

Contours of Pakistan's Deterrence Strategy and Deterrence Stability in South Asia

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Abstract

Basically, this is an empirical study to qualitatively analyze the changing deterrence contours of Pakistan with respect to its impact on deterrence stability in South Asia. Since the deterrence contours of nuclear power states significantly affect the deterrence environment, therefore Pakistan's changing deterrence postures are taken into account to analyze its impacts on South Asian evolution of deterrence. The need of its maintenance as "necessity" is encompassed in this paper because of its close association with deterrence contours. For broader understanding of deterrence environment in South Asia, evolution of nuclear deterrence and its imperative-maintenance are critical. Primary focus in this attempt is given on the changing deterrence contours of Pakistan because of the fact that it has multi-layered perspectives and perplexity. It is also endeavored to figure out and analyze the rationale behind the changes and character of these changes as "responsive policies".

Key words: Deterrence, Deterrence postures, Deterrence Stability, South Asia

Introduction

The significance of nuclear deterrence in the contemporary world is no more required to be implied. There is an explicit relation between nuclear deterrence and stability resulting from deterrence discourses. Veracity of

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this relationship has multiple aspects. Various academicians and scholars have given several insights with different aspects on this relation. However, given the complexity of this concept, it remains ambiguous to define perfectly with respect to its exercise. Therefore, Deterrence calculus in South Asia also needs to be recapitulated from time to time because of the changing deterrence postures of India and Pakistan. Both countries keep on changing their deterrence contours according to their changing strategic needs. Nuclear arms race and the different developments in nuclear arms exert a certain impact on nuclear deterrence. Usually, these developments strengthen the deterrence or sometimes strategically weaken the deterrence on the strategic level. Sometimes, deterrence induces instability at lower level to reinforce the deterrence and enhance the stability at higher level. Similarly, sometimes it enhances the stability at lower level and induces instability at higher level. Higher level of deterrence refers to the deterrence on strategic level whereas lower level deterrence refers to the deterrence on tactical level although all levels are interlinked.

Deterrence is a complex subject to study in the South Asian landscape. Nuclear powers in South Asia share a geographical proximity which makes the deterrence relation more complex, unlike the Cold War deterrence model. In Cold War deterrence model, the US and USSR had geographical distance and exercise of deterrence was quite different. Whereas, in South Asia India and Pakistan have a common border making missile flight times very short and limiting reaction time to almost nothing; a history of four wars along with unlimited number of border skirmishes; the perennial Kashmir dispute; active involvement in intra-State conflicts; contesting regional and global outlook; and, above all, power asymmetry.¹ Therefore, deterrence in South Asia has multi-layered perspectives and aspects which requires a thorough study. However, in this study, an attempt has been made to analyze Pakistan's changing deterrence postures with its impact on deterrence stability in South Asia. Pakistan changes its deterrence

Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, 2008. "Paradox of deterrence: India-Pakistan strategic relations". *ISSI Journal*, http://www.issi.org.pk/ss_Detail.php?dataId=507 (accessed March 5, 2017)

contours from time to time because of a given deterrence environment in the region. In order to get a clear picture of deterrence stability and deterrence strategies on various levels in the region, a succinct evolution of deterrence has been encompassed in this study, because, evolving nature of deterrence has deep co-relation with the changing nature of deterrence.

Pakistan is primarily focused in the analysis with respect to the deterrence departments. Thereafter, a brief discussion on necessity of the maintenance of deterrence between the nuclear states as a "necessity" is incorporated in the study. Why deterrence is required to be maintained with its different contours according to the regional environments? How exercise of deterrence serves the nuclear state on strategic, operational and tactical levels? These kinds of questions are attempted to be answered with substantiated arguments and references in this paper.

Pakistan's nuclear deterrence is specifically chosen to analyze with its impact on the stability of South Asia keeping in view the fact that certain postures which appear to be negative can impact positively. Basically, this article argues that the changing deterrence postures of Pakistan are directly contributing to the deterrence stability of South Asia. Developments of nuclear deterrence on the part of India were the initiatives to disturb the power equation between both nuclear states. Therefore, the relationship between the rationale behind Pakistan's changing deterrence postures and the initiatives taken by India to destabilize the region is undertaken thoroughly in this paper.

In this regard, the rationale behind the changing deterrence contours is not perceptible in its nature. In this relationship, the analysis of developments on the part of Pakistan which have contributed, directly or indirectly, to the deterrence stability of region are also focused in this research. This study exclusively revolves around nuclear deterrence. In the end, the importance of deterrence stability with regard to strategic stability is taken into account in the South Asian strategic landscape. The

pathway of deterrence stability which leads toward strategic stability is succinctly analyzed.

Evolution of Deterrence: A Succinct Overview

Strategic environment of South Asian is quite different from other regions in the world. India and Pakistan, the two hostile nuclear neighboring states, are located next to each other. There is a geographical contiguity between the two states which led them to several military conflicts and wars. There are certain inevitable strategic compulsions which have to be maintained within strategic policies according to the national interests of each side. Evolution of nuclear deterrence in South Asia can be traced back to 1998 when both states tested nuclear weapons and declared themselves *de facto* nuclear states.²

It is axiomatic in international relations that states endeavor to ensure their sovereignty, security and safety. For that matter, they adopt multiple strategies which include economic growth, domestic security, developing alliance, arms buildup, and military modernization. Nuclear weapon states prefer to adopt the strategies which could deter the aggressors. Therefore, strategic approach between the two countries has changed because of the centrality of nuclear weapons. Pakistan, initially, had not intended to acquire nuclear weapons but India's nuclear test of 1974 made it to pursue the nuclear capabilities. So, in order to maintain the balance of power in the region, Pakistan successfully acquired the nuclear weapons and ensured its strategic security for as John Garnet says "Security means freedom from insecurity".³

Acquisition of nuclear weapons and their centrality in the strategic approach brought the course of deterrence in the region. Deterrence can be understood as the: "Ability to dissuade a state from embarking upon a

²Dr. Farah Zahra, 2012. "Credible Minimum Nuclear Deterrence in South Asia". *IPRI Journal* XII, no. 2, 1-14.

³John Garnet, 1980. *Theories of Peace and Security*. London: Oxford University Press.

course of action prejudicial to one's vital security interests/core values, based on a demonstrated capability".⁴ States articulate deterrence differently according to their strategic needs. There can be various doctrines of deterrence like massive retaliation, mutually assured destruction, flexible response, graduated deterrence, extended deterrence, limited deterrence and minimum deterrence.⁵ Initially, India was not interested in deterrence because of its hegemonic ambitions and belief on the inability of Pakistan to develop nuclear weapons. As Raj Rammana narrated that "There was never a discussion among us over whether we should or not make the bomb. How to do it was more important? For us it was a matter of prestige that would justify our ancient past. The question of deterrence came much later".⁶ While the quest of nuclear weapons by Pakistan, is closely linked with the conventional military superiority of India (which was needed to be negated), Kenneth Waltz stated that "States acquire nuclear weapons for containing fear of present or future conventional strength of adversary power".⁷ However, it seems that Pakistan's acquisition of nuclear weapons was aimed at to contain the fear of both conventional and non-conventional strength of adversary.

In 1998, both states in the region successfully tested nuclear weapons. Resultantly deterrence strategies based on the nuclearization started to be formulated by the policy makers. Strategists and scholars from various regions started to study and concentrate on the deterrence policy of neighboring nuclear states because 'Nuclear Deterrence' is a necessity which has to be maintained between nuclear states. The acquisition of

⁴Dr. Zafar Iqbal Cheema, 2013. "Revisiting Nuclear Deterrence and Strategic Stability in the Shadow of Tactical Nuclear Weapons in South Asia". in "Shifting Dynamics and Emerging Power Equilibrium in South and Central Asia around post-2014", Islamabad: Asia Printers. 375.

⁵Zafar Iqbal Cheema, 2010. *Indian Nuclear Deterrences: Its Evolution, Development and Implications for South Asian Security*. (New York: Oxford University Press), 2010.

⁶Muhammad Mushtaq and Muhammad Jawad, Hashmi, 2012. "Regional Hegemonic Aspirations of India; A Review of Indian Nuclear Program". *Pakistan Journal of Social Sciences* 32 (1): 253. (Raj Rammana was quoted by Muhammad Mushtaq and Muhammad Jawad Hashmi)

⁷Gurmeet Kanwal, 2008. "Indian Army Vision 2020". New Delhi: Harper Collins. (Kenneth Waltz quoted by Gurmeet Kanwal)

nuclear weapons by two all-time hostile neighbor states was the first phenomenon in the world. Therefore, it had to be studied out of the framework of the “Cold War” because the USSR and the US did not share the same geographical contiguity as India and Pakistan do.

Maintenance of Nuclear Deterrence as Necessity

India and Pakistan have fought four wars which clearly indicate the belligerent nature of bilateral relations. Both states exist next to each other sharing an elongated border. In such a strained environment, development of nuclear weapons by both states not only has created the fear among other states but also has made the region very capricious. Deterrence had been the primary factor that averted a hot war during the Cold War. On its realization, both superpowers started to concentrate on the formulation of deterrence policy at strategic level to achieve the war-aversion objectives. In the discipline of International Relations, deterrence is generally termed as the relations between adversaries in whom one attempts to frighten the other to not to react. Phil Williams pointed out that “Deterrence is an attempt by one government to prevent an adversary from undertaking a course of action (usually an attack on itself or its allies) that the government regards as undesirable, by threatening to inflict unacceptable costs upon the adversary in the event that the action is taken”.⁸ Deterrence strategies usually aim at to influence the adversary’s thought process in such a way that an adversary begins to believe that refraining from attack is in its best interests.

Henry Kissinger offered his thoughts that “The Nuclear Age turned strategy into deterrence, and deterrence into an esoteric intellectual exercise”.⁹ It shows that deterrence is a multi-faceted phenomenon. It is not merely a policy to deter the enemy from doing a specific act. Richard Wasserstrom also argued (when different deterrence policies were being formulated during Cold War) that “I do not think that issues of nuclear

⁸Phil William, “Nuclear Deterrence”, in John Baylis, Ken Booth, John Garnett, Phil Williams, *Contemporary Strategy: Theories and Concepts*, Vol. 1 (Great Britain: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1987), p. 115.

⁹Henry Kissinger, *Diplomacy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994), p. 608.

deterrence are so easily separable from those of nuclear war, and the topic of nuclear deterrence seems to me to be a very difficult one, possessing elusive, puzzling, and deeply problematic aspects".¹⁰ Richard's claim also implies that characteristics of deterrence are multi-faceted leading to the performance of multiple functions. By virtue of its multiple aspects, states have to maintain it in order to gain strategic objectives.

In South Asia, geographical proximity reduces the warning time of the launch of nuclear weapons as compared to USSR and the US case during the Cold War. Therefore, despite the abhorrent nature of these weapons, both states retain the nuclear weapons to maintain deterrence at all levels in order to avert any catastrophe in the region. Its maintenance may require the different policies and objectives. Given the significance of deterrence and its ineluctability as a necessity, both states have set certain strategic objectives to achieve through the mean of deterrence. According to Maj. Gen. (R) Qasim Qureshi, Pakistan's strategic objectives are:-

- a. Persuade or compel India to alter the status quo in Kashmir.
- b. Deter India's conventional military threat.
- c. Deter India from attempting or supporting initiatives to de-nuclearize Pakistan.
- d. Deter India from wrongfully exploiting the provisions of the Indus Waters Treaty.

India's strategic objectives are:-

- a. Deter Pakistan from using sub conventional/limited military initiatives as means to change the status quo in Kashmir, or to damage India.
- b. In the event of conventional war, deter Pakistan from threatening or initiating nuclear use.
- c. Persuade or compel Pakistan to dismantle militant outfits existing in or operating from Pakistan.

¹⁰Richard Wasserstrom "War, Nuclear War, and Nuclear Deterrence: Some Conceptual and Moral Issues". (University of Chicago Press Journal: The University of Chicago Press publishers April 1985 Vol. 95, No. 3) 424-444, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2381030> (accessed February 22, 2017)

d. Persuade or compel Pakistan to accept the status quo in Kashmir".¹¹

Both states have to maintain the nuclear deterrence in order to achieve their strategic objectives without fighting the conventional or nuclear war with each other. Moreover, deterrence is also required to be maintained because of its feature that it can also avert the major crises.

Pakistan's Changing Deterrence Postures

Nuclear posturing of Pakistan is critical to the study of nuclear-deterrence linked security dilemma vis-à-vis India. India's growing economy allows it to flex its military and strategic muscles in order to influence the regional stability and impact the balance of power. On the other hand, Pakistan with its smaller economy, struggles to favorably maintain the deterrence equation. Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif announced the deterrence policy of Pakistan after 1998 nuclear test, and declared that Pakistan would follow the minimum credible deterrence as the nuclear policy of the state. He also declared to ensure that Pakistan would avoid the arms race in the region.¹² That was the first deterrent posture of Pakistan. Often, deterrence postures of nuclear states cannot be figured out accurately. However, a vague understanding can be developed by virtue of official statements to analyze the deterrence contours of Pakistan. It is plausible because, deterrence doctrines are generally embedded in the statements of heads of relevant departments and press releases of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Directorate of the military.

Before reaffirming the minimum credible deterrence of Pakistan, the concept 'minimum credible deterrence' needs to be discussed. Primarily, this concept lacks consensus in terms of implications and particularly definitions. Definition of minimum deterrence given by Buzan states that "a secure second strike force of sufficient size to make threats

¹¹Major General (R) Qasim Qureshi, "Deterrence Stability in South Asia".
<https://www.hsdl.org/?view&did=709864> accessed March 1,2017

¹²Tertrais, "Pakistan's Nuclear Program: A Net Assessment,"5

of Assured Destruction credible".¹³ Stein and Lebow argue that "Too much deterrence...can fuel an arms race that makes both sides less rather than more secure and provoke the aggression that it is designed to prevent".¹⁴ Baylis is of the opinion that "fewer weapons deployed "in a less threatening manner" are "less dangerous in terms of accidents and are less provocative" in order to support the case of minimum deterrence.¹⁵ Therefore, it still needs to be figured out as to how to remove ambiguities as claimed by Dr. Farah Zahra i.e. "It is a matter of debate as to what credible and minimum deterrence would actually constitute in a nuclear deterrence relationship... Should the mere presence of a few nuclear weapons and delivery systems constitute a minimum deterrent, or would "credible minimum deterrence" necessitate an arsenal that is constantly being quantitatively and qualitatively upgraded in line with perceived improvements in an opponent's capabilities?"¹⁶

However, keeping in view the above noted definitions of minimum credible deterrence, It can be interpreted as a reliable force to deter the enemy with minimum required potential. In order to develop the understanding of the contours of deterrence for Pakistan, Brig. ® Naeem Salik has written that "Nuclear Doctrine is the principle of belief or bedrock on which organizational and force structures are built... It provides the guidelines for force configuration and the nature, type and number of weapons and delivery systems that would be needed to implement the doctrine".¹⁷ According to George Perkovich, four principles appear to be vital for Pakistan's nuclear doctrine:

- a. That Pakistan's nuclear deterrent is India-specific.

¹³Barry Buzan, 1987. *Strategic Studies: Military Technology and International Relations*. London: Macmillan.

¹⁴Richard N. Lebow and J.G. Stein, 1994. *We All Lost the Cold War*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994. 368

¹⁵Johan Baylis, 2000. *The Search for a Third Way in Alternative Nuclear Futures Role of Nuclear Weapons in the Post-Cold War World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.79

¹⁶Dr. Farah Zahra, 2012. "Credible Minimum Nuclear Deterrence in South Asia". *IPRI Journal* XII, no. 2, 1-14.

¹⁷Naeem Salik, 2010. *The Genesis of South Asian Nuclear Deterrence: Pakistan's Perspective*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009,234-239

- b. Pakistan has embraced a doctrine of credible minimum deterrence.
- c. The requirements for credible minimal deterrence are not fixed; instead, they are determined by a dynamic threat environment.
- d. Given India's conventional military advantages, Pakistan reserves the option to use nuclear weapons first *in extremis*".¹⁸ Agha Shahi, Zulfiqar Ali Khan, and Abdul Sattar wrote, "Obviously our deterrence force will have to be upgraded in proportion to the heightened threat of preemption and interception".¹⁹ Abdul Sattar mentioned in the presentation at National Defense College that "Our policy of minimum credible deterrence will obviate any strategic arms race".²⁰

These declarations and statements provide the view of the deterrence picture of Pakistan. However, in the context of South Asia, there are various question pointed out by Rodney Jones in order to find out the "minimum" which raised suspicious about its definition and implication.

He asks that "Does 'minimum' imply the sufficiency of small number of nuclear weapons? Nuclear weapons held in reserve? Low readiness or alert rates of nuclear force? Renunciation of nuclear war fighting? Mainly counter-value targeting? Alternatively, does the term minimum merely make a virtue of today's facts of life in the Subcontinent's limited resources, scare weapons materials, unproved delivery systems, and still undeveloped technical military capabilities?"²¹

Certain technical and classified information are essentially required to answer these questions. Anyhow, primary focus of this paper is to analyze the changing deterrence postures of Pakistan, not the in-depth analyses of

¹⁸ Michael Krepon, 2013. "Pakistan's Nuclear Strategy and Deterrence Stability". In *Deterrence Stability and Escalation Control in South Asia*, by Michael Krepon and Julia Thompson, 41. Stimson Center.

¹⁹ Agha Shahi, Zulfiqar Ali Khan and Abdul Sattar, "Securing Nuclear Peace," *The News International*, 5 October 1999.

²⁰ Naeem Salik, 2010. *The Genesis of South Asian Nuclear Deterrence: Pakistan's Perspective*. New York: Oxford University Press.

²¹ Herbert F. Yark, *Arms and the Physicist* (New York: American Physical Society, 1994), p.373

exclusively “minimum deterrence definition”. From the inception of nuclear weapons to April 2011, Pakistan had maintained the minimum credible deterrence. In order to maintain the strategic balance, Pakistan retuned its doctrine for wide-ranging response. From minimum credible deterrence to Full Spectrum Deterrence (FSD) was developed to deter the enemy from the course of aggression at all levels. Transformation of deterrence took place after the first flight missile test of 60 kilometer range Hatf-9 (Nasr) in April 2011 which was followed by the view of Lt. Gen. (R) Khalid Kidwai that “a very important milestone in consolidating Pakistan’s strategic deterrence capability at all levels (strategic, operational, tactical) of the threat spectrum”.²² Furthermore, flight test of 180 kilometer Hatf-2 in March 2012 was posed by the ISPR as acquisition of military capability both at “operational and tactical level”.²³ The successful test of Hatf-2 further strengthened the newly adopted deterrence posture. It was developed in accordance with the contemporary dynamics of strategic environment in the region. These missiles had specific functions to perform in certain scenarios as pointed out by David Smith that “Pakistan’s shorter-range missile flight tests suggest its targeting objectives either to signal the urgent need to halt a military campaign or to stall advancing armored formations and their logistical support on both sides of the International Border or Line of Control dividing Kashmir”.²⁴

This shows that changing deterrence strategy was already anticipated by the various scholars that it has reached at tactical level. Its shorter range and conventional war grounds between both countries corroborate the above mentioned indirect claim by David Smith. Anyhow, all the

²² Inter-Services Public Relations, “Press Release,” No. PR94/2011-ISPR, May 29, 2012, http://www.ispr.gov.pk/front/main.asp?o=t-pressrelease&id=2075#pr_link (accessed March 2, 2017)

²³ Inter-Services Public Relations, Press Release No. PR34/2012-ISPR, March 5, 2012, [http://www.ispr.gov.pk/front/main.asp?o=t-press release&date=2012/3/5](http://www.ispr.gov.pk/front/main.asp?o=t-press%20release&date=2012/3/5).(accessed March 2, 2017)

²⁴ David Smith, 2013. “The US Experience with Tactical Nuclear Weapons: Lessons for South Asia”. In *Deterrence Stability and Escalation Control in South Asia*, by Micheal Krepon. Washington : Stimson Center.

quoted statements and assessments explicitly illustrate that deterrence strategy of Pakistan is associated with the changing strategic paradigm of India. Italian researchers reported in 2002 that Lt. Gen. (R) Khalid Kidwai gave the following expositions i.e. “Nuclear weapons are aimed solely at India. In case that deterrence fails, they will be used if:

- a. India attacks Pakistan and conquers a large part of its territory (space threshold)
- b. India destroys a large part either of its land or air forces (military threshold)
- c. India proceeds to the economic strangling of Pakistan (economic strangling)
- d. India pushes Pakistan into political destabilization or creates a large-scale internal subversion in Pakistan (domestic destabilization)”²⁵

These expositions imply that Pakistan’s FSD is more an attempt to enhance the deterrence stability at all levels because any kind of use of nuclear weapons is associated with Indian proceedings. According to renowned scholar Dr. Mansoor Ahmed, “the combined official narrative revolve around the following postulate First, introducing the Nasr was a direct response to India’s Cold Start doctrine, which seeks to exploit perceived gaps in Pakistan’s deterrent posture. Second, using any nuclear weapons on the battlefield, even so-called tactical weapons, would have strategic consequences. Third, Pakistan’s full spectrum deterrence is not a war-fighting strategy, but rather a strategy to deter limited conventional war below Pakistan’s existing thresholds for nuclear use. Fourth, Pakistan will control Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNWs) just like other strategic nuclear forces, maintaining centralized command and control at all times under the National Command Authority (NCA). Finally, because Pakistan’s Nasr missiles ‘will not be deployed to forward positions, nor will use be delegated to field commanders,’ fears for the field security of deployed

²⁵ Michael Krepon, 2013. “Pakistan's Nuclear Strategy and Deterrence Stability”. In *Deterrence Stability and Escalation Control in South Asia*, by Michael Krepon and Julia Thompson, 41. Stimson Center.

short-range nuclear systems, such as preemption and loss of control, are misplaced".²⁶

Given the combined official narratives and strategic calculations, it can be believed that development of comprehensive response at all levels (including strategic level, operational level and tactical level) was the result of development of newly limited conventional war doctrine on part of India. In order to analyze the "change" in the deterrence policy of Pakistan, rationale behind the change is critical to be discussed.

Rationale Behind the Changing Deterrence Postures

Rationality in deterrence policy making is a complex subject. It can be discussed under the light of one unique or exclusive factor. Sometimes, the unexpected sudden change in deterrence policy can be the rationale under the given strategic environment. As Michael Krepon stated, "Willingness to risk a breakdown in nuclear deterrence would only be rational if the threat that is being countered or deterred is of an existential scale".²⁷

Since it can be easily extrapolated that Pakistan's policies are closely attributed to the developments on the part of India, those are essential to be mentioned. Over the last decade, nuclear stockpile of India has doubled from 70 to 100 warheads.²⁸ It is also imperative to understand that India can afford to spend substantial resources in order to develop both its conventional and nuclear capability with its burgeoning economy that may not necessarily be Pakistan specific. However, it does affect Pakistan's security calculus. At the same time, India is continuously pursuing the policy of intervention in the internal affairs of Pakistan, particularly in Baluchistan. India is playing an instrumental role in spreading terrorism in

²⁶ Mansoor Ahmed 2016 "Pakistan's Tactical Nuclear Weapons and thier impact on Stability". Carnegie

Endowment for International Peace, June 30, 2016. 2-3

²⁷ Michael Krepon, 2013. "Pakistan's Nuclear Strategy and Deterrence Stability" In "Deterrence Stability and Escalation Control in South Asia", by Michael Krepon and Julia Thompson, 41. Stimson Center.

²⁸ Robert Norris and Hans Kristensen, 2012. "Nuclear Notebook: Indian Nuclear Forces". *Bulletin of the Atomic Sceintists* 96-101.

Pakistan as is evident by the confession of Indian spy, senior serving naval officer, Kulbhushan Yadav, operating in Balochistan and captured by the Pakistani law enforcement agencies.²⁹

Since Pakistan was following the minimum credible deterrence, the gap on operational and tactical level in conventional deterrence very much existed. India has been exploiting this gap below the nuclear threshold for conventional and sub-conventional military activities against Pakistan. In order to exploit this gap systematically under the nuclear threshold, India formulated the conventional military warfare doctrine, called Cold Start Doctrine (CSD). According to Brig. (R) Gurmeet Kanwal of Indian Army

“The CSD aims at making land incursion into Pakistan’s territory through forward mobilization of eight integrated battle groups (IBG’s) with the support of Navy and Air force in facilitating Indian army to conduct tactical manoeuvres within 72-96 hours... The political objective of this war strategy is to bring war into the enemy’s territory under the nuclear overhang before the international community intervenes to enforce a cease-fire. The military objective is to destroy Pakistan’s Army Reserve (North) and Army Reserve (South) during which 3-5 of the Indian strike divisions will penetrate by crossing the international border keeping simultaneity with the holding corps, and thereby creating confusion for Pakistan army to make mistakes by dividing their cohesive strength”.³⁰

In order to counter this doctrine, Pakistan developed the comprehensive response by changing the deterrence posture from minimum credible deterrence to Full Spectrum Deterrence (FSD), plugging in the gap below the nuclear threshold. This change had practically

²⁹ Transcript of RAW agent Kulbhushan's confessional statement, March 30, 2017
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1248786>

³⁰ Gurmeet Kanwal, 2008. “Indian Army Vision 2020”. New Delhi: Harper Collins.
(Kenneth Waltz quoted by Gurmeet Kanwal)

occurred after the successful flight test of Nasr,³¹ a battlefield nuclear weapon. Newly adopted deterrence policy was further articulated by the press releases of ISPR and statements of government officials. After the test, Pakistan's ISPR issued the statement that "Nasr was developed to add deterrence value to Pakistan's Strategic Weapons Development Program at shorter ranges. The Nasr could carry nuclear warheads of appropriate yield with high accuracy and had shoot-and-scoot attributes, essentially a quick response system that addressed the need to deter evolving threats".³² In this statement, it can be figured out that the purpose of this test was to enhance the deterrence value on operational and tactical level. It was also clearly mentioned in the press release that this was the need of time to address the evolving threat. India's conventional military doctrine CSD can be taken as reference to the evolving threat.

Moreover, speaking at the 2015 Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference, General(R) Khalid Kidwai reaffirmed that "Pakistan's battlefield nuclear weapons are an extension of the country's conventional deterrent capabilities... Pakistan needed short-range tactical nuclear weapons to deter India's Cold Start doctrine, and having tactical nuclear weapons would make war less likely". He further made clear that "these weapons are developed in response to concerns that India's larger military could still wage a conventional war against the country, thinking Pakistan would not risk retaliation with bigger nuclear weapons".³³ This speech also indicates that the development of tactical nuclear weapons was aimed at counter-balancing India's conventional military doctrine CSD and led to the change in deterrence posture of Pakistan. Primarily, Nasr was tested to strengthen deterrence at all levels, as claimed by Zafar Nawaz Jaspal i.e.

³¹ Sadia Tasleem, "Pakistan's Nuclear Use Doctrine," Carnegie Endowment for Peace, June 30, 2016, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/06/30/pakistan-s-nuclear-use-doctrine-pub-63913>

³² ISPR, April 19, 2011, http://www.ispr.gov.pk/front/main.asp?o=tpress_release&id=1721 (accessed March 5, 2017)

³³ "Pakistan Needs Short Range Tactical Nuclear Weapons to Deter India," Express Tribune (Islamabad), March 24, 2015, <http://tribune.com.pk/story/858106/pakistanneedsshortrangetacticalnuclearweaponstodeterindia/> "Gen. Khalid Kidwai," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 9.

“The aim of NASR is not to induct weapons of use, but “weapons of deterrence” to counterbalance India’s move to conventional military offensives at a tactical level”.³⁴

Pakistan’s official rationale of change in deterrent posture and doctrine after inclusion of Nasr missiles is well-fixed to understand. Development of FSD was necessary, useful, and well-timed to address conventional asymmetries against India. As the nature of the threat posed by India changed, Pakistan’s response also changed according to the needs of a strategically given environment. The newly adopted FSD doctrine brought back rationality and credibility but does not signal a shift to war-fighting strategy. The changes simply bolster deterrence posture and simultaneously Pakistan’s intent of using nuclear weapons as a weapon of last resort remains intact. Furthermore, given the prevailing asymmetries, it seems that a certain level of ambiguity may provide for a more effective deterrence. Therefore, in order to identify the rationale behind the changing nuclear and conventional military policies, changes in India’s both conventional and non-conventional strategies are inevitably required to be studied and analyzed. Counter-balance of CSD was the primary rationale behind the transformation of deterrence from minimum credible to full spectrum deterrence.

Pakistan’s Responsive Strategic Policies and Deterrence Stability

Stable relationship between the two nuclear states is associated with stable deterrence, which can be denoted by the two terms, Deterrence and Stability. Usually, these terms are commonly understood as the description of this relationship.³⁵ Deterrence stability is a much wider concept to be discussed with the inclusion of various factors. It should be viewed as a whole because of its multi-faceted characteristics. It cannot be stated that deterrence stability is automatically articulated and is a result from merely acquiring nuclear capabilities. It becomes awfully tough to

³⁴ Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, 2008. “Paradox of deterrence: India-Pakistan strategic relations”. *ISSI Journal*, http://www.issi.org.pk/ss_Detail.php?dataId=507 (accessed March 5, 2017)

³⁵ Zafar Iqbal Cheema, 2010. *Indian Nuclear Deterrences: Its Evolution, Development and Implications for South Asian Security*. New York: Oxford University Press

maintain deterrence stability when hostile states enmesh in strategic competition with their unequal capabilities. Particularly, when adverse nuclear states share geographical contiguity, it automatically involves a bundle of intricacies.

India, because of its growing economic edge, has indulged in a fast arms build-up which paves the way for an arms race against Pakistan. Obviously, an intensified nuclear arms race has certain ramifications for deterrence stability. Pakistan's deterrence and force postures are greatly responsive in nature. It may be assumed on the part of Pakistan that nuclear deterrence is an alternative to conventional war-fighting. However, India's strategic policies indicate their lack of belief in such assumptions. As noted above, Pakistan's strategic policies are India-centric and responsive in nature. Primarily, India takes the initiative in the alteration of its strategic policies or development, stockpiling and manufacturing of weapons. These initiatives start to affect the stability negatively in the region. Strategic balance starts to oscillate and Pakistan prepares a response to maintain the balance in the region. Development of nuclear weapons by India led Pakistan to follow the same path. Therefore, Pakistan's all kinds of security policies towards India are solely aimed at maintaining the deterrence stability in the region.

The Indian Army Chief unveiled the new concept of CSD as detailed above which started to affect strategic stability in the region. Pakistan responded to this doctrine with the development of comprehensive response in the form of change in deterrence contours from minimum credible deterrence to FSD. Though strategic stability has several definitions, yet it can be defined as a "State of affairs, in which, countries are confident that their adversaries would not be able to undermine their nuclear deterrent capability".³⁶

It is important to note that strategic stability is intangible because "there are no certain tools or equipment to measure how much or what

³⁶ Pavel Podvig, 2012. "The Myth of Strategic Stability". *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*.

strategies would be sufficient to maintain balance of power”.³⁷ However, as a concept, strategic stability has never been contentious though debatable because of its various definitions. Employment of different strategies responsively by Pakistan, to maintain the balance of power for deterrence stability, exclusively aimed to bring about strategic stability in the region. Different deterrence postures of Pakistan are an attempt to utilize the deterrence force as instrument to avert the conventional and nuclear war, and maintain the strategic stability. Lt. Gen. (R) Kidwai reaffirmed that “Nuclear Weapons will be used only if the very existence of Pakistan as a state is at stake”.³⁸ Introduction of tactical nuclear weapons was also an attempt to integrate conventional defense with nuclear deterrence capability at operational and tactical level. Primary purpose of induction of battlefield nuclear weapons was to counter the limited war doctrine of India, so that, deterrence could be stabilized at all levels and strategic stability could be ensured in the region.

Conclusion

Nuclear deterrence evolved in South Asia with the development of nuclear weapons by India and Pakistan, and the predisposed and perceived threats of both evolved after the cold nuclear test by India in 1974 that led Pakistan to do the same. Growing influence of deterrence on policy making and its erstwhile exercise in cold war model provided it with remarkable significance in the strategic paradigm of South Asia. It is also evident that it is very much required to be maintained particularly on strategic level for positive outcomes and favorable consequence. It has become the necessity which cannot be evaded. After its integration in policy formulation, Pakistan kept on changing its deterrence contours in tandem with the strategic developments on part of India. These developments took place in

³⁷ Kenneth Waltz, *Theories of International Politics*, (Boston: Mc Graw Hill, 1979), 116-118. (According to explanation provided by Waltz about Balance of Power theory, states are unitary actors who, at a minimum, seek their own preservation and, at a maximum, drive for universal domination)

³⁸ Michael Krepon, 2013. “Pakistan's Nuclear Strategy and Deterrence Stability”. In *Deterrence Stability and Escalation Control in South Asia*, by Michael Krepon and Julia Thompson, 41. Stimson Center.

various forms including the nuclear doctrine structure, deterrence policy, arms import and articulation of conventional war doctrine like CSD.

Moreover, the evolving Indian conventional force modernization and rapidly increasing capabilities are potentially exacerbating the technological and conventional asymmetry between India and Pakistan. This asymmetry may add to the misplaced confidence of the Indian political and military elite that they can achieve required results within the short time of a newly formulated limited military campaign CSD against Pakistan and succeed in degrading Pakistan's conventional forces while remaining below the Pakistani nuclear thresholds.

However, Pakistan has continuously pursued a policy to maintain the strategic balance by increasing its nuclear and conventional capabilities. Along with that, deterrence and force postures have been changing with the strategic environmental requisites. Counter-initiative by Pakistan according to its restricted and limited resources extensively served the region to bring back the deterrence stability. Rationale behind this can be linked to the changing nuclear and conventional policies of India. Therefore, it can be out-rightly claimed that Pakistan's changing deterrence contours and deterrence policies directly ministered to the strategic environment of South Asia to bring back the deterrence stability. Primarily, focus of Pakistan's strategic policies and operational policies has been to counter the perceived threats emanating from the adventurous strategic policies of India, so that deterrence stability could be ensured and peace could be ensured in the region.