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Edited by:
M Waqas Jan

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Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)

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SVI Foresight

SVI Foresight is a monthly electronic journal. It has a multi-disciplinary perspective highlighting contemporary strategic and security studies. The Journal is envisioned to be a collection of policy-oriented articles written by its Research Associates, Visiting Faculty and professional experts. The objective is to provide the readership with a concise all-round and real-time policy oriented discourse on contemporary strategic regional and international developments, highlighting their relevance to Pakistan.



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Editor's Note

As the country is once again plagued by political instability, it is important to not lose sight of the myriad regional issues being faced on both the strategic and diplomatic fronts. Kashmir still remains an ever-present flashpoint between the two nuclear armed neighbors, posing a very real and dangerous threat to peace and stability. Similarly, burgeoning tensions in the Middle East and Persian Gulf regions carry with them a broad range of threats with changing geopolitical dynamics directly affecting global energy and financial markets. With global economic slowdown directly leading to staggering growth in both the Chinese and Indian economies, the stage is set for even further turbulence and uncertainty throughout the region.

Within this scenario it is important to thus evaluate where Pakistan stands from a defense and foreign policy perspective within these regional dynamics. The worsening situation in Kashmir has demanded that the present government take stock of its attempts at re-orienting its priorities along its vision of a 'Naya Pakistan.' The worsening crisis in Kashmir has in essence truly tested the ruling government's mettle at projecting a strong and cohesive message both inwardly and outwardly. While the outward projection of the country's stance has been lauded as being relatively successful (as evident in PM Khan's speech at the UNGA last month), there is still a lot more that needs to be done, which can only stem from a concerted more cohesive policy forged from within the country.

With the rest of the world steadily moving toward greater interconnectedness and integration, it is thus extremely important that the country take stock of its strengths and not let its petty divisions enforce a myopic outlook when a grand lasting vision of its national security is what's required.

It is hoped that this issue will help readers in staying up to date with the current political environment and that they will find the analyses useful. The SVI Foresight team invites and highly encourages contributions from the security and strategic community in the form of opinion based short commentaries on contemporary political, security and strategic issues. Any suggestions for further improvements are welcome at our [contact address](#). Previous issues of the SVI Foresight can be accessed [here](#), and can also be found on our [Facebook page](#). For more information, please visit our website at www.thesvi.org.

M Waqas Jan
Senior Research Associate

Kashmir Issue at the UNGA and the Nuclear Discourse

Haris Bilal Malik

The Kashmir issue has more significance in view of the nuclearization of South Asia as many security experts around the world consider Kashmir a potential ‘nuclear flashpoint’ between India and Pakistan. The revocation of the special constitutional status of Kashmir by the BJP government on [August 5, 2019](#), also referred to as the [Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act 2019](#) and the subsequent lockdown in Kashmir has since considerably increased political and diplomatic tensions between India and Pakistan. India’s recent moves and actions in Kashmir have once again internationalized the Kashmir dispute. This was evident during the UN General Assembly’s 74th Session, where the Kashmir issue remained a crucial agenda item for several countries.

During this year’s session, prominent leaders of the world condemned Indian brutalities in Kashmir. Turkish President [Recep Tayyip Erdoğan](#) criticized the international community for failing to pay attention to the Kashmir conflict and called for dialogue to end this dispute. Malaysian Prime Minister [Dr. Mahathir Mohamad](#) said that Kashmir “has been invaded and occupied” by India despite the UN resolution on the issue. Chinese Foreign Minister [Wang Yi](#) also discussed the issue and called for a peaceful resolution of the dispute based on the UN Charter and Security Council resolutions. Based on the grave importance of Kashmir as a potential ‘nuclear flashpoint’ between India and Pakistan, Prime Minister Imran Khan, while addressing the UNGA [warned](#) the world community about the dangers of a nuclear war that according to him might break out over Kashmir due to Indian atrocities. The current situation appears to be the most critical time for the region as both countries are nuclear-armed.

However unfortunately, Indian leaders and media perceived Prime Minister Imran Khan’s warning as a nuclear threat and termed it as [‘brinkmanship’](#). Contrary to this perspective, it is worth mentioning here that the Indian leadership itself is involved in negative nuclear signaling and war hysteria against Pakistan in recent months. For instance, the 2019 Indian General Election campaign of Prime Minister Modi was largely based on negative nuclear signaling comprising of several threats referring to the possible use of [nuclear weapons](#) against Pakistan. Furthermore, as an apparent shift from India’s ‘No First Use’ (NFU) policy, on [August 16, 2019](#) Indian Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, while on a visit to the Pokhran nuclear test site paid tribute to the late former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and asserted that India might review its NFU policy. He stated that a change in future circumstances would likely define the status of India’s NFU policy. Since then there is no official denial of this assertion from India which indicates that India might abandon its NFU policy.

Moreover, India’s offensive missile development programs and its growing nuclear arsenal which include; hypersonic missiles, ballistic missile defence systems, enhanced space capabilities for intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance and the induction of nuclear-powered ballistic-missile-capable submarines clearly indicate that India’s nuclear weapons modernization is aimed at continuously enhancing its deterrence framework including its second-strike capabilities vis-à-vis Pakistan. This is also evident from India’s military preparations under its more recent doctrines such as

the [2017 Joint Doctrine of the Indian Armed Forces \(JDIAF\)](#) and the [2018 Land Warfare Doctrine \(LWD\)](#) which are also based upon more proactive offensive strategies and indirect threats of pre-emptive strikes against Pakistan.

As evident from the above-mentioned developments, it seems likely that India aspires to increasingly project itself as a regional hegemon and a potential superpower. The BJP government under Prime Minister Modi, inspired by the Hindutva ideology, is taking offensive measures under the notions of 'a more Muscular or Modern India' based on strong military preparedness. In such circumstances, Pakistan's threat perception would likely remain increasingly inclined towards its eastern border. Pakistan due to its economic constraints would also likely face considerable difficulties in competing with India toe to toe with respect to its military modernization plans. Pakistan is already punching well above its weight, and nuclear deterrence would be the only way through which Pakistan can maintain a precise balance of power to preserve its security. This could only be carried out by deterring India with the employment of both minimum credible deterrence and full-spectrum deterrence capabilities. This posture clearly asserts that since Pakistan's nuclear weapons are for defensive purposes in principle, they are aimed at deterring India from any and all kinds of aggression.

Hence, at the present, India's forceful annexation of occupied Kashmir and the resultant nuclear discourse at the UNGA has further intensified Pakistan-India tensions. Under present circumstances, the situation could easily trigger another politico-military escalation between India and Pakistan. Prime Minister Modi has bet his political reputation on his move to annex the region and his political career is on the line. The same way Pakistan's politico-military establishment is equally unlikely back down from its stance on Kashmir. It would be difficult for both countries to come down from the escalation ladder because politico-military reputations would be at stake at both ends. Consequently, Pakistan might be forced to take action before India's modernization plans get ahead and might respond even sooner.

The nuclear discourse in Prime Minister Imran Khan's speech against the backdrop of the Kashmir crisis at such a high forum such as the UNGA would likely keep the issue internationalized. The situation demands that the UN fulfill its responsibility of ensuring peace and to prevent billions of people from the dangers of nuclear war. However, India's blame game, its aggressive behavior and offensive nuclear signaling against Pakistan all present a clear warning of nuclear war. It would greatly limit the prospects for international mediation especially by the United Nations whose resolutions on Kashmir clearly provide the right of self-determination to the Kashmiri people.

<https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2019/10/17/kashmir-issue-at-the-unqa-and-the-nuclear-discourse/>

The Game-changing Fallibility of BMD Systems: Lessons from the Middle East and South Asia

M Waqas Jan

As the Middle East's major powers [recalculate](#) their defence and foreign policies following last month's missile strikes on Saudi oilfields, there have emerged some telling lessons with regard to the changing nature of modern warfare. While these lessons are perhaps painfully obvious to the likes of Saudi Arabia who have directly been on the receiving end of these attacks, they are also evident in the near deafening introspection being undertaken by the region's other power brokers, the United States and Israel as well. This has been made clear by the fact that even after a month since the attacks took place, there remains a definite and near ironic aspect of shock and awe to what was otherwise a quick, covert and precision strike on a highly valuable target.

What's more, the fact that the strike took place despite the presence of one of the world's most sophisticated missile defense systems, presents a telling example of how the technological balance in cruise missile development has shifted more in favor of offensive strikes at the expense of a highly touted defensive capability. As such, the ease and precision with which one of the world's most closely guarded facilities were struck, shows that based on the widespread availability of current technologies, it is perhaps more reliable to count on a missile system's offensive strike capabilities. Consequently, the opportunity cost of investing in and developing expensive missile defense shields based on this scenario becomes tremendously higher.

These lessons provide valuable strategic import to another nearby region which is also brimming with tensions amongst two extremely well equipped and militarily capable states. This refers to the South Asian region, where both India and Pakistan also seem headed towards a dangerous escalation of hostilities. As a result, both countries would do well to consider the lessons emanating from the above-mentioned Saudi experience. For instance, like Saudi Arabia, India has also been on a military spending spree [over the last decade](#), importing some of the world's most advanced weapons systems from across the world. Its massive economic growth has given it license to pursue a robust military modernization program that is keenly focused on enhancing its power projection capabilities.

However, again like Saudi Arabia, India's military also remains untested and risks being termed another '[glitter force](#)' that is more concerned with procuring arms as a matter of prestige as opposed to operational efficacy. This for instance was clear during India's aerial engagement with Pakistani Air Force jets in March, during which a sophisticated Israeli origin missile fired by India's air defenses [downed one of India's own](#) Russian made Mi-17 helicopters. Such lack of operational readiness and blind faith in untested systems is evident in both the Saudi and Indian experience highlighted above.

Specifically, regarding the US made Patriot batteries used by the Saudis and the Israeli made Spyder missiles used by India, the above incidents have shown that the efficacy and reliability of these systems in the real-time conflicts of today is quite patchy at best. If anything, any form of over-reliance on these

systems runs the risk of a grave miscalculation which in effect is multiplied by the regional complexities of both their respective security environments. These miscalculations are already on display in the increasingly volatile Middle East, as the Western backed and Saudi led military alliance is just realizing. With the vulnerability of such missile defense systems now increasingly evident, there has also arguably been an element of deterrence that has been further reinforced. Consequently, the path to de-escalation appears a lot more rational than one which may escalate towards all-out war. The case of South Asia too was similar where the aerial engagement between nuclear weapons capable India and Pakistan, also ultimately reinforced the latter's conventional deterrent while exposing gaps in the former's much touted aerial defenses.

Yet, considering that the case of South Asia remains infinitely more precarious due to the presence of two adversarial nuclear weapons states, the above described developments pose additional yet considerably more important implications when applied to the region's nuclear deterrence framework. In effect, they erode the belief that ballistic missile defense systems can serve as the backbone to what many a state would consider a winnable nuclear war. These primarily comprise of Nuclear Weapons States such as the [US](#) and [India](#) which in the recent past have increasingly relied on concepts such as counterforce, pre-emption and precision as key themes within their official military thinking. All under the premise that Missile defense shields offer a reliable and credible defense against an adversary's pre-emptive or secondary nuclear strikes as part of their strategic calculus. India's [much vaunted purchase](#) of the Russian made S-400 system presents a clear example of such a strategy.

In contrast however, the fallibility and faltering reliability of such air defence systems shows the immense dangers of adopting such an approach within scenarios that have the potential of irreversibly altering life on earth. Considering how peace and stability in the South Asian region is precariously balanced between Pakistan and India's nuclear deterrence framework, the unreliability and increasing fallibility of missile defense systems thus warrant a serious re-evaluation of the strategic calculus of both nuclear weapons capable India and Pakistan.

<https://foreignpolicynews.org/2019/10/12/the-game-changing-fallibility-of-bmd-systems-lessons-from-the-middle-east-and-south-asia/>

Post-UNGA: Kashmir is Somewhere Between Abyss and Fear

Shamsa Nawaz

Hailed as a hero for calling out New Delhi's draconian measures in occupied Kashmir, Imran Khan warned the world of a "bloodbath" once India lifts its lockdown of Jammu and Kashmir. He persuaded global leaders to denounce the brutalities and human rights violations unleashed on *Kashmiris* ever since the disruption of the decades old status quo, which had been granted by the symbolic autonomy of Articles 370 and 35(A) within the Indian constitution. The constitutional *coup d'état* ensures the alienation of *Kashmiris* in IOK beyond the point of redemption with massive spillover effects across the LOC. Pakistan is home to 4,045,366 self-governed and independent *Kashmiris* as per the 2017 census, who are desired of more than a political and diplomatic support for their brothers in IOK. India and Pakistan have already fought three wars on the Kashmir issue.

Focusing on the brazen denial of core human values, Imran Khan prognosticated a more radicalized world as the scourge of radicalism finds more fodder in a discriminated society. If climate change is ignored, the clichés of religious affiliation continues and the inherent right of self-determination remains disregarded, violent reaction is inevitable. He said, "we all know that marginalization leads to radicalization" ... "No one did research that before 9-11, the majority of suicide bombers in the world were Tamil Tigers. They were Hindus, but Hindus rightly escaped the blame since belief and religion has nothing to do with desperation."

Imran Khan talked more like Gandhi than the nation of Gandhi itself. He reminded the world of the reincarnation of the pogrom and racial ridden medieval periods when religion and state were inseparable. It has reshaped and now resides more in inter-state relations while negatively stirring regional cooperation and globalization. Already enwrapped in a world of deprivation, the fifth largest population of South Asia is fearfully seen at the brink of a nuclear war with there being very few options left for a seven times smaller nuclear state of Pakistan, which has been already driven to the wall. The speech was well received and touched a chord with many *Kashmiris* reeling under the unprecedented communications blackout and travel restrictions in place since August 5.

"It felt like there is someone to watch our back. It felt that someone is talking for us, that we are not alone", was the feeling commonly displayed. Hundreds of affected *Kashmiri* stakeholders came out of their homes, shouting slogans in support of Imran Khan and calling for the independence of Kashmir despite the movement restrictions and deployment of additional force by India in Srinagar. A fresh charge sheet has also been filed by the National Investigation Agency (NIA) of India against the chief of Jammu & Kashmir Liberation Front, (JKLF) Yasin Malik, and other leaders including Asiya Andrabi, and Masarat Alam on October 4, 2019.

Conjuring up his dystopian vision, Prime Minister Modi made no mention of the disputed region of Kashmir in his read-out speech at the UN along the lines of diplomatically bureaucratic explanation. He only ticked the fanciful boxes of development, progress, and world peace, annihilation of terrorism and protection of environment. This speech however, was soon followed by a threat from his own

government's defence minister calling for the *liberation* of Pakistani Administered Kashmir as the next step in India's quest for regional dominance.

Moreover, Imran Khan has also expressed his fears in his erstwhile meetings with Donald Trump, Angela Merkel, Emmanuel Macron and Boris Johnson on the sidelines of the General Assembly session. Trump has offered mediation, but only if both Pakistan and India agree. A senior US diplomat for South Asia called for a lowering of rhetoric between India and Pakistan, while saying that Washington hoped to see rapid action by India to lift restrictions it has imposed in Kashmir and the release of detainees there. Similarly, State Councilor and Foreign Minister of China, Wang Yi, in his address to the General Assembly on 27 September stated that; "The Kashmir issue, a dispute left from the past, should be peacefully and properly addressed in accordance with the UN Charter, Security Council resolutions and bilateral agreements."

Nonetheless, an arrogant denial by India to the support of Pakistan's stance on Kashmir by Turkey and Malaysia is more of an inept understanding of diplomacy and international commitment. India needs to step out of the skeptical comprehension of the role of the UN that was pronounced by Ms. Vidisha Maitra India's Permanent Mission to the UN. The sway of diplomatic terms espoused with preconceived historical interpretations could be misguiding for political leaders. Modi needs to keep his ears close to the ground to save his political future. It is an extensional battle for *Kashmiris*. No concertina wire can blur the contradiction in his approach to the issue, "when they are in India they say it is an internal issue and when they are on the international forums, they consider it a bilateral issue," said one of the residents of Srinagar. Confusion exacerbates the fear, which consequently becomes a forerunner to terrorism. Same goes for the US whose mediator's role gets paradoxical by Trump's close alliance with Modi in his perusal of Asia-Pacific policy. Though, Imran Khan is perpetually using his political and diplomatic influence proactively, to mobilize both the international community and his own people, the anti-India feeling, the pro-militancy sensitivity and the general sense of despair — is stronger than before in Kashmir.

<http://southasiajournal.net/post-un-74th-session-kashmir-is-somewhere-between-abyss-and-fear/>

India Possibly Trying to Appease China on Kashmir

Haris Bilal Malik

The recent meeting between Chinese President Xi Jinping and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi referred to as the 2nd India-China Informal Summit was held in Chennai between [11-12thOctober 2019](#). This summit has considerable significance in view of the evolving landscape of the South Asian region, especially since India's unilateral revocation of the special constitutional status of the Jammu and Kashmir region. China has openly supported Pakistan's stance at various multilateral forums such as the UNSC and has criticized the annexation of the region by the Modi led BJP government. On the other hand, greater cooperation with India, specifically in terms of trade, forms a cornerstone of China's stated policy of maintaining friendly ties with all its neighbors. Based on these dynamics, analysts around the world remain highly curious about the politico-diplomatic outcomes of the summit, especially considering the informal and closed-door manner in which it was conducted. This curiosity is further exacerbated by the lack of even a joint statement leading to rampant speculation on whether anything was agreed to at all.

The summit has nevertheless created considerable hype in local and international media. India claims it as a diplomatic success against the backdrop of ongoing politico-military tensions between India and Pakistan. It was widely perceived that Premier Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Modi would likely discuss some specific economic and political issues. These included enhancing bilateral trade with the prospects of breaking a deadlock over a long proposed free trade agreement and better linkages through the provision of the [Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar](#) (BCIM) economic corridor.

At the politico-security front, there was also widespread speculation that the summit would afford the opportunity to discuss efforts to resolve border disputes and strengthen defence cooperation to avoid border skirmishes in the future like the [2017 Doklam standoff](#). Moreover, according to various analysts, the Kashmir issue and India's recent move to change the administration of the disputed region whose Aksai Chin area is also claimed by China was speculated to be a crucial agenda item for the summit. As such, it was perceived that India would be keen to resolve its outstanding dispute with China as it would not only lessen the disputed nature of the J&K region as a whole but would also further isolate and weaken Pakistan's stance over the disputed territory. Especially since many analysts have opined that the bifurcation of Ladakh was to allow India to settle its disputed borders with Pakistan and China separately, such a move would help India eliminate the prospects of a potential 'two-front' war that may be centered more on its disputed North-Western borders.

It is worth noting there that China's territorial dispute with India goes back to [1962](#) in which India was reportedly [humiliated](#) by China in the first-ever and only major confrontation between the two. Moreover, China has facilitated Pakistan's stance on the Kashmir issue at the United Security Council against the backdrop of India's recent move to abrogate Kashmir's autonomy. Subsequently, at the UNGA session this year, Chinese Foreign Minister [Wang Yi](#) reiterated the Chinese position on Kashmir and called for a peaceful resolution of the dispute based on the UN Charter and Security Council resolutions. As per the [Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Act 2019](#), and its aim of dividing the Kashmir

region into two 'Union Territories' i.e. [Jammu and Kashmir](#) and [Ladakh](#), China still officially considers such a step as [undermining its territorial sovereignty](#) and being in violation of its own bilateral agreements with India on maintaining peace and stability in the border areas.

Another significant point to be considered in this regard is that the Xi Jinping- Modi summit was held right after [Prime Minister Imran Khan's](#) two-day official visit to China in which President Xi Jinping [reassured](#) Chinese support to Pakistan's stance on Kashmir. This was also emphasized in the joint press release issued after which a direct reference was made to the Chinese position that the Kashmir issue should be addressed under the UN Charter, relevant UN Security Council resolutions and bilateral agreements.

As evident by its rapid and incredible industrialization, China has emerged as a global driver for world economic and strategic realignment over the past decade. President Xi Jinping's government is working efficiently to expand its global footprint based on strong political and economic grounds. In this regard, China has undertaken the visionary [Belt and Road Initiative](#) (BRI) under which [China Pakistan Economic Corridor](#) (CPEC) is one of its ongoing flagship projects with an estimated worth of US Dollars [62 Billion](#). Both China and Pakistan are cooperating with each other to materialize this project and it seems that the CPEC would likely be completed in the proposed time frame. The project once fully functional would obviously provide a boost to Pakistan's economy and ultimately become a game-changer for the country.

Hence at the present, Pakistan fully acknowledges China's vision of economic integration with the rest of the world including India. In the same vein, China has indicated all-out support for Pakistan's stance on Kashmir against the backdrop of India's recent constitutional revocation of its special status. Still, the fact remains that Pakistan-China bilateral relations have no doubt proved to be a unique and all-weather strategic partnership that is unlikely to falter amidst any of the changing international and regional politico-economic dynamics. In the current landscape of South Asia, China, based on its strong political and economic standing can further influence India to resolve the long-standing Kashmir issue with Pakistan. By doing so, China would likely facilitate the prospects of long-desired peace and stability in the region which it has consistently espoused as being one of its primary goals as a major regional power.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/489632/india-possibly-trying-to-appease-china-on-kashmir/>

Cease Fire Violations and Lawfare

Shamsa Nawaz

Previously oscillating between military tensions and peace talks, cease fire violations (CFVs) have increased to 307 in August and 292 in September 2019, ever since Article (370) was repealed unilaterally by India on August 5, 2019, according to Indian sources. September 2019, also recorded 61 caliber escalations, implying usage of mortar and heavy ammunition. On the other hand, there have been only 24 cases of 'terrorist-initiated incidents' during the months of July-September recorded as against 114 and 31 in the corresponding periods of 2018 and 2017 respectively. Earlier, Pakistan's director general of military operations (DGMO) recorded 1,299 CFVs in 2017, which is the highest in the history of Indo-Pak relations. Pakistan's Foreign Office also acclaims that India has committed more than 2,000 ceasefire violations since 2017. Such flagrant violations by ultra-hawkish elements within the Indian establishment have surely drawn Pakistan's response. Though the casualties are not systematically acknowledged and publicized, they do feed into the public view effectively.

Regardless of the accuracy of these figures, the salience of CFVs should be seen within the context of escalation, which could be in the form of territorial occupation as well. Enlarging Lebanon's boundaries to encompass the Shebaa Farms is one such example from the history of low-lying conflicts. The multi-dimensional varied characteristics of these CFVs are already eminently posturing the security policies and the strategies of the two warring nations, India and Pakistan; towards either obsessive security centric, or expansionist card play. Local factors on both sides of the border are equally instrumental. The inherently unpredictable nature of CFVs adds to volatility. In his recent study on CFVs, Indian scholar Happymon Jacob suggested that local factors are the main variable of interest. Jacob wrote that "local military factors in the India-Pakistan border are in fact behind the recurrent breakdown of the 2003 agreement. That is, CFVs are generally not planned, directed, or cleared by higher military commands or political establishments, but are instead driven by the dynamics on the frontlines." When things don't improve, CFVs also occur over the working boundary which clearly defines escalation.

Nonetheless, due to the intensified military maneuvers on both sides of the border, the ritualization of India-Pakistan CFVs is facing a new kind of challenge. It reflects the quality of bilateral relations as well as the strategies of the respective rulers of India and Pakistan. For instance, both increases in the CFVs prior to the revocation of Articles 370 and 35 by India on August 5, 2019 and its post period is meant to "to divert the world's attention away from the massive human rights violations (in IOK)" which are being reported and questioned by the Human Rights Council as well. Recently, the UN and the world community had started to pay attention to the repression of the Azadi (freedom) movement in Jammu and Kashmir. Similarly, to take thread from Indian scholar Manoj Joshi, the political objective is obvious "once the BJP government came in, they had a counter-bombardment policy and it affected people on the border. But what exactly is their goal is not very clear." Whatever the political factors may be, their salience invites paraphrasing of Carl von Clausewitz: if war is politics by other means, CFVs are also war by other means.

Agreed between the Directors General Military Operations (DGMOs) of the two countries on CFVs back in 2003, to fully implement the ceasefire understanding in letter and spirit, these violations in the Kashmir region are a significant trigger for bilateral military, political, and diplomatic tensions. They have the potential to not only trigger a crisis but to also escalate the ongoing crisis, especially in the aftermath of the unlawful revocation of the independent status of Jammu and Kashmir by occupying forces. It is pertinent to mention here that third parties played a very significant role in the 2003 agreement. Regrettably, both the US and the West at large have gradually withdrawn from their role with the passage of time, leaving the region to boil into a nuclear flash point. Christopher Snedden very rightly suggests that “India and Pakistan’s total inability to resolve the Kashmir dispute has two major ramifications. The first is that the people [of Jammu and Kashmir] have been subjected to ongoing hardships and sufferings since 1947. The second is that a third party is clearly needed to break this deadlock.”

The UN has also not come out with any definitive report on CFVs, much less a resolution to mitigate the risks and potential impact of this violently growing conflict between India and Pakistan. This explains the total failure of the UN Military Observer Group (UNMOGIP) while undermining the prospects for peace. The role that the UN can play in early warning and assessment by implementing both long-term and short-term measures according to its Guidance Note, are completely non-existent. The Guidance Note basically provides policy and programmatic guidance to the UN when confronted with land related grievances and conflicts. Several cross-cutting strategies aimed at addressing land grievances and conflicts, including regular assessments and conflict analysis at different stages of the conflict authorizes UN officials to report a necessary counter measure. There are about 114 UN officials in Pakistan alone. The Pakistani army reports any CFV to the UNMOGIP and the group is supposed to “investigate alleged ceasefire violation complaints” and to report them to the UN in New York. Although the UNMOGIP officials cannot visit the Line of Control independently due to security reasons, Indian denial of accessibility to the UN observers exacerbates the damage further.

Despite the intensification of CFVs the UN is still bound to play its role. The UNMOGIP is supposed to be headquartered in Srinagar, which is the capital of the disputed land of Jammu and Kashmir. It cannot be forbidden to station in a disputed region. Tying their hands for not letting it place its officials on the ground, or the dissolution of its mandate after 1972 Simla Agreement, lack constitutional validity and exposes Indian noncompliance with the jurisdiction of the UN.

Hence, to sustain a ceasefire is as vital as addressing the fundamental political, humanitarian and historical disputes between the two countries within the premise of lawfare. Article 21(1) of the draft Additional Protocol II submitted by the ICRC to the CDDH provided that “when carried out in order to commit or resume hostilities, the feigning of a cease-fire” was considered as perfidy. Similarly, according to Article 15 of the 1863 Lieber Code: “Military necessity admits ... of such deception as does not involve the breaking of good faith either positively pledged, regarding agreements entered into during the war, or supposed by the modern law of war to exist. Men who take up arms against one another in public war do not cease on this account to be moral beings, responsible to one another and to God.”

This is certainly a violation of a bedrock principle of international law. The international community should be worried about the voluntariness of the agreement to cease fire between India and Pakistan, its practicability, and whether maintenance/enforcement of the agreement conforms in all respects with principles of international law. Bad agreements already provide space for aggression. If they are perceived by one or the other side as unjust, they might not be held up even.

<http://southasiajournal.net/cease-fire-violations-and-the-lawfare/>

On Nuclear Madmen and Their Perilous Bluffs

M Waqas Jan

During the Cold War, and in particular, the Nixon era, the US's Nuclear Deterrence Strategy had at times flirted with the idea of its leadership playing the role of an unpredictable '[madman](#)' in charge of one of the world's most destructive nuclear arsenals. This strategy, that has since been defined as a more aggressive or coercive form of diplomacy, went as far as loading American long-range bombers with thermonuclear weapons and flying them over the north pole for eighteen hours in a holding pattern. This was done in a bid to signaling to the Soviet Union, the US's seriousness and intent in ending the Vietnam war via any means necessary. However, as both history as well as a number of analysts have since [concluded](#), the entire exercise did more to heighten the risks of an unnecessary global catastrophe than extracting any real or proven politico-diplomatic concessions.

This signaling of unpredictability and even irrationality on the part of US leadership have been echoed in the assertions and fiery rhetoric of several other global leaders over the last few decades. These range from North Korean, former Iranian, Indian, and even perhaps to a certain extent a former Iraqi leader all of whom based their entire image on the notion of being dangerous and unpredictable with their finger readily on the nuclear button. Not to mention the current US President and his penchant for compulsively tweeting threats of all-out destruction to his adversaries. (Although the jury is still out on whether the current US President's irrational behavior is part of a deliberate policy or quite simply an [actual condition](#)).

All in an all, appearing as irrational or even dangerous as part of a diplomatic ploy to exact concessions based on fear or through sheer terror is not something exclusive to the advent of the atomic era either. Similar ploys have been advocated by the likes of Machiavelli and Sun Tzu where such posturing and deceptive saber-rattling has been deemed an important part of a robust politico-military strategy. Yet, one wonders what such strategists contemplating warfare in the medieval or ancient periods would have thought of when facing the possibility of putting the entire human race at risk, simply for the pursuit of certain restricted political gains. Especially when the stakes and repercussions of failure are so much higher, does a ruthless realism or pragmatism stand justified in the case of nuclear brinkmanship?

Leaving aside the imagined reservations of classical military strategists, such projected notions of madness or unpredictability still remain very much a reality within our world today. Its latest incarnation can be witnessed in the case of South Asia where escalating tensions between age-old rivals and nuclear weapons capable India and Pakistan, have led to a [serious assessment](#) of what a nuclear engagement between the two would look like. While the global dangers of nuclear war are mostly common knowledge, the simple fact that such dangers need to be emphasized and need reminding of speak volumes of the precariousness prevalent in our world today.

This holds especially true when considering that just a few months ago, the world witnessed its first aerial dogfight between two nuclear weapons states over the skies of the disputed Jammu and Kashmir region. This dogfight which was a culmination of years of escalating tensions and bellicose rhetoric

particularly from Indian leaders was followed by even more incendiary rhetoric referring directly to the use of nuclear weapons. References alluding to the [mother of all bombs](#) or to a purported '[night of slaughter](#)' can all be seen as premeditated and highly calculated attempts by PM Modi to not only appear tough, but even a tad unhinged. What's more, both the above references were made at election rallies as part of projecting a carefully crafted image of a strong leader that was ready to depart from the calculated restraint shown by his predecessors. Instead, it was his readiness to all but embrace the destruction and irrationality associated with the use of nuclear weapons that proved instrumental in projecting this image. An image of a leader, who by pandering to his electorate's basest fears and insecurities was capable of belligerently challenging Pakistan's nuclear deterrent.

It is worth mentioning here that [Pakistan's response](#) to such open provocation has remained forcefully measured. In balancing both its resolve and credibility, against the need to come off as a responsible nuclear weapon's state, Pakistan has had to project itself as the rational actor against the more irrational, near nonsensical rhetoric coming out of the other half of the South Asian nuclear dyad. This is despite immense internal pressures and criticism that has deemed adopting such a course as akin to showing weakness in the face of such brazen threats.

While there are many in Pakistan that would want their country to adopt a tougher, even perhaps irrational stance keeping in mind their nuclear weapons capability, there is however a certain overarching wisdom that lends a sense of clarity to this whole affair. This is perhaps best encapsulated in one of Sun Tzu's oft quoted maxims in which the great strategist advises to 'appear weak when strong, and strong when weak.' In this simple yet eloquent couplet, one finds not only the basis for the measured restraint being adopted by Pakistan at the present, but also the desperate madness exhibited by the likes of a Nixon or Modi when threatening the end of humanity.

<https://pakobserver.net/on-nuclear-madmen-and-their-perilous-bluffs/>