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Compiled & Edited by:
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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

During his election campaign, Joe Biden pointed to the return to the Iran nuclear deal. A debate is going on across the circles working on the Middle East what could be the future of the Iran nuclear deal under his administration. This has spurred expectations to renew the U.S. diplomatic approach to the Middle East. Any appropriate reopening of the JCPOA in a balanced way acceptable to Iran as well as the U.S.' Western allies will be a positive development not only for Iran but for the region too. This would potentially stop any further escalation in the Middle East between the U.S. and Iran.

Coming to South Asia, where India's ever-increasing war rhetoric and the notions of false flag operation against Pakistan has further increased the fears of war and escalation in the region. There has been a continuous intensification of Indian adventurism and war rhetoric in the form of border skirmishes across the Line of Control (LOC). Given the current domestic environment in India, the prospects of false flag operation are considerably enhanced since the controversial legislation and other political moves of the Indian government have compelled the Muslim and Sikh minorities, and farmers to come on roads. It is also intended to divert the attention of the international community from the genocide it has been carrying out in the occupied Kashmir. India under the rule of the current extremist government has been intentionally creating war hysteria against Pakistan. In pursuit of this, it has forgotten that any escalation beyond a certain point could result in an all-out war with a prospective fear of the first-ever nuclear exchange between the two countries. One of the contributors analyzes that in the second nuclear age, maintaining a credible deterrence vis-à-vis one's adversary has become more challenging with the rapid advancement of technology. In South Asia, Pakistan is ensuring its survival in one of the most volatile regions, owing to its nuclear deterrence. However, India is attempting to find grounds of conflicts that it hopes would stay below the nuclear threshold of Pakistan. Moreover, emerging technologies and the changing nature of warfare in the region have considerably increased security concerns for Pakistan. Resultantly, in recent years, other than existing conventional and unconventional threats from India; Pakistan has been facing threats in the emerging technological domains as well. In recent years, the technological advancements by India in the domain of counterforce military capabilities have increased the vulnerability of the South Asian region. Notwithstanding the repercussions, India is voyaging towards destabilization in the South Asian Region. In this regard, the technological advancements made by India are sprouting a new era of counterforce posture, which would further make the South Asian region volatile and vulnerable to conflicts. Any kind of failure to maintain nuclear deterrence in South Asia could result in an all-out war, without any escalation control.

One of the articles discusses the New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) which is the last treaty to address strategic arms control. The Trump administration was adamant that any extension in it should include China. It has been opined that this shift in U.S policy to engage China to become part of an arms control regime would have far-reaching implications, for the future of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime in general and the strategic stability of the South Asian region in particular. It would be possible for the U.S to convince China to become a party to a strategic arms control agreement while India continues to develop its nuclear arsenal without the watchful eye of the strategic arms control regime. The new administration of Mr. Biden might not indulge in the same practice of emphasizing the Chinese inclusion as a prerequisite for a new agreement or extension of the New START. Likewise, any arms control agreement between the U.S and China would not be possible without addressing the future of South Asian strategic stability.

In this volume of the SVI Foresight, one of the articles deliberates on the role of Pakistan's Atomic Energy Commission in the Health Sector. The use of nuclear technology in the health sector has remained one of the top priorities of the PAEC. It has established various hospitals with state of the art diagnostic and treatment facilities. One of the goals of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission is the dissemination of knowledge to the general public and spread awareness about cancer that can be cured if it is diagnosed at the early stages. For this purpose, various events such as workshops, seminars, conferences, and symposiums are being organized in collaboration with medical colleges, NGOs, universities, Cancer Patients Welfare Societies to spread cancer awareness. Furthermore, PAEC's nuclear medical centers are also involved in international collaborations through IAEA, WHO, IRC, UICC with the developed countries. The sustained efforts of PAEC to overcome the challenges related to oncology and provide healthcare show its strong commitment to providing the best way to deal with cancerous diseases in a cost-effective manner.

In July 2020, India received the first batch of five Rafale jets out of a total of 36 it had ordered back in 2016. Security experts around the world are keen to analyze its prospective combat capabilities and the nuclear role vis-à-vis the future aerial combats in the region. This has become more significant since the most recent induction of a locally built dual-seat variant and the commencement of the local production of a 4.5-generation Block-III variant of the JF-17 multirole fighter jet by Pakistan. Some experts also believe that the advanced technology of the Block-III variant would make it far superior to the Indian Rafales. Regardless of India's acquisition of Rafale, the AESA radar and PL-15 missile-equipped JF-17 thunder Block-III would enable Pakistan to carry a beyond visual range deep strike inside India in case of any conflict in the future. There has been a very special focus on analyzing the hostilities in the Indian Ocean that have considerably grown where in response to western powers and the US, China also seeks to have a military presence in the region. The US is making alliances in the Indian Ocean

Region (IOR). India has emerged as one of the key allies of the US. The equation has turned the Indian Ocean into a heavily militarized region where the Indo-US nexus has significantly increased the chances of conflicts between the regional countries. This in turn would likely create a security dilemma for Pakistan. To counter India's offensive naval buildup in the Indian Ocean; Pakistan might need to invest in anti-submarine and anti-ship capabilities, UAVs, and ship-launched hypersonic cruise missiles. These developments would lessen the Indian decisive quantitative edge over Pakistan's naval forces, implement conventional deterrence, and add to the threshold level of Pakistan's nuclear capabilities during the crises.

It is hoped that readers will find a good blend of articles focusing on various aspects of the contemporary security discourse in South Asia.

The *SVI Foresight* team invites and highly encourages the 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](#). Please see [here](#) the copy of the *SVI Foresight* electronic journal. You can find us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) and can also access the SVI [website](#).

Research Associate

Haris Bilal Malik

Prospects of the Iran Nuclear Deal under Biden Administration

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai

Iran nuclear program has been a key element of the United States' Middle East policy. Being controversial for years, the Iran nuclear issue was resolved in July 2015 by inking a deal known as Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) signed between P5+1 (U.S., UK, China, France, Russia + Germany) and Iran. The deal provided a plan where Iran had to reduce its nuclear program in exchange for relief in sanctions from the U.S., UN, and European Union. After a year of IAEA's evaluation, it was confirmed Iran met the commitments she made in the deal. However, the Trump administration, being quite close to Israel, wanted to renegotiate the deal in the first place and then unilaterally withdrew from the agreement in May 2018 by calling it too lenient on Iran.

A debate is going on across the circles working on the Middle East what could be the future of the Iran nuclear deal under Joe Biden's administration. During his election campaign, Biden pointed to the return to the Iran nuclear deal that spurred expectations to renew the U.S. diplomatic approach to the Middle East. Biden considers the agreement an appropriate step that would limit Iran to a point where it would take Tehran one year to make a nuclear weapon. Besides, the IAEA inspectors were constantly visiting the nuclear sites in Iran and were satisfied with Tehran's compliance. In absence of any agreement, Iran was able to make a nuclear weapon in three months. However, despite the U.S. unilateral withdrawal from the agreement, Iran was fully committed to the agreement for a year but in response to the sanctions, it again started uranium enrichment in June 2019.

Although Biden's new administration which is going to take charge on the 20th of January is not fully convinced to get back to the deal. Nonetheless, there is a serious consideration for the Iran nuclear issue. Biden told the New York Times, "the best way to achieve getting some stability in the region," is our priority to deal with Iran. In one of his articles last September, Biden wrote, "make an unshakeable commitment to preventing Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon." Biden's nominee for national security advisor, Jack Sullivan, "We are in a dangerous situation since the United States left [the JCPOA], Iran has moved closer to a nuclear weapon," told the Wall Street Journal. Biden further told, "in consultation with our allies and partners, we're going to engage in negotiations and follow-on agreements to tighten and lengthen Iran's nuclear constraints, as well as address the missile program."

Experts believe there are greater chances of renegotiations of the deal under Biden yet the Iranian foreign minister Jawad Zarif in his tweets on December 21, 2020, made it clear,

“JCPOA timetable is inseparable from the accord. Renegotiations are out of the question.” Zarif stressed the effective JCPOA compliance by all the parties. He further added, “Iran will rapidly reverse remedial measures in response to U.S. unlawful withdrawal — and blatant E3 breaches — when US/E3 perform their duties and the Iranian people MUST feel the effects of sanctions lifting.” Iran is viewing the Biden administration as a blessing where there are possibilities for the JCPOA to bring it back to the track of compliance. Furthermore, the Iranian president Hassan Rouhani by throwing his weight behind the JCPOA told last month: the next president who will be elected this June may not be so open to cutting a deal. Thus, Iran is Pushing the president-elect Biden to resume the JCPOA. Besides, Iran put pressure on the IAEA and other powers on December 31st last year that it will enrich uranium to 20% purity where it was before the Iran nuclear deal.

If Biden takes any step towards the recommencement of the JCPOA, he will face opposition from within the country and from the Western and Middle Eastern allies — especially from Britain and Israel. Republicans in Congress will strongly oppose reentering the Iran nuclear deal. Republicans believe it will give Iran funds to further its ballistic missile program along with its nuclear activity in the long run. However, it can better be assessed by the U.S. intelligence apparatus whether the deal can be a threat in the long run or not. Moreover, Israel is the strong opposition to Biden in the Middle East if he resumes the nuclear deal with Iran. In last November, “Iran’s decision to continue violating its commitments, to raise the enrichment level and advance the industrial ability to enrich uranium underground, cannot be explained in any way except as the continued realization of its intention to develop a military nuclear program. Israel will not allow Iran to manufacture nuclear weapons,” Netanyahu told the reporters. Thus, this is a question for Biden’s administration how he deals Israel opposition vis-à-vis the issue.

Any appropriate reopening of the JCPOA in a balanced way acceptable to Iran as well as the U.S.’ Western allies will be apposite development not only for Iran but for the region too that would potentially stop any further escalation in the Middle East between the U.S. and Iran. On the other hand, in a time of COVID, the Iranian people will get some relief due to lifting sanctions, in a case of positive development.

<https://dailytimes.com.pk/711968/prospects-of-the-iran-nuclear-deal-under-biden-administration/>

India's War Rhetoric and Emergent Dynamics of False Flag Operations against Pakistan

Haris Bilal Malik

Since the year 2019, the South Asian region has become one of the most crucial factors that have impacted the prevalent international security environment. This is primarily because India considers both of its immediate neighbors Pakistan and China as its adversaries that can challenge the Indian great power aspirations at the military front. Since then, there has been a continuous intensification of Indian adventurism and war rhetoric in the form of border skirmishes with both of its neighbors across the Line of Control (LOC) and Line of Actual Control (LAC). In this regard, the [Pulwama-Balakot](#) crisis of 2019 and the [Ladakh-Galwan](#) crisis of 2020, which are now part of history are quite significant. India met a very befitting response during these crises and they emerged as an embarrassment for India at the military and diplomatic levels. Furthermore, many believe that these crises were the result of India's false flag operations with some predetermined strategic objectives. Most significantly, the Pulwama attack of February 2019 which resulted in a short-lived military engagement between India and Pakistan is believed to be a controversial false flag operation. India's ever-increasing war rhetoric and the notions of false flag operation against Pakistan would further increase the fears of war and escalation in South Asia.

Over the years, India has been involved in many false flag operations against Pakistan. These significantly include; the [Mumbai attacks of 2008](#), the [Pathankot Air Base attack](#) of 2016 and the [Uri military base attack](#) of 2016. India had blamed Pakistan for these attacks without any undeniable evidence. These false flag operations are in-line with the Indian hybrid agenda that over the years has evolved to blame Pakistan for sponsoring terrorism in the region. The timings of some of these operations have remained quite significant since the main aim was to manipulate the domestic political environment. Likewise, the attention from the core issue of Kashmir between India and Pakistan was also diverted. Especially, the Pulwama attack is a candid example of achieving political goals in the elections. This is further evident from the fact that the whole electoral campaign of the BJP led by Mr. Modi was based on anti-Pakistan war rhetoric and negative nuclear signaling. In the same vein, the timing of this operation that was two months right just before the elections had made it one of the most contentious operations to date. As expected, the whole war rhetoric met the expectations of the Indian political and strategic elite and the BJP was able to secure a landslide victory in the elections.

Given the current domestic environment in India, Pakistan believes that India might again carry out another false flag operation to fulfill its politico-strategic objectives. The prospects of false flag operation are considerably significant since the controversial legislation

and other political moves of the Indian government have compelled the Muslim and Sikh minorities, and farmers to come on roads. Along with this, the growing Indian atrocities in Occupied Kashmir and the [August 2019](#) revocation have resulted in worldwide criticism against the extremist policies of Mr. Modi's government. Quite recently, Pakistan's [Prime Minister Imran Khan](#) has warned that India is deliberately looking for an opportunity to wage another false flag operation and blame Pakistan. He further asserted that India would be given a befitting response at all levels of threats; refrain from making any such mistake. The assertion was quite significant since a United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan ([UNMOGIP](#)'s) vehicle that was on a monitoring mission near Rawalakot area of Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) came under attack by the Indian forces. This appears to be a deliberate Indian attempt to defame Pakistan at the international level.

Furthermore, the Indian desire to carry out a false flag operation is also intended to divert the attention of the international community from the genocide it has been carrying out in the occupied Kashmir. Just two days before the Prime Minister's warning, on [December 18, 2020](#) Pakistan's Foreign Minister has also revealed that India is planning to carry out a strike to divert attention from the internal issues. He further stated that India is planning a false flag operation and Pakistan has very credible intelligence information in this regard. It is quite noteworthy that the current Indian government is facing various challenges on the domestic front. These include; economic challenges, insurgencies, protests, and religious extremism. In this regard, the reports of; [Human Rights Watch](#), the US Commission on Religious Freedom, and the most recent [EU DisInfo Lab](#) all have added to the frustration of the Indian government. In such circumstances, the chances of a false flag operation by India are very less likely to be ruled out.

Hence at the present, it appears that India under the rule of the current extremist government has been intentionally creating war hysteria against Pakistan. In pursuit of this, it has forgotten that any escalation beyond a certain point could result in an all-out war with a prospective fear of the first-ever nuclear exchange between the two countries. Given the Indian war rhetoric against Pakistan and its planning of a false flag operation, the significance of the Kashmir issue as a 'nuclear flashpoint' has been considerably increased. In this regard, Pakistan's appropriate diplomatic stance of highlighting India's deliberate attempt to play with the peace and stability in the region has turned out to be a success. This strategy of exposing the anti-Pakistan war rhetoric and prospects of false flag operation has served as a plausible way out. Pakistan needs to maintain a strong manifestation of its politico-diplomatic resort that would deter India from taking any misadventure in the years to come.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/13012021-indias-war-rhetoric-and-emergent-dynamics-of-false-flag-operations-against-pakistan-oped/>

The Interface of Nuclear Deterrence with Emerging Security Concerns for Pakistan

Ahyousha Khan

[Nuclear deterrence](#) refers to a situation in which one state presents its adversary with a threat (overt or covert) of using nuclear weapons to discourage the adversary from taking any aggressive action, that otherwise, the adversary would consider taking. The term nuclear deterrence was widely understood and used to deliberate upon the global strategic arena during the Cold War between the United States and the former Soviet Union. However, later on, nuclear weapons were acquired by some other countries as well. This has been characterized as the "[second nuclear age](#)". The beginning of the second nuclear age was not marked by some catastrophic destruction like the one that was witnessed in the first nuclear age after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. But, the second nuclear age has brought its perils for international security and stability. Security experts around the world believe that the second nuclear age [started](#) with India's so-called peaceful nuclear explosion ([PNE](#)) in 1974. This Indian action along with its historical clashes and aggressive policies towards Pakistan has substantially created the security dilemma for Pakistan over the years. Threatened by this, Pakistan was compelled to attain a credible nuclear capability. However, the emergent security dynamics of the region have made the nuclear deterrence and deterrence stability in the region more complex as compared to before.

Given India's continuous attempts to break free from mutually assured destruction (MAD), this has become more threatening for Pakistan. In the second nuclear age, maintaining a credible deterrence vis-à-vis one's adversary has become more challenging with the rapid advancement of technology. This has resulted in facilitating changes in policies, strategies, and doctrines of the states. Pakistan is a country bordered by a nuclear-armed adversary in the region, where both neighbors share unresolved disputes, historical grievances, common mistrust, and growing divergence of interests. Therefore, nuclear deterrence is highly significant for preventing an all-out war between both states. But owing to its hegemonic ambitions, India is attempting to find grounds of conflicts that it hopes would stay below the nuclear threshold of Pakistan. Moreover, emerging technologies and the changing nature of warfare in the region have considerably increased security concerns for Pakistan. Resultantly, in recent years, other than existing conventional and unconventional threats from India; Pakistan has been facing threats in the emerging technological domains as well. This would likely impact the nuclear deterrence equilibrium in the region.

When India firstly attempted to exploit the levels below the nuclear threshold by inventing a military doctrine of proactive operations otherwise also known as [Cold Start](#)

[Doctrine \(CSD\)](#), Pakistan effectively blocked Indian intentions by bridging the gap between its conventional and strategic domains. However, over the years and with the rapid military modernizations, technological developments, and information warfare, the emerging security concerns for states are being originated from space, cyber and grey warfare. Likewise, the technological developments being carried out by India in the domains of cyber warfare, outer space, Artificial Intelligence (AI), and hypersonic weapons can further disturb nuclear deterrence by prompting major uncertainties, ambiguities, and speed, especially during a crisis. All these factors would likely remain a significant security concern for Pakistan in the coming decade; especially the Indian Space militarization and weaponization. The consequences of such actions by India would further affect the deterrence stability in the region. It would be notably important to highlight that as part of its space modernization plans, India has launched [42](#) communication satellites to date; most recently signed BECA with the US, established designated military space agency “Defence Space Agency”. Furthermore, it has tested an [anti-satellite weapon](#) back in 2019 along with the indigenously developed geostationary satellites (GSAT), Radar Imaging Satellites (RISAT), and Cartosat satellite with earth observational. Threats emerging from disruptive technologies (cyber warfare, artificial intelligence, automated decision making, small satellites, big data analysis, robots, swarm technology, and 5G/6G) can disturb the balance of power in the South Asian region. Since the state with better access to disruptive technologies would have better chances to disrupt and destroy its adversary in first-strike. With India investing heavily in disruptive technologies, Pakistan’s security concerns are considerably increasing in this arena as well.

The interface of these technologies with nuclear deterrence is not very stable, consequently these technologies “erode the foundation of nuclear deterrence” by improving remote sensing, uncertainty, and weapon accuracy. In recent years, information warfare waged by India has emerged as a challenging threat for Pakistan as well. Recently, Europe based NGO, [EU DisInfo Lab](#), issued two reports in 2019 and 2020, which shed light on Indian information warfare against Pakistan. The reports have exposed how India is involved in spreading disinformation through fake media channels, websites, NGOs, IOs, and prominent political personalities in Europe and the UN. Pakistan has presented a dossier to the UN Secretary-General and the international community to highlight the Indian sabotage and subversion activities. Though this information warfare does not have any direct consequence on Pakistan’s nuclear deterrence, it affects Pakistan’s international reputation and weakens national cohesion. As this information warfare is exploiting the national fault-lines.

Hence the technological developments in these emergent domains have put states in a continuous state of war, even during peace times. Pakistan is a country that is ensuring its survival in one of the most volatile regions, owing to its nuclear deterrence. However, to tackle these emerging security concerns, especially the “war of narratives, relying on reactive strategies might not serve as a plausible way out for Pakistan. But greater measures, strategies,

policies, and investment are required by Pakistan in the domains of cyber, space, AI, ML, and even hypersonic weapons. This however is not to say that the importance of nuclear weapons is declining. There is no alternative to nuclear weapons in deterring an adversary and helping the state to achieve its strategic objectives.

<http://southasiajournal.net/the-interface-of-nuclear-deterrence-with-emerging-security-concerns-for-pakistan/>

India's Sprouting Counterforce Posture

Amber Afreen Abid

In recent years, the technological advancements by India in the domain of counterforce military capabilities have increased the vulnerability of the South Asian region. While trying to disturb the strategic stability in South Asia, India through its adventuresome counterforce posture against Pakistan is on the verge of becoming a rogue state. Notwithstanding the repercussions, India is voyaging towards destabilization in the South Asian Region. India's enhanced strategic nuclear capabilities which includes the development of Multiple Independent Reentry Vehicles (MIRVs), Ballistic Missile Defence System (BMD), Inter-Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), supersonic and hypersonic cruise missiles, and acquisition of nuclear-capable submarines indicate that India is moving away from its declared policy of 'No First Use' (NFU) towards a more aggressive, counterforce posture against Pakistan. The BMD and MIRV technology along with the provision of an advanced navigation system under [BECA](#) would embolden India to go for the first strike against Pakistan. While having reliance on BMD, as to be sheltered in return. These technological advancements made by India are sprouting a new era of counterforce posture, which would further make the South Asian region volatile and vulnerable to conflicts.

India's urge to acquire counterforce capability is strongly associated with its doctrinal shift. As the stated posture requires flexibility in the use of nuclear weapons, which fortifies the first strike capability, and thus a deviation in India's declared policy of 'No First Use' (NFU) has become more significant, particularly concerning its impact on regional stability. India's declared policy of NFU, set out in [Draft Nuclear Doctrine](#) in 1999, followed by its first amendment in [January 2003](#) has since then been into hot debates. Pakistan has long doubted the Indian policy of NFU, as the actions and statements by the officials of the latter have always been aggressive and protruding towards the former. India, now, is drifting away from its policy of NFU with the acquisition of counterforce capabilities, particularly against Pakistan. This is further evident from the [statement](#) issued by India's Defense Minister Mr. Rajnath Singh, back in August 2019. It stated "Till today, our nuclear policy is 'no-first-use' (NFU). What happens in the future depends on the circumstances." A change at the doctrinal level is evident in the Indian strategic enclave. Notwithstanding the challenges and repercussions caused by the counterforce strategy and with an attempt to destabilize the nuclear deterrence in the region, India would go unjustifiably low to attain such measures.

In the same vein, India has been enhancing its nuclear capabilities for strategic flexibility against its regional rivals. By the same token, it wants to attain nuclear dominance, which would ultimately result in chaos in the region. The counterforce capability by India would compel its adversaries to heed towards the preemptive strike, in case of a crisis, out of the fear

of the use of Nuclear weapons first by the patent enemy. Moreover, the counterforce capability pushes the enemy to put the nuclear weapons on hair-trigger mode, which is directly linked with the crisis escalation. The acquisition of counterforce capability by India would likely provoke a new arms race in the region. This would further destabilize the already volatile South Asian region. The far-reaching destabilization which India is trying to create, just to have an edge on the nuclear adversary, would be back on India's face, faster than she knew it.

On the contrary, Pakistan has been maintaining a posture of Credible Minimum Deterrence (CMD) and does not claim to have a No-First Use (NFU) policy. Moreover, Pakistan's nuclear capability is defensive in principle and a tool for deterrence. Given the Indian evolved notions of counterforce preemption, even now Pakistan would be left with no choice but to leave room for carrying out a 'first strike' as a feasible deterrent against India. Nevertheless, with the advent of technological innovations, its countermeasure arrives soon, too. Presently, there are two aspects that Pakistan should take into consideration; the growing Indo-US nexus and India's concealed innovations in the nuclear posture. Though India is far from achieving counterforce strikes against Pakistan's nuclear targets, concrete steps are required for maintaining future deterrence stability. With that intention, Pakistan might need to look towards its allies for getting hands-on the modern capabilities which includes- advanced communication and navigation systems, sensors, and advancements in artificial intelligence and otherwise, is essential for strengthening its deterrent capability. Pakistan should heed towards the development of absolute second-strike capability; as, what is survivable today, could be vulnerable tomorrow. Therefore, advancements in technology should be made for preserving nuclear deterrence in the future as well.

Summarizing it all, the existence of Pakistan's nuclear deterrence has created a stable environment in the region, by deterring full-scale wars on multiple occasions that might have resulted in a nuclear exchange. With the revolution in nuclear technology, the threat of nuclear war has emerged again. Instead of going towards the attainment of peace and stability in the region, India has been enhancing its counterforce capabilities. This would likely remain a significant threat to the deterrence stability in the region. Moreover, any kind of failure to maintain nuclear deterrence in South Asia could result in an all-out war, without any escalation control. India, in its lust for power and hegemonic designs, has been destabilizing the region. Both the nuclear states in South Asia need to engage in arms restraint and escalation control measures. This seems to be a concrete and more plausible way out; else the new era of destabilization could be more disastrous.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/15012021-indias-sprouting-counterforce-posture-oped/>

End of New START and Future of International Arms Control Regime: Implications for South Asia

Khawaja Dawood Tariq

The New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) which is the last treaty to address strategic arms control is set to expire in February this year. The Trump administration has been adamant that any extension in it should include China. This change in the US' arms control strategy seems to be more consistent with a shift in its threat spectrum vis-à-vis China. Policymakers in Beijing believe that the U.S policy is driven to contain China and compete more freely without the constraints of an arms control regime. It would be quite significant to deliberate that the U.S withdrew from another arms control agreement (INF Treaty) on the pretext of alleged Russian violations. Multiple analysts have observed that that the US' exit from the INF treaty was least determined by the Russian violations. In fact, it became quite apparent that the treaty was no more relevant for the US vis-à-vis China. This shift in U.S policy to engage China to become part of an arms control regime would have far-reaching implications, for the future of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime in general and the strategic stability of the South Asian region in particular.

South Asia is perhaps the most peculiar region from a strategic point of view. There have been three Indo-Pak wars and a Sino-Indian war in the last 70 years. All three key regional players possess nuclear weapons now. Add to that the growing conflict between China and India as the U.S and India develop a strategic partnership to contain China. There are two primary hypotheses. First, the US manages to engage China and agree on an arms control agreement. This would likely put China in a vulnerable position vis-à-vis India since there would be no constraint by any arms control regime for India. Second, free from the constraints of an arms control regime, the U.S could better overcome the Chinese strategic modernization challenge. In that case, an arms race between the U.S and China would more likely become inevitable. Nonetheless, both of these scenarios would likely have a massive impact on the strategic stability of South Asia.

What can be the purpose behind the US' push to get China involved in a strategic arms control agreement when the [Chinese nuclear arsenal stands at 300 operational warheads](#) as compared to [4000 active warheads maintained by the US](#)? In this regard, multiple factors are driving the US' policy to involve China in a new strategic nuclear arms control regime. First and foremost is the pace at which China is bridging the gap in comparative military power with the US. In recent years, China has considerably modernized its conventional and unconventional military capabilities along with huge investments in outer space and cyberspace. [There seems](#)

to be a consensus among analysts that China has been the beneficiary of the New START and INF Treaty. Both of these arms control agreements imposed restrictions and limitations on the US' strategic conduct, which brings us to our second reason. In this regard, the western security analysts believe that regardless of being a signatory of the NPT, China has been able to increase its nuclear arsenal during the last three decades. Moreover, there still exists ambiguity regarding the future trajectory of the Chinese nuclear arsenal. In Particular, China now has an advantage with intermediate-range missile systems as the US was barred from their development while being a party to the INF treaty. Apart from this, China now seems to be more willing to leverage growing economic and military power to achieve its strategic and foreign policy goals. The US is more or less concerned with this very important aspect as well.

The Nuclear Crisis Group has identified four major flashpoints where the risks of a nuclear conflict are extraordinarily high. South Asia is among those four flashpoints and perhaps the most volatile one. Pakistan, China, and India have disputed territorial claims. There have been three Indo-Pak wars and a Sino-Indian war and now all three possess nuclear weapons. Pakistan maintains a very principled and calculated nuclear posture of full-spectrum deterrence in-line with the broader credible minimum deterrence vis-à-vis India. This further implies that nuclear capability is defensive in principle with no offensive posture against any country. Furthermore, Pakistan has no interest in disturbing broader regional or international strategic stability. However, in recent years some major developments in Sino-Indian relations would likely impact the strategic stability in the South Asian region. For instance, India is modernizing its conventional military capabilities and strategic capabilities at a rapid pace. In addition to this, the enhanced Indo-U.S strategic partnership creates a contentious regional strategic environment which would ultimately have implications for Pakistan.

The Sino-U.S relations cannot be considered as positive by any measure of standard. As of now, the Indo-U.S strategic partnership is based on strengthening Indian capabilities to serve as a bulwark against China. The US and India have signed four defense agreements to date; the most important one BECA was signed in October last year. The Indian defense modernization drive coupled with other US initiatives to counter China would further add to the volatility of the region. In this scenario, any attempt to engage China to become part of a new arms control treaty while its regional adversary indulges in arms built up and defense modernization is bound to create friction in the already fickle strategic stability of South Asia.

Simply put how it will be possible for the U.S to convince China to become a party to a strategic arms control agreement while India continues to develop its nuclear arsenal without the watchful eye of the strategic arms control regime. India is not even part of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT). Without addressing the threat emerging from India, the U.S won't be able to satisfy Chinese insecurity vis-à-vis India. Will India be forced to become a party to NPT or even an arms control regime? If India is brought in NPT, what would be the prospects for

Pakistan? That's the thing, any plan to include China into a bilateral or multilateral strategic arms control regime will have to carefully manage the quagmire that is the South Asian strategic stability.

<https://foreignpolicynews.org/2021/01/19/end-of-new-start-and-future-of-international-arms-control-regime-implications-for-south-asia/>

Role of Pakistan's Atomic Energy Commission in Health Sector

Sher Bano

Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) is among Pakistan's highly reputed Research and Development (R&D) organizations. Over the years, it has significantly contributed towards sustainable socio-economic development. Furthermore, along with its substantial contribution to overcome the ever increasing regional security threats, it remains the torchbearer for guaranteeing sustainable development in all spheres of life. The use of nuclear technology in the health sector has remained one of the top priorities of the PAEC. Pakistan, being an underdeveloped country has been facing various hurdles in efficient cancer care in the past due to the lack of training facilities, shortage of manpower, unawareness, absence of infrastructure, and low spending on cancer treatment and prevention. In this regard, PAEC has played a fundamental role in overcoming such obstacles with the establishment of various medical centers and by providing state of the art diagnostic and treatment. These facilities are available either at the subsidized rates or are completely free of cost for the general public.

PAEC has established [18](#) Atomic Energy Commission's Cancer Hospitals (AECHs) to date in four provinces that are providing diagnostic and treatment facilities whereas the 19th hospital is under construction in [Gilgit](#). Since the treatment of cancer is very expensive and the general public cannot afford such facilities, PAEC has been providing facilities at discounted rates or completely free of cost to nearly 85% of the cancer patients. In addition to these, the construction of multiple Cancer Patients Welfare Societies and Pharmacies, mobile breast care clinics, Pakistan's registration in WHO/IAEA [PACT](#) (Program of Action for Cancer Therapy) are some of the other milestones that have been accomplished by PAEC. In the ongoing global pandemic of COVID-19, these hospitals helped the government in fulfilling the needs of patients affected by Corona besides providing therapeutic and diagnostic facilities to cancer patients. All PAEC hospitals continued the treatment of the cancer patients during the days of pandemic when even the tertiary care hospitals had to temporarily suspend these facilities. These remained the last ones to close down the OPDs. Pakistan has received COVID-19 testing equipment worth [100,000](#) Euros from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on special request of PAEC. These include; BSL (Biohazard Safety Level) level-3 cabinets, 'Real-Time Polymerase Chain Reaction' ([RT-PCR](#)), and testing kits along with paraphernalia in order to build corona testing labs. PAEC Chairman Mr. [Muhammad Naeem](#) even sent DG IAEA Rafael Mariano Grossi, a letter of gratitude for his support to Pakistan in the difficult times of pandemic.

One of the goals of Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission hospitals is the dissemination of knowledge to the general public and spread awareness about cancer that can be cured if it is diagnosed at the early stages. For this purpose, various events such as workshops, seminars,

conferences, and symposiums are being organized in collaboration with medical colleges, NGOs, universities, Cancer Patients Welfare Societies to spread cancer awareness. Other than that PAEC hospitals have been involved in various other activities such as arranging walks for cancer awareness, delivering lectures at colleges and universities, displaying banners, and distributing informative brochures /leaflets.

PAEC's nuclear medical centers are also involved in international collaborations through IAEA, [WHO](#), [IRC](#), [UICC](#) with the developed countries. PAEC provides its doctors and scientists access to international organizations and institutes. This gives them opportunities to participate in various international training programs and attend conferences and events in order to keep themselves updated with the changes taking place in the medical field. Though cancer research is very difficult to conduct anywhere, in the under developed countries this challenge becomes considerably increased. The PAEC hospitals, [NILOP](#), and [PIEAS](#) are actively involved in research related to cancer and other infectious diseases. Pakistan has become an associate member of '[CERN](#)' which is a European Organization for Nuclear Research, due to the efforts of PAEC scientists, researchers, and technicians. Based on such strong credentials, now Pakistani researchers and scientists actively participate in the research activities organized by IAEA and CERN. IAEA also provides technical support to Pakistan for capacity building in the application of innovative and advanced nuclear technologies and research and development. Pakistan is also a founding member of ([SESAME](#)) 'Synchrotron light for Experimental Science and Application in the Middle East'. Synchrotron light is used as an essential tool in basic and applied sciences and also used for experimental purposes. Hence the contributions of all the research and development institutes that are functioning under PAEC such as 'PIEAS', '[NIBGE](#)', '[PINSTECH](#)', '[NIAB](#)', '[CHASCENT](#)', and '[KINPOE](#)' is commendable.

Summarizing it all, the sustained efforts of PAEC to overcome the challenges related to oncology and provide healthcare education has had a tremendous impact on reducing the mortality and morbidity associated with such diseases. All of the contributions made by the PAEC show its strong commitment to provide the best way to deal with cancerous diseases in a cost-effective manner. To attain sustainable human resource development for patient-related services, continuous training and education are fundamental ingredients which PAEC has ensured by encouraging its scientists and doctors to participate in international workshops. Last but not the least, with the growing demand, PAEC aims to further enhance its capacity of early detection, cancer prevention, develop a national cancer registry, and more national and international collaborations for training and research. This would remain a strong manifestation of Pakistan's commitment towards peaceful uses of nuclear technology and energy in the years to come.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/28012021-role-of-pakistans-atomic-energy-commission-in-health-sector-oped/>

Induction of JF-17B and Commencement of Block-III Production: Significant Milestones for PAF's Combat Capabilities vis-à-vis India's Rafale

Haris Bilal Malik

Over the past few years, India has been pursuing an offensive military modernization program. This is mainly inspired by its hegemonic designs that are aimed at dominating the South Asian region. Along with various other components, in pursuit of this, India has significantly enhanced its air capabilities. However, in this regard, the major bulk of the most advanced fighter jets and combat aircrafts for the Indian Air Force (IAF) still comes from countries like the US, France, and Russia. This implies that India continues to rely on foreign acquired military hardware to fulfill the requirements of its armed forces. In [July 2020](#), India received the first batch of five Rafale jets out of a total of 36 it had ordered back in 2016. The Rafale jet is believed to be one of the most advanced and sophisticated combat jets that are currently operational in the world. The acquisition of Rafael jets has appeared quite obsessive for India. This is further evident from the way India has been portraying it as a breakthrough and a strategic win against both of its regional rivals China and Pakistan. Moreover, security experts around the world are keen to analyze its prospective combat capabilities and the nuclear role vis-à-vis the future aerial combats in the region. This has become more significant since the most recent induction of locally built dual-seat variant and the commencement of the local production of 4.5-generation Block-III variant of the JF-17 multirole fighter jet by Pakistan.

On [December 30, 2020](#), Pakistan inducted 14 JF-17Bs which are a dual-seat variant of the Block-II of this fighter aircraft. This has marked the end of production of Block –II and commenced the local production of the most advanced Block-III variant of the JF-17 thunder multirole fighter aircraft. The forthcoming indigenous Block-III variant is nearly equivalent to the French origin Rafale jets which India has recently acquired. Furthermore, it would serve as an important milestone for Pakistan towards self-reliance to address the emergent regional aerial threats in the form of advanced fighter jets and multi-layered air defence shields. In this regard, there has been an ongoing debate within the discourse surrounding the strategic communities of the world about the prospective role of the forthcoming Block-III variant of JF-17 thunder as a direct competitor for the Rafale jets of India. Some experts also believe that the advanced technology of this variant would make it far superior to the Indian Rafales. Regardless of this, it has become more obvious that the Block-III of JF-17 would significantly enhance the combat capabilities of the Pakistan Air Force (PAF).

It is notably important to mention that the Block-III variant of JF-17 would be the first 4.5-generation combat aircraft in the PAF's inventory. The jet would have an advanced radar system AESA (Active Electronically Scanned Array) Radar, advanced infrared missile approach system, helmet-mounted display for the pilots, an upgraded targeting pod for better strikes, and electronic warfare capabilities. This would make it a near to 5th generation combat jet and on paper, it would likely provide Pakistan a significant boost in its existing air warfare capabilities vis-à-vis India. Similarly, the combination of sophisticated weapons that can be integrated with the Block-III variant would significantly enhance its role with a better strike role. These include; air to air, and air to ground missiles, laser guided bombs, and guided and unguided missiles. Along with these, the most important weapon that would likely provide an edge to Pakistan over India regardless of the latter's acquisition of Rafale is the [PL-15](#) missile which is one of the world's most advanced (BVR) 'beyond visual range' air-to-air missiles having a range of [200 kilometers](#). It is an active electronically scanned radar-guided missile that would likely outrange the forthcoming [Meteor](#) air-to-air- missiles for the Indian Rafales having a reported range of 150 kilometers. This implies that with the acquisition of JF-17 thunder Block-III that is equipped with AESA radar and PL-15 missiles, Pakistan would be in a much stronger position to carry a beyond visual range deep strike inside India in case of any conflict in the future.

Likewise, the JF-17 Thunder Block-III would also be capable of delivering nuclear warheads. This would likely embolden Pakistan to employ a credible air-based nuclear deterrence capability which till now has been ensured by the PAF's Mirage-III jets. Furthermore, it cannot be entirely ruled out that Pakistan might integrate its stealth capable [Ra'ad-II](#) Air Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM) having a reported range of 600 kilometers with the Block-III variant. The Ra'ad-II missile has a guided navigation system that makes its strike pinpoint accurate. In addition to this, it is a terrain hugging and highly maneuverable missile. Once integrated, it would further add to the standoff capability of the PAF with enhanced nuclear-capable missiles within the ambit of credible minimum deterrence.

Hence, the induction of dual seats and the start of local production of the JF-17 Block-III variant have significantly added to the credibility and reliability of this aerial platform for Pakistan. JF-17 is a combat-proven jet that the PAF has been considerably relying upon over the years. This is further evident from the combat role it had played during the 2019 [Pulwama-Balakot](#) crisis. While the security environment of the South Asian region remains under continuous stress primarily because of the Indian offensive military strategies and acquisition of advanced fighter jets. Nonetheless, Pakistan's JF-17 jet, with its upgraded variants and equipped with advanced systems and weapons would likely emerge as a decisive factor for the prevalent regional dynamics of air combat. Pakistan needs to remain compliant with its existing doctrine of minimum credible deterrence against the wide spectrum of threats coming from

India. Last but not the least, the Block-III variant of the JF-17 fighter jet appears to be at par with the Indian self-hyped Rafale jet.

<http://southasiajournal.net/induction-of-jf-17b-and-commencement-of-block-iii-production-significant-milestones-for-pafs-combat-capabilities-vis-a-vis-indias-rafale/>

Enhancing Naval Power for Conventional Deterrence of Pakistan

Ahyousha Khan

Pakistan's coastline that is adjacent to the Arabian Sea is about [approx.990 km](#) long. It is an integral part of the country's maritime economy and also provides a strategic gateway to Pakistan and adjacent landlocked countries. The Arabian Sea is part of the Indian Ocean, which serves as an important trade and connecting route between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans. The Indian Ocean holds great significance for the global oil trade since more than [65% of world oil sources](#) are located in countries that are littoral to it. This makes the Indian Ocean strategically important for the world powers; therefore they want to maintain a military presence in the Indian Ocean. In recent years, the hostilities in the Indian Ocean have considerably grown where in response to western powers and the US, China also seeks to have a military presence in the region. To counter China, the US is making alliances in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). In this regard, India has emerged as one of the key allies of the US. India considers the Indian Ocean as its back yard and is pursuing a strategy that is aimed at dominating this region. The equation has turned the Indian Ocean into a heavily militarized region where the Indo-US nexus has significantly increased the chances of conflicts between the regional countries. This in turn would likely create a security dilemma for Pakistan.

Pakistan has a vast naval coastline and littoral sea. Over the years it has never indulged in a massive naval buildup or maintained an offensive naval doctrine. Due to the ever-increasing threats coming from its eastern borders, it was compelled to neutralize those threats by adopting a reliable and credible deterrence approach. However, with growing Indian offensive naval modernization, the nuclearization of the region, and its belligerence towards Pakistan, it was left with no choice but to enhance its naval power. This is aimed at protecting its sovereignty and geo-economic interests in the Indian Ocean Region. In this regard, Pakistan Navy has been pursuing the strategy to thwart any kind of aggression against maritime borders, assets, and geostrategic interests of the country. Very recently, the Pakistan navy has successfully launched [anti-ship missiles and torpedoes](#) in an impressive fire play from submarines to demonstrate its readiness and war fighting capabilities. Last year, Pakistan also tested its anti-ship missiles and torpedoes from [surface ships, fixed and rotatory aircraft](#). In addition to these, several other modernization and development initiatives are in the pipeline. These [acquisition and developments efforts](#) include; expansion of Pakistan Navy's fleet to 50 Ships, free transfer of Chinese Yuan Class Submarines, training of Pakistani Crew for the 8 Hangor Class Submarines, the establishment of Naval Research and Development Institute, development of [P282](#) hypersonic ship launched/land-attack ballistic missile, acquisition of medium altitude long endurance combat aerial vehicle and 20 indigenously developed gun-boats by 2025.

Back in 2018, Pakistan had also launched its [first formal Maritime Doctrine](#), titled “First Maritime Doctrine of Pakistan, Preserving Freedom of the Seas”. The objective of the doctrine was to highlight and disseminate the knowledge on the national maritime sector and the maritime economy. Moreover, the “threat spectrum” in the maritime doctrine ranges from peace, tension, crisis, conflict, and war. It further emphasizes the presence of sufficient/lean naval military muscle to protect the country’s interest in the Indian Ocean. These initiatives are quite significant for Pakistan to protect its geo-economic interests in the IOR, where India appears as a stronger and aggressive force. All these efforts combined would likely strengthen Pakistan’s conventional deterrence vis-à-vis India. Likewise, it would further raise the level of Pakistan’s nuclear threshold in the naval domain as well.

It is notably important that Pakistan acquired the nuclear capability to deter any kind of Indian aggression. Apparently, when the Indian naval nuclearization became a threat for Pakistan, it was compelled to develop naval based second-strike capability. In this regard, the development of the Babur-3 cruise missile is quite significant and aims to provide an ensured second-strike capability. Furthermore, the missile was developed to bridge the gap between Pakistan Navy’s conventional and strategic capabilities. It is in line with Pakistan’s policy of full-spectrum deterrence (FSD) under the broader principle of credible minimum deterrence. Nevertheless, Pakistan’s policy to use nuclear weapons is the last resort. Given that, in the Indian Ocean, where India enjoys a considerable edge over Pakistan based on its massive naval buildup. This is further evident from how India tried to utilize its naval forces against Pakistan during the Pulwama/Balakot crisis of 2019. Based on such threats from India, Pakistan tends to pursue a conventional naval build-up at the minimum level to ensure its survivability. These naval assets would help Pakistan in neutralizing growing Indian naval capabilities.

Therefore, to protect Pakistan’s geo-economic interests and its coasts it appears quite rational to enhance conventional naval capabilities to a minimum level that can deter India from taking any misadventure. To counter India’s offensive naval buildup in the Indian Ocean; Pakistan might need to invest in anti-submarine and anti-ship capabilities, UAVs, and ship-launched hypersonic cruise missiles. These developments would lessen the Indian decisive quantitative edge over Pakistan’s naval forces, implement conventional deterrence, and add to the threshold level of Pakistan’s nuclear capabilities during the crises. Furthermore, it would complement the credibility of an ensured second-strike capability by enhancing the chances of survivability of its submarines and naval fleets.

<http://southasiajournal.net/enhancing-naval-power-for-conventional-deterrence-of-pakistan/>

Imagining Arms Control in South Asia

Khawaja Dawood Tariq

As it appears, the New START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) is very likely to expire in February this year. The Trump administration's refusal to extend the New START treaty citing Chinese inclusion in an arms control regime has opened a Pandora box. Although the Biden administration seems quite open to the extension of New START, the debate to include China in strategic arms control agreement however would become more contentious when the five-year extension period ends. In light of these developments, [two hypotheses](#) were developed. First, the United States would engage China and convince it to become a party to a strategic arms control regime. Second, with no strategic arms control agreement in place, an arms race would commence. Both of these scenarios are sure to have a massive impact on the strategic stability of the South Asian region. Most significantly, further elaboration is required to assess the impact of the first hypothesis.

The question that arises is how the United States can convince China to become part of an arms control agreement. How can the U.S address the security dilemma faced by China? It is easier to address Chinese insecurity in Pacific theater as no regional adversary possesses nuclear weapons and China has developed considerable defensive capabilities. These can offset U.S conventional forces with a provision of credible anti-access/area denial capability.

However, India not only shares land borders but has territorial disputes with China and possesses nuclear weapons. In the last few years, the border skirmishes have increased. Furthermore, the U.S has developed a strategic partnership with India to counter the Chinese rise. This partnership includes multiple defense agreements and a civilian nuclear deal among other initiatives. India which possesses nuclear weapons and is increasing its nuclear capabilities at a rapid pace is not part of the non-proliferation treaty (NPT) and remains outside the remit of any inspection and regulations by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It would be next to impossible for the U.S to convince China to become part of the arms control regime while India possesses nuclear weapons and there is no administrative mechanism for check and balance with regards to the Indian nuclear program.

The only way to address the Chinese security dilemma vis-à-vis India's offensive nuclear capabilities is to include the latter into a similar arms control regime. But that's a problem. For any such development, India first would be required to become a signatory to NPT. If this happens India would join the exclusive club of the five recognized nuclear-weapon states. Once part of the international non-proliferation regime, the next step would be to include India in an arms control agreement that can satisfy the Chinese security dilemma.

Well if that becomes the case and India becomes part of the international non-proliferation regime where would it leave Pakistan? We have to scale back a bit to wrap this. If India is accorded a chance to become part of the NPT while retaining its nuclear weapons, how would Pakistan be treated when Pakistan only developed its nuclear capability to counter India's nuclear program and other security threats? Pakistan's nuclear posture is of 'full spectrum deterrence' within the broader ambit of 'credible minimum deterrence' against India.

There are two ways Pakistan's concerns can be addressed. One is to offer Pakistan a similar pathway to India. Pakistan can be asked to become a signatory to NPT and an arms control regime for South Asia can be agreed upon. If Pakistan is not offered the same pathway, it would mean making Pakistan a pariah state in South Asia. Well, option one would mean the establishment of an arms control regime in South Asia and the other option will represent no arms control regime.

Without Pakistan, an arms control agreement in South Asia is not possible. India would not agree to open its nuclear program to inspection and regulation while Pakistan remains outside the non-proliferation regime and is not under constraint by arms control agreement. Similarly, how would the U.S convince China to allow Indian entry into the nuclear community when Pakistan, a close strategic ally of China is not offered the same opportunity? The question of how Pakistan would respond at the conventional and strategic level would become more significant. Specifically, when it is not a part of the international non-proliferation regime while India is treated differently. Although it can be assessed that this would likely undermine the Chinese interests if Pakistan is kept out at the expense of India. The prospects of this seem very unlikely that the Chinese policymakers would ever agree to that but if in case it happens it might change the Pak-China strategic relations. Just to clear this scenario seems next to impossible considering the depth of the strategic and historic partnership between Pakistan and China.

Hence, this debate to include China into the strategic arms control regime by the Trump administration has opened multiple scenarios for analysis. The new administration of Mr. Biden might not indulge in the same practice of emphasizing the Chinese inclusion as a prerequisite for a new agreement or extension of the New START. Likewise, any arms control agreement between the U.S and China would not be possible without addressing the future of South Asian strategic stability. It rests on creating an agreement that can incorporate and address the security dilemma faced by both the South Asian adversaries.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/30012021-imagining-arms-control-in-south-asia-oped/>