



**STRATEGIC VISION**  
INSTITUTE

# VISION

VISIONARY INSIGHTS INTO THE STRATEGIC INQUESTS OF NATIONS

## SVI FORESIGHT

**VOLUME 8, NUMBER 9**

**SEPTEMBER 2022**

**Compiled by:**

**Ghulam Mujtaba Haider**

**Edited by:**

**Amber Afreen Abid**

**Strategic Vision Institute**  
**Islamabad**

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I N S T I T U T E

**Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)**

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this edition are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Strategic Vision Institute.

# Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)

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Strategic Vision Institute (SVI) is an autonomous, multidisciplinary, and non-partisan institution, established in January 2013. It is a non-governmental and non-commercial organization, administered by a Board of Governors (General Body) supervised under a Chairperson and administered by a Management Committee headed by Executive Director.

SVI aims to project strategic foresight on issues of national and international import through dispassionate, impartial, and independent research, analyses, and studies. The current spotlight of the SVI is on national security, regional and international peace and stability, strategic studies, nuclear non-proliferation, arms control, and strategic stability, nuclear safety, and security and energy studies.

## SVI Foresight

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*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 the SVI Research Officers, Visiting Faculty, and professional experts. The objective is to provide the readership with a concise all-around 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

September brings with it another well-timed issue of the SVI electronic journal *SVI-Foresight*. The issue covers various contemporary topics of strategic importance, and offers opinion-based short commentaries on a number of issues including, the effects of India's BJP-led government on South Asian regional security paradigm, the role of global powers and international cartel in the global and regional security calculus, and the discussion on the on-going Russia-Ukraine war.

The intensifying competition for preeminence and hegemony between the global powers affects the global strategic scenario and South Asia. The intense strategic competition between the US and China has led to a balancing coalition between the US and India. The issue discusses the discriminatory and biased approach by the US and international cartels, which makes Pakistan vulnerable against Indian hegemonic ambitions.

India, in its hegemonic ambitions, is pursuing advanced military and defense procurement, driven by its pursuit of refashioning India as Hindu Rashtra. The current BJP government has incorporated offensive military tactics, such as surgical strikes, as manifested in the Balakot attack and BrahMos missile launch, the analysis of which has been discussed in the issue. Moreover, India has unleashed an unabated wave of suppression in Kashmir. The systematic human rights violation in Kashmir has exposed the world's so-called largest democracy. The Indian atrocities in the Kashmir has been highlighted and the international community has been urged to play its role.

Furthermore, the major development in global politico-economic scenario has been the outbreak of war in Ukraine, in where a series of events, marks the new phase of escalation of Russia-Ukraine war. The current phase of war and its effect on the nuclearization of the states has been discussed in the current issue.

It is hoped that the September issue will help readers in staying updated with the current strategic environment and 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, nuclear and strategic issues. Any suggestions for further improvements are welcome. 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](#).

**Amber Afreen Abid**  
**Editor, *SVI Foresight***

## ***The Tenuous State of Strategic Stability in South***

### ***Asia***

Great power competition is driving the revival of ambitious revisionist regionalism in international politics. To meet the above purpose, India has been pouring its economic surplus in its defense and advanced weaponry purchase. This disproportionate advantage has incorporated offensive military tactics such as surgical strikes, as manifested during the Balakot attack and Brahmos launch, in the evolving strategic culture of India towards Pakistan, thereby causing strategic instability. Pakistan seeks to achieve strategic stability in a state of the disadvantage of conventional asymmetry by utilizing workable deterrence under the ‘first strike’ policy in order to restore the balance of power in South Asia against a potentially stronger adversary India with economic and conventional defense leverage. This ongoing review in Indian nuclear doctrines responded with a defensive-offensive approach in Pakistan’s strategic culture is a challenge to strategic stability in South Asia.

India’s policy of ‘neighbours, not friends, but persistent enemies’ influences India’s offensive foreign policy towards Pakistan and is a destabilizing factor for the strategic stability in South Asia. Witnessing that, the Doval doctrine outlines offensive strategy via covert operations; however, in the name of self-defense; as core to India’s foreign policy towards Pakistan.

India regards diplomacy as a subtle war and stresses offensive war in denial of the international law, rather than no war policy, for the security of national interest. The relevance of war to Indian diplomacy has been openly admitted by the former Indian ambassador Pinak Ranjan Chakravarty in the official text of his distinguished lecture to the Ministry of external affairs, the government of India. India’s support to the separatists in Pakistan’s Western territory signifies its hidden warfare against Pakistan. India’s (Mandala’s) secret service and espionage strategy as mainstream Indian foreign policy has been recognized internationally in the Jadhav (India v. Pakistan) case being pursued in ICJ. Hindu Rashtra is the essential driver of Indian strategic culture that determines the state of strategic stability in South Asia. India’s ambition of regional domination is being pursued by India’s advanced military and defense procurement in relations to India’s adversary. It is also the factor that determines Pakistan’s counter-response to restore the strategic deterrence in the region as a viable conflict management mechanism against India.

To pursue the interests of regional domination and leadership in South Asia and the Indian Ocean region, India’s foreign policy is framed under the set guidelines of Realism which count warfare and aggression as central India’s practice of international relations, particularly towards Pakistan in the regional context. Intelligence, diplomacy, and military affairs are focused on setting up the strategic patterns of Indian decision-making.

Hybrid warfare remains part of Indian strategic culture and its foreign policy to tilt balance in India's favour by destabilizing the adversary. The confession of it has been made by India on occasions of Modi's Dhaka Visit in 2015 where he admitted India's military support to the "Mukti Bahini" in the war of 1971 and also his Independence Day speech August 2016 where he confessed to India's active support to the Baloch Liberation Movement in Pakistan. Kalbushan's case is also on the record of the ICJ.

India's recognition by the US and the West as a net security provider in the Indo-Pacific affairs necessitates for Pakistan to incorporate cross-domain deterrence to prevent Indian aggression amid its transforming offensive behaviour against Pakistan. The China-India geo-strategic competition for regional leadership in South Asia leads to a challenge of a two-front war which is recognized as 'India's China-Pakistan Dilemma' at the regional fronts. Stimson study conducted on this issue argues that India's security dilemma related to the China-Pakistan strategic partnership exposes it to a military threat on two fronts. To counterbalance India with technological edge, a military escalation by India increases the possibility of a cooperative military response from Pakistan in band wagoning with China. The intense strategic competition between the USA and China has led to a balancing coalition between the US and India, characterized by Indo-US defense cooperation in the form of the four foundational agreements; the NSG waiver that has led to a significant vertical proliferation in India's nuclear weapons program; and the US-sponsored India's

membership in MTCR that has boosted India's missile program. These are likely to raise India's counterforce temptations, thereby risking first strike stability between Pakistan and India.

Pakistan's counter-response to restore the strategic deterrence in the region as a viable crisis management mechanism against India does have an impact on strategic stability in South Asia. For example, the Balakot strike was responded by Pakistan in the form of a limited warfare whereby two Indian fighter aircrafts were downed by Pakistan. The event had an escalation potential which was dealt responsibly particularly by Pakistan in the form of a defensive military response and with the return of the IAF pilot captured during the operation. Moreover, advancement and pursuit of tactical and strategic weapons to balance India in an arms race are inevitable conflict management tools that Pakistan is compelled to employ to ensure deterrence stability in South Asia. However, in the long term, it may also be perceived as challenge to strategic stability in South Asia.

Strategic stability in contemporary South Asia is tenuous because under no dialogue, with no risk reduction and restraint mechanisms, there has been a constant threat of militarily aiming strategic targets and surgical strikes that may be misunderstood as pre-emptive strikes causing nuclear escalations and deterrence instability in South Asia.

*Komal Khan (Research officer, Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.)*

<http://southasiajournal.net/the-tenuous-state-of-strategic-stability-in-south-asia/>

## ***India's BrahMos Landing in Pakistan: Accidental or Intentional?***

On 09 March 2022, a supersonic missile crossed the Indian border, covering a distance of 124km across the border, and crashed into Pakistan, destroying a civilian building. That was a BrahMos cruise missile, with a range of 450km, jointly developed by India and Russia. This is the first ever incident in nuclear history, wherein a missile has been fired from a nuclear state into another nuclear state.

On top of that, India remained quiet for 48hrs after the incident; and was provoked to answer only after Pakistan's military spokesperson went to highlight this grave incident in the media. Moreover, the supersonic missile traveling at such a higher speed can't take 90 degrees sudden turn provided its fast speed of Mach 3. Furthermore, the timing it was launched sparks concerns of its technical maintenance; as such matters are done during the day, not in the twilight. Despite having the 2004 hotline agreement between the two countries, the so-called accidental launch had not been intimated. Moreover, if at all it was accidental, as claimed by India, normally a missile has a self-destruct system mechanism, which is controlled from the ground, and the missile could be destroyed mid-flight to prevent any damage, but certainly, it was not done. The incident is, however, a flagrant violation of Pakistani airspace. Moreover, it could have hit any passenger plane, provided it traveled at a height of 40,000 ft, and could have caused human loss as well.

India in its initial statements termed the incident as an accidental firing of the missile during routine maintenance and a technical malfunction. However, later on, the Indian government changed the narrative and termed the incident to be a 'human error' and set up a court of inquiry to review the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) with regard to missile handling. Recently India closed the inquiry of this missile incident and stated that the deviation from SOPs by three officers led to the accidental firing of the missile.

Pakistan has rejected the purported closure of the inquiry into the case and has stated that the measures taken by India and the subsequent findings and punishments handed by the so-called internal Court of Inquiry are totally unsatisfactory, deficient, and inadequate. The matters of such grave concern, involving strategic missiles, can't be brushed under the carpet by labeling them as mere human error. India has also not responded to several questions by Pakistan, regarding India's command and control system, and the safety and security protocols.

As far as Indian intentions are concerned, whether it was accidental or intentional, considering the above facts and Indian aggressive counterforce posture and aggressive designs against Pakistan, this seems to be an attempt to assess Pakistan's deterrence capabilities and nuclear response measures. Lt Gen (R) Khalid Kidwai (Former DG SPD) has recently stated that the launch was no accident as claimed slyly by India, as the launch could not have taken place without political clearance at the highest level and detailed operational and



technical planning spanning over weeks. Moreover, the objective was very clear: to test Pakistan's air defense alert levels and operational responses. India has put a technically and operationally laughable story to the world, which no serious professional would buy.

India wants to undermine Pakistan's deterrent capabilities. This war-prone behavior of India needs to be changed as it could result in disastrous consequences. Pakistan's military spokesperson made it very clear that Pakistan forces are alert to any threat and the challenges it faces. However, this incident sparks a dire need to re-invigorate the Confidence Building Mechanism between the two nuclear South Asian countries. Moreover, an agreement similar to the Pre-Notification of Flight-Testing of Ballistic Missile should be made for cruise missile testing as well, in order to minimize the risk of nuclear-related accidents.

Pakistan has shown restraint and maturity, and prevented South Asia from serious catastrophe. If Pakistan could have retaliated, after identifying an aerial object coming from India, considering it to be an attack, the results could have been disastrous. Pakistan has always made efforts for restoring regional peace and stability, which India has always tried to destabilize due to its immature ruling authority. The political elite has always used the aggressive war-prone card against Pakistan in front of public for their political gains, without realizing the repercussions, which shows the ill-mindset of India's ruling power.

Moreover, the world has seen numerous instances of Uranium theft in India, which

indicates weak safety and security protocols and weak Command and Control structure in India to handle such precarious technology. Moreover, the chances of nuclear war increases, as in case of cannisterized weapons (warheads permanently mated with the missiles), so such negligence can't be tolerated.

The Indian obsession of acquisition of newer technology could result in the accidental or inadvertent war in South Asia, provided its unproven capability to manage it. This proves India to be an irresponsible nuclear weapon state and the international community must look into this extremist and war-provoking country, which is also incompetent to manage nuclear and nuclear-related technology and delivery vehicles, and is thus a threat to the regional and global peace and security.

*Amber Afreen Abid (Research officer, Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.)*

<https://strategic-times.com/blog/2022/09/29/indias-brahmos-landing-in-pakistan-accidental-or-intentional/>

## ***Pakistan and the Multilateral Export Control Regimes***

The Multilateral Export Control Regimes (MECRs) such as the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Australia Group and the Wassenaar Arrangement are Western dominated, created and controlled cartels. Although these cartels work by consensus, there is an attribute of preferential or discriminatory treatment towards other non-members of these cartels and a clear example is the NSG exemption that was granted to India, while, on the other hand, the MTCR membership for China has been denied for several years even though it has been offered to small countries. Hence this depicts the reality of these regimes.

These MECRs are trying to bring India into these cartels because India is part of the Indo-US strategic partnership against China. It is also important for India because it gives it the ability to claim the status of a responsible regional power. In 2010, President Obama announced that the US would ensure that India join these MECRs as well as the UN Security Council. It has been a tremendous boost to India's ambitions for great power status and has gone a long way in building India as a counterweight to China.

For Pakistan, the worst outcome is perhaps that it allows India to block Pakistan's membership in such MECRs and if India becomes a member of NSG, India would also block Pakistan's entry into NSG. From a longer-term perspective, the treatment that India has been accorded despite its dubious missile and nuclear proliferation record over

the years undermines the credibility and effectiveness of the international non-proliferation and control regime. Due to India's importance as a strategic partner of the US, these kinds of proliferation activities are often overlooked and tolerated due to the heightened interest in this partnership. Pakistan is left with only raising these issues with countries that do not have any specific or direct interest but unfortunately these countries are small and weak even if they are European and are unable to change American policies as we saw in the way that the India NSG waiver played out.

In 2011, Pakistan stated that it is willing to join all four export control agreements and also requested similar treatment for Pakistan as was given to India in the context of the NSG waiver. There wasn't much progress on any of those issues, as far as the waiver was concerned, the US was clear that Pakistan and India are on different trajectories and have different histories, therefore they would be treated differently. Pakistan received no positive feedback from these cartels. In 2006, Pakistan expressed its willingness to join the MTCR, and then several years later, in 2015, Pakistan circulated a non-paper to the MTCR. However, the response from the MTCR group is still awaited.

Meanwhile, India joined the MTCR in 2016 and is now likely to block Pakistan's entry. Since 2016, no formal application has been made from Pakistan to the MTCR. It should be underlined here that the Pakistan Export Control List is at par with the MTCR standards and covers items that are included in the MTCR. Therefore, Pakistan is already observing the conditions of MTCR

membership without enjoying the benefits of any MTCR membership.

As far as the Australia Group is concerned, Pakistan has made no renewed effort to join it and now Pakistan's view is that our accession to the chemical weapons convention covers almost all the items that are on the Group's list, so, our commitments to the CWC cover almost all of them. Hence, Pakistan hasn't pushed Australia Group membership very much. As far as the Wassenaar Agreement is concerned, Pakistan's participation has been reconsidered and we believe that joining this agreement on conventional arms would be detrimental to Pakistan's trade and to its emerging aspirations as an exporter of conventional arms. That's why Pakistan has not pushed this and also in all these cartels there are obviously double standards that are being pursued by the west.

Pakistan should not seek membership in any of these cartels without a quid pro quo similar to that given to India for its NSG exemption. When India wanted to acquire the NSG waiver, it took on certain obligations, and therefore in that agreement, one of the obligations was to become a party to these MECRs. Therefore, Pakistan's principled position must remain that we should be given the same kind of quid pro quos and should be given in the same sequence.

*Sher Bano (Research officer, Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.)*

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/01102022-pakistan-and-the-multilateral-export-control-regimes-oped/>

## ***Abrogation of Article 370: How the Kashmiris are Being Punished by the Laws?***

The Amnesty International released a new report titled “‘We are being punished by the law’: Three years of abrogation of Article 370 in Jammu & Kashmir”. The document has revealed how the civil society including journalists, lawyers, and human rights activists continue to face relentless policies based on interrogations, arbitrary restrictions, and repressive media policies, which clamps down on people’s right to information and freedom of expression. It highlights that the Indian government’s repressive policies in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) – three years since the scrapping of Article 370 in 2019 – has intensified, making the Kashmir issue a serious matter of abuse to humanity. Since then, the disputed region has been subjected to war crimes by the Indian forces. The draconian laws and lack of accountability for use of force or killings by the police due to the Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act (AFSPA), grants them immunity and additional powers which leaves the human rights standards in doldrums.

In the three years since 2019, to suppress dissent, the Indian government has restricted the right to freedom of expression and opinion of the people of IIOJK. The record of human rights in the region is alarming. Amnesty International pointed out that a day before scrapping Article 370, a communication blackout including suspension of telephone and internet services, arbitrary detentions, and

restrictions on movement was enforced. According to Access Now, the internet shutdown turned to be the longest ever imposed in a democracy. It significantly impeded people’s right to information and the media to report on human rights violations in the region. Amnesty International highlighted that since the revocation of IIOJK’s special status, there have been 60 incidents of human rights abuses where human rights defenders and journalists were illegally detained, tortured and unlawfully interrogated. In addition, between 5th August, 2019 and 5th August 2022, at least six people including journalists, academicians and human rights activists were barred from travelling abroad. Moreover, Amnesty International also found that there has been an increase of 12% in the use of the draconian Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA) in IIOJK since 2019, which provides immunity to the authorities for detaining any person for a period of 180 days without any charge sheet.

An unabated wave of suppression is unleashed by the Hindutva driven BJP government where the Kashmiris are routinely questioned for their work, their social media accounts being monitored, and resultantly they are threatened with detention. The intimidation is meant to censor the criticism on the government – an infringement on Article 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The crackdown on media also comes in tandem with increased surveillance in the region. The Indian security forces have used draconian counterterrorism and brutal sedition laws to stifle dissent. The Sedition Law is enforced in the region which the Indian government misuses for political

purposes against its critics. Amnesty International's report highlights that such laws and increased surveillance have created a sense of fear in the region.

The systematic human rights violation in Kashmir has exposed the world's so-called largest democracy. The situation on ground has not improved. The silence of the world in general and the champions of human rights in particular is a tragedy in itself. The double standards of the major powers, diminish the chances of Pakistan and India coming to an understanding on Kashmir dispute. So, the unfolding situation in Kashmir must concern the international community. The report is a step ahead to trigger conscience of the world leaders to protect human rights and pressurize India to implement the United Nations resolutions. The Indian government must be held accountable by the world for the injustices inflicted upon Kashmir. Given the state of systemic human rights violations in IIOJK, Amnesty International calls on the Government of India to immediately stop the politically motivated persecution of human rights activists and journalists. The illegal laws must be brought in accordance with the international human rights law. It is high time that the Indian government removes unjust hurdles placed on the people of IIOJK in exercising their freedom of expression and ensuring their right to justice. For upholding the human rights principles, the people of Kashmir must be redressed by holding the perpetrators accountable. A fair and an independent investigation must be carried out to help provide justice to the victims.

*Zukhruf Amin (Research officer, Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.)*

<http://southasiajournal.net/abrogation-of-article-370-how-the-kashmiris-are-being-punished-by-the-laws/>

## ***A New Phase of Escalation in the Russia-Ukraine War***

The month of September marked a new phase of escalation in what was being branded as a “grinding war of attrition”. Invading Russian forces, after having lost the momentum thanks to unwavering Ukrainian resistance supported by crucial military assistance from the West, kept narrowing down their military objectives, ultimately failing to achieve even those narrowed down aims virtually leading to a stalemate.

The tables started turning during the early part of September. Armed with cutting-edge Western weaponry and vital intelligence support, Ukrainian Army launched a two-pronged counteroffensive in the South towards Kherson and in the Northeast. While Ukrainians made some gains in the South, startling was their lightning recapture of the territory in the northeast, and even more startling was the rout of the Russian forces, which was such complete and absolute that Ukrainians recaptured more territory in less than a week compared to what Russians were able to take during past many months. The demoralized Russian troops hardly put up a fight and abandoned loads of arms and ammunition during the hastily carried out disordered retreat. Unsurprisingly, the Russian defense ministry sought to obfuscate the rout by cataloging it as a withdrawal aimed at regrouping.

While the Ukrainian gains demonstrated the high morale and motivation of the Ukrainian troops, traits indispensable for winning wars — the Russian rout once again exposed the

material and motivational shortcomings of what was for long regarded as one of the most powerful and capable military machines in the world: the Russian military. Though the Western military and intelligence support played a decisive role in the earlier stalemate and recently in the speedy Ukrainian gains, the heroism and unflinching commitment displayed by the Ukrainian nation and troops against all the odds marks the start of a new chapter in the national history of Ukraine — through which it is emerging as unified than ever.

Since it invaded Ukraine in February this year, Kremlin has been very careful so as not to transmit any signal implying weakness of its military or Putin’s control over the state of affairs within Russia. However, on September 21st, Moscow decreed the first mobilization, though partial, since World War II, which marked an implicit admission that Putin is failing to achieve his military objectives with the available military force. Though there has not been an official word on the exact numbers, media reports claimed that the numbers being mobilized are around 300,000 while other estimated, mostly based on the scale of the draft campaign in Russia reaching up to smaller towns and villages, placed the figure as high as 01 million. Irrespective of the exact numbers, the military draft marks a major escalation in the war and dims the hopes of a rapid Ukrainian triumph over the invading Russian force, which the Western observers started pinning after the lightning Ukrainian gains during the first half of the month.

Putin unquestionably has played a massive gamble. Western media has been reporting

numerous incidents of people trying to leave Russia to circumvent being drafted; however, these reports can be highly exaggerated. Nevertheless, it must also be acknowledged that irrespective of how indoctrinated a country's population is, being recruited forcibly for a seemingly wasted cause is unlikely to receive much traction in Russia. Even though at this time Putin does seem to be too worried about the decline in domestic approval, in the medium to long-term, the draft venture can turn the odds drastically against the Russian President, especially, if the death toll mounts and the campaigns designed to gaslight the masses do not have the desired impact.

As if the draft was not enough, on September 30th, Putin announced annexing four Russian-controlled regions of Ukraine — Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhia. The move marks the biggest annexation of territory since World War II and makes up an estimated 15 to 20 of Ukraine's landmass. After declaring the inhabitants of the annexed region as "our citizens forever", the Russian President pledged to defend the Russian land, which as per Russian law also includes the annexed region, employing all available strength and means — phraseology that was translated as another nuclear threat in a long series hurled by the Russian President since the start of the war.

As the lines are being written, the Ukrainian Army has captured the city of Lyman on Donetsk while the Russian defense ministry has acknowledged the takeover again calling it a withdrawal by Russian forces. The takeover of Lyman, however, demonstrates that does not matter how many lines one

draws on the map, the actual outcome of the war would be determined on the battlefield, wherein Ukrainians, at least for the time being, have the momentum on their side.

*Hamdan Khan (Research officer, Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.)*

<https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2022/10/03/a-new-phase-of-escalation-in-the-russia-ukraine-war/>

## ***Non-proliferation and Disarmament after Ukraine and JCPOA***

At a time when there is a long queue of cars at the border with Georgia, as those Russians who fear that they might have to take part in the ongoing ‘Special Military Operation’ in Ukraine after a call for partial mobilization, Putin has once again threatened to go nuclear. Ukraine, courtesy of easy access to apparently limitless U.S. coffers in terms of military aid, has held up Russia and even started to push back.

It is certainly not the intended dreamlike scenario that Russian President Vladimir Putin may have imagined back in March when he initiated his special military operation. The war continues to linger on under the shadow of a nuclear apocalypse, real or not depending on the individual dispensation on what constitutes the term ‘rational’. For the moment let’s focus on the bigger, and consequently gloomier impact of the Ukraine war and an event of the not-so-distant past, the abrupt termination of JCPOA.

A lot has been said about how the war in Ukraine is the most recent example of reality staring the security-sensitive states right in the face that the present world order is practically fending for itself. The security guarantees that Ukraine got against giving up the stockpile of Soviet nuclear weapons meant nothing in the end. And the same sort of assurance was given to Iran for drastically scaling back on its uranium enrichment program in exchange for the freedom to do business with the rest of the world.

Given the longevity of the matter and sensitivity around nuclear weapons proliferation, at the time of its signing, JCPOA did seem like a step in the right direction. However, similar to the promises to Ukraine, it all fell apart when U.S. President Donald Trump unilaterally walked out of the deal although Iran had been fully compliant with the terms of the agreement. And when the dust of war in Ukraine settles down, hopefully soon and without a major catastrophe, the west would see the scars both these events have left on the efforts of nonproliferation and even the wishful goal of nuclear disarmament.

The violence and loss of human life in the ongoing conflict in Europe are indeed condemnable. However, Russia has held a legitimate fear of encirclement ever since the fall of the Soviet Union. NATO was pushing too close to the predefined redline and the United States-led west did not give those security concerns the attention they deserved. There are several protracted ongoing conflicts around the world and states are concerned about keeping their territorial integrity intact. The war in Ukraine has signaled to the states around the world that it depends on the geopolitical mood of powerful states and how their security concerns would be perceived.

Nuclear weapons have certainly prevented a global war. But the world cannot sustain on the same path if security concerns rooted in the history of states are not addressed in an amicable manner rather major powers keep playing other states as mere pawns in the great game. If it continues, there is no guarantee that more states would not begin



pursuit of having their own nuclear weapons as the guarantor of security.

The belief in the security assurances and pledges of economic perks and freedom in case of compliance has shattered. The international system is broken, and it is destined for more anarchy especially as there are more poles of power than at any point since World War II. Now more than ever, North Korea is going to hold onto its nuclear weapons. It is evident from the approval of the North Korean nuclear use doctrine as recently released and endorsed by its leader Kim Jong-Un.

Saudi Arabia is anxiously monitoring the ongoing situation regarding the resumption of JCPOA, ready to go on the nuclear path if Iran seems to be getting nuclear weapons. The desired system of rules-based world order that unipolar America, at least verbally, championed at the end of the cold war is broken. It would need a serious overhaul to prevent further nuclearization once the war in Ukraine allows a relatively permanent respite.

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<https://www.globalvillagespace.com/nonproliferation-and-disarmament-after-ukraine-and-jcboa/>