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Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)

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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

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

The SVI Foresight for the month of January brings with it a rich mix of high-quality analytical opinions on a range of subjects dealing with strategic, security and international politics. The articles mostly focus on the contemporary developments and give an in-depth diagnostic review of the regional and global strategic and security environment.

The issue discusses Pakistan's impeccable record of nuclear non-proliferation and as a responsible nuclear-weapon state. Pakistan has instituted measures in the broader realm of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear security. Nevertheless, Pakistan is still being brought into the spotlight for baseless remarks made internationally by the segments who just want to discredit Pakistan. An open attempt has been made to defame Pakistan by maligning it for the uranium found in London airport, Pakistan denies such baseless allegations. Furthermore, former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo makes an astounding revelation that they played a role and stopped Pakistan from nuclear use in February 2019. It was a sub-conventional confrontation that did not escalate into even a wider conventional conflict, let alone a nuclear conflagration. Pakistan's stated policy regarding the use of its nuclear weapons and the measures taken to strengthen its security are included in this issue.

Moreover, the articles related to Kashmir discuss the issue of Ladakh and India's demographic invasion in Kashmir. India's refusal to acknowledge the problems in Ladakh has exacerbated the public outcry. This makes the current crisis another cause to impact the geopolitical chessboard at the terrain for the Indian government. Moreover, Pakistan intends to peacefully resolve the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with international legitimacy. Pakistan's continuous support to the people of Kashmir and the steps being taken by Pakistan have been analyzed.

Furthermore, some aspects of the Indo-Pacific region have been discussed in this issue. As Japan now seeks to assume primary responsibility for its security meanwhile enjoying the shelter of the USA's security umbrella and extended deterrence. But, at the same time, Japan is also exploring options beyond the alliance with the US by expanding military partnerships and collaboration with other like-minded countries. Moreover, the US conventional deterrence capabilities vis-à-vis China have also been analyzed in the issue.

It is hoped that this 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

Pompeo, Swaraj and the Myth of Nuclear Escalation in February 2019 India-Pakistan Crisis

Akash Shah

In his recent book "Never Give an Inch," former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo makes an astounding revelation about a near nuclear confrontation between India and Pakistan following the Indian air strike at Balakot. According to Pompeo, while he was in Hanoi, he received a call from late Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj warning that Pakistan was preparing to launch a nuclear strike against India. "No other nation could have done what we did that night" he gloats while mentioning the extraordinary feat that he and his team, U.S. diplomats in India and Pakistan, along with National Security Advisor John Bolton were able to pull and save the world from "a horrible outcome". Not many U.S. Secretaries of State are remembered in history because their limited tenure in office may not provide them with a significant global event to deal with. Mike Pompeo claims that he did get one in 2019. However, his claims in the book raise concerns that either he is blowing the incident out of proportion for publicity or, even worse, neither he nor his Indian counterpart at the time understood how the dynamics of nuclear deterrence work.

Secretary Pompeo's account in his memoir "Never Give an Inch" omits a crucial aspect of the events that transpired between India and Pakistan in February 2019. The senior

Trump Administration officials, specifically National Security Advisor John Bolton and Mike Pompeo played a significant role in exacerbating the ongoing crisis between the two nations with their partisan support of India. Indian National Security Advisor Ajit Doval [discussed plans for a strike in Balakot with his U.S. counterpart](#) just two days after the Pulwama attack. India sought and received support from the U.S. to proceed with the strike. Historically, the United States has played a mediating role in de-escalating crises between India and Pakistan. However, following his phone call with Doval, Bolton released a [statement unambiguously supporting India's right to self-defense](#), a literal green signal to go ahead with its plans. This triggered a chain of events that ultimately led to the capture of an Indian pilot after being shot down on Pakistani territory. While Secretary Pompeo may want the world to thank the U.S. for preventing a catastrophe, it is important to acknowledge the role the U.S. played in wittingly or unwittingly precipitating it.

The narrative presented by Secretary Pompeo raises questions about the logical consistency of the assessments made by both Pompeo and Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj regarding the events of 2019. The Indian response to the Pulwama attack was to send Mirage-2000 fighter bombers, escorted by Sukhoi SU-30MKI fighter jets, to target an alleged terrorist training facility in Balakot. According to Indian accounts, the Mirage bombers dropped Spice 2000 bombs from a distance of 80 km away, allowing the bombs to self-propel toward the target utilizing their deployable wings. The Indian jets were in Pakistan's airspace for a matter of minutes

before returning as Pakistan scrambled its own jets to intercept them. The following day, Pakistan responded with Operation Swift Retort, which involved airstrikes across the Line of Control from Pakistani airspace, with the stated goal of demonstrating their right, will, and capability for self-defense, as per Inter-Services Public Relations. Considering the sequence of events, the onus of escalation was shifted on India at that point. Therefore, the idea that Pakistan was preparing to launch a nuclear strike against India while the former had an upper hand in the exchanges, seems implausible. This raises doubts about the validity of Pompeo's claim and calls into question the understanding of deterrence dynamics by both Indian Foreign Minister and U.S. Secretary of State at the time.

The actions taken by both India and Pakistan during the events in question were limited in scope, with less than a dozen aircraft involved from either side without any mobilization of forces on land or in the Arabian sea. With the land and naval forces intact and air forces largely unscathed there was no logical reason for either of the adversaries to even contemplate bringing into play the nuclear forces. The entire incident was confined to a small swathe of territory. It was a sub-conventional confrontation that did not escalate into even a wider conventional conflict, let alone a nuclear conflagration. Additionally, Pakistan's stated policy regarding the use of its nuclear weapons is that they are to be employed only as a last resort when it is felt that it has run out of all conventional options and the very survival of the country is at stake. There was no threat to Pakistan's

survival, particularly after the successful execution of Operation Swift Retort which dispelled the perception that Pakistan's conventional weakness would force it to resort to nuclear use early on in any conflict and established the viability of Pakistan's conventional military capability. The events of 2019 served to affirm the credibility of Pakistan's conventional deterrence capabilities. The crisis not only reinforced Pakistan's confidence in its ability to respond with conventional force, but it also served as a valuable lesson for the future on how to handle sub-conventional incursions by India. Therefore, with all its conventional forces intact, the notion that Pakistan was going nuclear straightway is illogical, to say the least.

“I thought that was it for the evening but word soon came that Shanahan and Dunford wanted to talk to Pompeo and me about a ballooning crisis between India and Pakistan. After hours of phone calls, the crisis passed, perhaps because, in substance, there never really had been one.” This is how John Bolton remembers the events of February 2019 in his book ‘The Room Where It Happened’, a striking contrast to what Mike Pompeo said in his book. Secretary Pompeo's memoir should raise concerns in the minds of America's friends and foes alike about either the understanding of nuclear dynamics on part of the Secretary of State who has also been the CIA Director or his blatant distortion of facts about a very sensitive issue. If Pompeo is to be believed there would be legitimate questions about the Indian Foreign Minister at the time for her lack of understanding of nuclear matters and for getting into an unnecessary panic. Or it may well be that she was playing the

traditional Indian game of maligning
Pakistan.

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[https://strafasia.com/pompeo-swaraj-and-
the-myth-of-nuclear-escalation-in-the-
february-2019-india-pakistan-crisis/](https://strafasia.com/pompeo-swaraj-and-the-myth-of-nuclear-escalation-in-the-february-2019-india-pakistan-crisis/)

Understanding Pakistan as a Responsible Nuclear Weapon State

Amber Afreen Abid

Nuclear security requires utmost vigilance and preparation at all levels without any complacency. Pakistan accords utmost importance to nuclear security and that is why Pakistan has an excellent nuclear command and control structure. Pakistan has instituted measures in the broader realm of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear security which are legislative, legal, regulatory, institutional development, operational and enforcement, and international cooperation. However, Pakistan is still being brought into the spotlight for baseless remarks made internationally by the segments who just want to discredit Pakistan.

India's non-proliferation record has always been problematic and the security of its nuclear infrastructure has always been questionable. India has a poor record of maintaining the security of its civil and military nuclear enterprise. Its nuclear program is not under IAEA safeguards, which could lead to nuclear terrorism, whereas, several incidents of Uranium theft have also been reported.

India also has been involved in nuclear proliferation activities in other countries, including Iran and Iraq. The most significant proliferation act was the diversion of nuclear energy into the nuclear weapon program in 1974, which led to the formation of NSG (Nuclear Suppliers Group). The world,

instead of keeping an eye on this irresponsible nuclear weapon state, maligns Pakistan without any evidence.

False accusations against Pakistan

Pakistan is the most secure state in terms of nuclear security, amongst the non-NPT states. It has established a comprehensive and effective national nuclear security regime that is at par with international standards and guidelines. Despite that Pakistan is often under the critical spotlight for security concerns, overlooking the flagrant security and safety loopholes of the other nuclear weapon state in South Asia.

Recently, there have been reports in British media regarding a package containing Uranium, found at London's Heathrow Airport, originating from Pakistan. Though Pakistan Foreign Office has denied such allegations, why they have been made in the first place, without proper investigation, is highly irresponsible of the British media. This is an open attempt to defame Pakistan.

For the identification of the source of Uranium material, nuclear forensic needs to be done to trace the origin of radioactive material. When any radioactive material is found, experts gather and analyze the evidence, and the sample is compared with the other radioactive material in the specified country, which helps investigators track where the seized material came from. Nuclear forensics has not been done in this case, and Pakistan has been falsely blamed for being the original source.

Pakistan's strict nuclear security

Pakistan has always been a responsible nuclear weapon state, and its safety and

security records are impeccable. Pakistan has a comprehensive nuclear security regime, which comprises the legislative and regulatory framework which governs the security of nuclear material. Pakistan developed the National Command Authority as an effective and robust command and control structure. It is the apex decision-making body for all nuclear matters including nuclear security.

Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA) is the competent and independent body for the regulation of nuclear safety, physical protection, radiation protection, transport, and waste safety in Pakistan. PNRA promulgated 'Regulations on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Installations', which is consistent with the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, and its 2005 amendment. The 'Regulations on Security of Radioactive Sources' is in line with the IAEA Code of Conduct on nuclear safety and security of radioactive resources and its two supplementary guidance documents.

Pakistan has developed a stringent export control system to monitor the items that could be used for the development of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons or their delivery systems. The Strategic Export Control Division (SECDIV) administers the export controls. The Export Control Act of 2004 is an effort of Pakistan to strengthen the control over exports of nuclear, biological, and related materials and their delivery systems. The National Control Lists of Pakistan are comprehensive and are reviewed periodically, taking into consideration the changes made by the international export control regimes. The

system for the classification of dual-use technology is consistent with the European Union integrated list.

Moreover, Pakistan very well contemplates that the weak security of nuclear and related material, like in India, could result in any kind of mishap, and thus vigorously enforces United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540. Pakistan has successfully implemented the IAEA nuclear security program. Pakistan contributes and benefits from the IAEA regarding the security of nuclear material in accordance with its mandate.

The nuclear security regime of Pakistan includes not only technological systems, but the human resources needed to manage, operate, administer, and maintain equipment. For that purpose, Pakistan has developed, the Pakistan Centre of Excellence for Nuclear Security (PCENS, NCA); the National Institute of Safety and Security (NISAS, PNRA); Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences (PIEAS, PAEC). Various national and international nuclear security courses are being conducted in collaboration with the IAEA. Moreover, Pakistan has been internationally endorsed by many experts for its effective security measures, even PCENS has been used as a training institution by IAEA.

Pakistan can further non-proliferation goals

Thus, Pakistan is contributing more to international non-proliferation efforts and through its highly responsible behavior makes sure no incident of theft or any other kind befalls. Still, Pakistan has been brought

to unfavorable attention over such immature behavior of the media.

The international media, however, closes its eyes to India's shenanigans, whose nuclear weapons are in the hands of a religious fundamentalist regime, and who over and over again threaten its use just for their political motives. The real danger lies in India, where the nuclear weapon, since its inception, has been used as a political tool, and they are, thus, least interested in its protection, as we have seen numerous examples of nuclear theft in India.

Moreover, the world should play its role now. It is for the non-proliferation regime now to play its part and adopt a non-discriminatory and criteria-based approach in order to create space for Pakistan to become part of the non-proliferation regime,

considering its excellent record and responsible behavior. Pakistan's expertise, capabilities, and strong credentials of cooperation could help further the goals of the non-proliferation regime.

Moreover, it is India that needs to be schooled by the international nuclear establishment regarding the importance of securing nuclear and nuclear-related material for national, regional, and international security.

<https://www.globalvillagespace.com/understanding-pakistan-as-a-responsible-nuclear-state/>

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An Account of India's Demographic Invasion in Kashmir

Sher Bano

The Indian government has dramatically intensified its suppression of rights in Jammu and Kashmir in the past three years since the abrogation of Article 370. Since then, Pakistan has made various efforts to peacefully resolve the longstanding Kashmir issue. Pakistani leaders have reiterated Pakistan's firm determination to continue supporting the Kashmiri people until the realization of their inalienable right to self-determination.

Pakistan's diplomatic response has been prodigious in raising global awareness of the Indian atrocities at IIOJK and in reaffirming solidarity with the Kashmiri people. To perpetuate its illegal occupation, India is instituting demographic change in IIOJK in contravention of international law, including the UN Charter, UN Security Council resolutions, and the 4th Geneva Convention. In order to crush Kashmiri's legitimate struggle for self-determination, India has unleashed the worst form of state terrorism and widespread systematic human rights violations against the IIOJK people without regard to international human rights and humanitarian law.

The situation in occupied Jammu and Kashmir has become more dreadful since August 5, 2019, when the Modi regime revoked the territory's special status and stripped away all basic rights and freedom of the Kashmiri people. The BJP

government has executed various policies and strategies aimed at altering the demographics of the disputed valley. These include changes in laws regarding residency status and land ownership to encourage Hindus to settle in Illegally Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

The Indian government also made changes to the domicile law to facilitate new settlements in the occupied territory. Kashmiris fear that India is following the model of the Israeli occupation of Palestine. Under this model, the Modi regime seeks to establish settler colonies to help it control the territory.

Ladakh was part of Jammu and Kashmir before the Union government read Article 370 and divided the former state into two union territories: J&K with a legislature and Ladakh without a legislature. On January 7, 2023, the Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) grouping decided to boycott the high-level committee formed by the Union Home Ministry to discuss measures to protect culture and language unique to the region. The grouping said it was unanimously decided to intensify agitation in the coming days against the refusal of the BJP-led Union government to accept its road map to resolve the issues in Ladakh. One of the group's four key demands was statehood for Ladakh, which was separated from J&K and downgraded to a hollow Union Territory without a legislature. Other demands include constitutional guarantees under the Sixth Schedule, the formation of the Public Service Commission and the reservation of jobs for local youth, and the creation of two

separate parliamentary constituencies for Leh and Kargil.

The revocation of article 35-A in particular paved the way for the BJP to implement its agenda in Kashmir, as the annulment of the article practically opened the floodgates for non-Kashmiris to settle in the region. The abolishment of Articles 370 and 35-A had been the dream project of right-wing Hindu supremacists, which was finally executed and implemented by Modi, the RSS leader. The establishment of separate housing colonies of Pandits and Sanik in the Kashmir Valley was part of the BJP's policy of settler colonialism.

These policies not only go against international law and other human rights treaties, but these actions also violate United Nations Security Council resolutions that emphatically prohibit an occupying state from making any unilateral decision that could undermine the status of a disputed territory. Furthermore, changing the electoral map of the state and now granting voting rights to outsiders speaks volumes about the malicious intentions of the Indian government to undermine the role of the indigenous population in the political decision-making process.

Kashmiris are facing a serious existential threat and there is a dire need for the world to come to the rescue of the Kashmiri people and play its part in helping Kashmiris achieve their cherished goal of freedom by allowing them to exercise their right to self-determination guaranteed to them to them by the international community. Lasting peace and security in South Asia depends on the peaceful resolution of the protracted Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with

relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the wishes of the Kashmiri people.

Pakistan calls on the international community to instill in India the imperative to reverse its unilateral and illegal measures instituted in IIOJK since 5 August 2019, stop all human rights violations, revoke demographic changes in IIOJK and peacefully resolve the Jammu and Kashmir dispute in accordance with international legitimacy. Pakistan will continue to provide all possible support to the people of Kashmir for the realization of their inalienable right to self-determination, as enshrined in the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/27012023-an-account-of-indias-demographic-invasion-in-kashmir-oped/>

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The Union of India and Ladakh at Loggerheads

Zukhruf Amin

Four years after the abrogation of Kashmir's special status, Leh and Kargil regions of Ladakh are seeking statehood as well as extension of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. Both regions have found themselves on the same side as per the demands, and have formed a joint core committee to decide the future course of action. Two groups based in the districts of Ladakh – Leh Apex Body (LAB) and Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA) – who have been spearheading this movement in Ladakh, rejected the Union Home Ministry's high-powered committee to end resentment in Ladakh region. Given its [demography](#), Ladakh is home to nearly 300,000 people living in its two districts: the main city of Leh which is predominantly Buddhist, and Muslim-majority Kargil. Culturally and historically affinitive to Tibet, 97% of the region's population is tribal. It comprises of a 46% Muslim population, 40% Buddhists and a 12% of the Hindu population.

The two political bodies have hardened their position on four [key points](#): Statehood; safeguard under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution of India to protect the interests of the tribal people of Ladakh, formation of Public Service Commission and reservation of jobs for youth of Ladakh; and creation of two separate parliamentary constituencies for Leh and Kargil.

The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) had earlier announced the formation of a committee led by Union Minister of State

Nityanand Rai 'to resolve the outstanding issues of Ladakh'. It was followed by an emergency meeting of the LAB and KDA on January 7, 2023, that fiercely rejected and denounced the MHA's announcement. A joint statement noted that "The LAB and the KDA [decided not to accept](#) the formation of the high-powered committee and not attend any meeting conducted under the aegis of the committee as the said committee was not mandated to discuss issues raised by the LAB and the KDA".

The groups' unanimous decision was to strongly protest and '[intensify the agitation](#)' against the BJP-led Union government's refusal to accept its roadmap for resolving the problems in Ladakh. Leader of the Apex Body of Leh and Senior Vice President of Ladakh Buddhist Association Chering Dorjay [highlighted](#) that "given the present scenario, we feel the earlier arrangement of Ladakh, that is being part of J&K, was better. We understand that the Centre is against our demand for statehood and 6th schedule [status]".

With the decision, the Ladakh's leadership has rejected BJP-led Indian government's committee and has made it clear that the region was better off with Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, before August 2019 move of abrogation of the region's special status. Previously, Ladakh was part of the disputed region before the abrogation of Article 370 that [divided the erstwhile disputed territory into two union territories](#) – J&K with a legislature and Ladakh without a legislature. Thereby, the absence of an elected government has deepened the resentment against the Union of India in the border region.

Notably, the resentment in Ladakh pose a major challenge to India amid a military standoff along the Line of Actual Control with China. A day after India scrapped the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hua Chunying issued a [statement](#) that read “the recent unilateral revision of domestic laws by the Indian side continues to undermine China’s territorial sovereignty, which is unacceptable and will not have any effect”. Since the deadly clashes at Ladakh’s Galwan Valley, China and India have been at loggerheads with concerns that tensions between the two could lead to an escalation. It is also believed that India’s refusal to acknowledge the problems in Ladakh has exacerbated the public outcry. This makes the current crisis another cause to impact the geo-political chessboard at the terrain for the Indian government

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/16012023-the-union-of-india-and-ladakh-at-loggerheads-oped/>

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

A Reappraisal of US Failure in Crisis Reliability in Indo-Pacific

Komal Khan

In March 2021, the lead of the United States Indo-Pacific Command, Philip Davidson [alerted](#) the Senate Armed Service Committee of the greatest danger facing the United States in the Indo-Pacific, and that is the erosion of the U.S. conventional deterrence capabilities vis-à-vis China. Two major determinants of this transformation that the U.S. identified are: First, China's credible investment in building the Peoples' Liberation Army; and, second, the adoption of the U.S. precedents of joint warfare that primarily shift the Indo-Pacific military balance unfavorable for the U.S. allied military network and its order in the region.

Moreover, a divulgence of the United States declination of any offensive action to China threat and a potential threat of China's unilateral maneuver of the Indo-Pacific status-quo was made by the Indo-Pacific Command to the Biden Administration in a bid to reassure the United States monopoly over Indo-Pacific power and security dynamics amid ongoing U.S. – China strategic competition in the region.

An assessment of the strategic dynamics of the Indo-Pacific at this time signal another significant implication of this, at least, operational imbalance of conventional deterrence. That is, a strategic erosion of the United States' strength is taking place; however, it is not only due to China's increasing military hold over in region.

Significantly, it is due to intensified indigenous medium power military networks being constructed in the Indo-Pacific security framework to implement an intra-regional integrated deterrence against the China threat. These medium power military networks foresee a security structure that is independent of the bilateral alliances with the U.S., thereby, opting for and consolidating a multipolar model of order in the Indo-Pacific.

Australia, in January 2022, entered into bilateral '[Reciprocal Access Agreement](#)' (JA-RAA) with Japan that legalizes military stationing, training, reciprocal access to facilities and areas, technological cooperation and information exchange between them. The agreement also legalizes allied support that advances extended military deployments as implementation of regional extended network framework to extend their influence by military outreach to counterbalance China in the Indo-Pacific. However, the U.S. – Australia expanded alliance in the Indo-Pacific has persistent significance in terms of increased arms purchase and military trainings. More than three-quarters of the Australian arms imports is from the U.S. However, at the operational level in terms of actual deployment to share the burden of defense, Australia has been [reluctant](#) to be part of the U.S. Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs) held near the artificial islands of China in the South China Sea. Moreover, it is also a fact that Australia does not station the U.S. troops beyond the Marine Rotational Force – Darwin.

Furthermore, realization of the disproportionate burdening of the security

alliances with the U.S., the burden of bases and financial costs have been very crucial in reassessment of the collective security arrangements by the U.S as well as its allies. Therefore, as stated by Sheila A. Smith in her book '[Japan Rearmed: The Politics of Military Power](#)', Japan's military is more interested in deterring a conflict, rather than waging it. To implement this, Japan incorporated amendment in article 9 of the Japanese "MacArthur Constitution," that previously limited full functioning of the Self Defense Forces (SDF), including the offensive military capabilities which are, at this time, workable deterrents particularly in conflict zones.

However, to seek sufficient counterattack military capabilities, as stated above, these medium powers have been collaborating bilaterally in regional minilaterals and at multilateral levels with inclusion of the U.S. to meet advanced technology needs. As in AUKUS, the security arrangement provides Australia with advanced nuclear submarines as counterattack capability. Similarly, the United States and Japan have been collaborating to deploy significant capabilities, including anti-ship missiles on Japanese Islands. Both the states have been in negotiations for the deployment of long-range missiles along the first island chain that stretches from the Japanese archipelago to the Philippines.

Similarly, India is also reluctant to compromise its strategic autonomy while at the same time benefitting from the U.S.-India strategic partnership of the '[equals](#)' that India has been utilizing as an opportunity for its advanced technology and weapons procurement. The dormant utility

of QUAD in terms of military partnership is the reason why the U.S. and its European allies are dragging India into AUKUS – that is more like an alliance in Indo-Pacific. The only intervening reluctance is the unreliability of the United States securities when it comes to actual warfare.

The Ukraine War has also identified a possible failure of the U.S. security assurances wherein the U.S. might sit on the sidelines of the conflict. Moreover, the war also points out the failure of the U.S. security reliability in crisis, thereby, indicating the erosion of the United States' conventional deterrence capability vis-à-vis China and also Russia. This being the case, the concept of collective security is witnessing a transformation into a more regional multilateral medium power integrated deterrence network in the Indo-Pacific, either with or without the United States as part of them.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/30012023-a-reappraisal-of-us-failure-in-crisis-reliability-in-indo-pacific-oped/>

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What is behind the Recalibration of Japanese Security Policy?

Hamdan Khan

On December 16th, 2022, the Japanese cabinet approved three crucial national security documents: 1) [National Security Strategy](#), 2) [National Defense Strategy](#), and 3) Defense Buildup Program. The documents collectively identify challenges and threats to Japan's security and propose counteractive measures to be undertaken during the next five years, essentially marking a paradigm shift in Japan's security policy and military posture.

The transformation: according to new policy documents, Japan would increase its defense spending to meet NATO's standard of 2% of GDP by 2027 meanwhile spending a sum of \$314 billion during the period on defense buildup. For the first time in decades, Japan would acquire long-range "counterstrike" capability to deter attacks besides pledging grand investments in developing cyber and space capabilities. To bolster counterstrike capability, [Japan would acquire](#) more F-35 aircraft capable of vertical landing and would invest in developing hypersonic weapons, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), and 6th generation fighter jets — last in [collaboration](#) with Britain and Italy.

From its humiliating defeat in World War II until the 1970s, Japan maintained a low military profile and relied on the USA's security umbrella for its defense. During the 1970s, Soviet military buildup in the Pacific and the USA's growing engagements

elsewhere compelled Japan to increase its military spending and by the end of the Cold War, Japan has [transformed](#) itself into the "world's foremost military powers". The steady buildup of military capabilities continued through the unipolar era given the regional threats — especially those emanating from North Korea and to some extent China — did not subside in all respects.

Changing Japan's security outlook via revising Article 9 of the Japanese constitution has long been a goal of the ruling [Liberal Democratic Party](#), which considers Japan's constitution as reminiscent of WWII defeat and subsequent occupation by the USA. Nevertheless, the memories of Japan's militaristic past and its aftermath long haunted the Japanese public, which remained vociferously averse to any such emendation. Therefore, despite having a two-thirds majority at one time, Liberal Democratic Party under the late Shinzo Abe as prime minister fell short of introducing any changes to Japan's constitution.

The Abe government, however, did reinterpret the constitution and initiated a makeover of Japan's security posture during its eight years reign (2012-2020). As [James Stavridis puts it](#), "Shinzo Abe's real legacy is military, not economic". In 2014, the Abe government [authorized](#) Japanese troops to act in aid of an under-attack ally. The same year, Abe relaxed the ban on the export of arms, however with the caveat that the exports would only be allowed if they "contributed to the global peace".

In 2018, the Abe government [created](#) National Security Council, which significantly enhanced

Prime Minister's authority in security affairs. Besides making institutional and organizational changes, Abe's era saw a steady increase in Japanese defense spending by leveraging the country's economy, which remains third biggest in the world. Tokyo [acquired](#) cutting-edge weaponry including missile defense systems, new-generation radars capable of detecting targets at a long-range, and fifth-generation F-35 fighters, mostly from the USA.

The recent policy documents mark the culmination of Shinzo Abe's nearly decade-long efforts and essentially purpose to transform Japanese security posture from pacifist to more assertive. Propitiously for the Liberal Democratic Party, in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, public opinion in Japan has [reportedly](#) shifted in favor of changes in security policy.

On the top of the internal predisposition to get away with the memories of WWII humiliation, the external security environment of Japan is also undergoing unprecedented changes, which made the aforementioned modifications inevitable.

China — categorized as the “greatest strategic challenge” in the Japanese National Security Strategy — now wields the world's largest navy by the number of vessels and is speedily expanding to its military footprint in the Western Pacific. Likewise, nuclear-armed North Korea — classified as a threat in the NSS — has grown in belligerence as well as the capabilities. The communist aloof country [conducted](#) the highest number of ballistic missile tests during 2022 — one of which [flew](#) over Japan last October. Moreover, Russia has recently added Japan

to the list of [unfriendly countries](#) after Tokyo joined Western sanctions against Russia. Moscow is not only increasing its military presence in the Pacific but is carrying out joint [naval](#) drills and [air patrols](#) with Beijing evoking anxieties in Tokyo. It goes without saying that the security environment for Japan has become more challenging and complicated than 1970s.

Although the USA has been trying to [reorient](#) itself towards the primary theater of Great Power rivalry i.e. Western Pacific, the transformed European security environment owing to the war in Ukraine would likely inhibit Washington's unqualified reorientation towards the Pacific. Moreover, despite Japan under Abe smartly weathered the Trump assault against the US allies, the eccentric real estate tycoon did galvanize Japanese leadership to be prepared for another isolationist inhabiting the Oval Office. Hence the intent to share more burden in the alliance besides taking an assertive role in regional security matters.

In essence, Japan now seeks to assume primary responsibility for its security meanwhile enjoying the shelter of the USA's security umbrella and extended deterrence. At the same time, Japan is [exploring options](#) beyond the alliance with USA by expanding military partnerships and collaboration with other likeminded countries. The project to develop 6th generation fighter jet in collaboration with Britain and Italy, and the recent [military drills](#) with India underscore Japan's inclination to expand its military partnerships beyond Washington.

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