



CISSS

CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STRATEGIC STUDIES SINDH



CISSS SINCE ITS INCEPTION

Editor-in-Chief

Executive Director

Ambassador Qazi M. Khalilullah (Retd)

Editor

Director Research

Mr Mohid Iftikhar

Contributors

Research Officer

Ms Iraj Abid

Research Officer

Ms Farzana Wahid

Research Assistant


Mr Usama Khan


Research Assistant

Ms Areeba Azhar

Contact Us

 House 16/1, Khayaban-e-Muhafiz, D.H.A Phase 6, Karachi

 [+92-21-35340881](tel:+92-21-35340881) & [+92-21-37120330](tel:+92-21-37120330)

 info@cisss.org.pk

 @ CISSS_Karachi

 www.facebook.com/CISSS-Karachi

 www.instagram.com/cisss_karachi

Contents

About CISSS	5
CISSS Advisory Board	6
Composition of Team CISSS	7
CISSS Introductory Workshop	8
BTTN-CISSS Joint Study Tour	11
CISSS Participation in the International Conference on Strategic Stability & Nuclear Security	11
Diplomatic Segment	12
CISSS Outreach Programme	13
Visit to National Centre for Artificial Intelligence (NCAI) NED University Karachi	13
Annexure 1	14
CISSS Op-Eds	19

About CISSS

The Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh (CISSS) is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-commercial and multidisciplinary research-oriented organisation.

CISSS was established in February 2021. However, it became operational with its full strength of twenty two researchers on 1st July 2021. Lt Gen Nadeem Zaki Manj, Director General Strategic Plans Division (SPD) inaugurated CISSS on 26 November 2021.

CISSS is committed to conducting rigorous and fact-based research and analysis of contemporary strategic issues.

CISSS: Concept, Rationale and Objectives

CISSS has been established as a Think Tank to interact with key opinion makers from various walks of life and young scholars in Sindh with a view to developing a better understanding of Pakistan's narrative on regional and global issues of interest to Pakistan.

CISSS will establish positive linkages with academic institutions of higher learning in Sindh. It will sponsor and groom a talent pool of young scholars with a view to presenting Pakistan's strategic narrative through effective writing, talks and wide participation in seminars and conferences.

CISSS intends to host and provide a forum to national and international think tanks, and those involved in Track -1.5/2 dialogues, to engage in meaningful debate on official policies on nuclear/strategic subjects within the ambit of the larger national narrative of Pakistan.

CISSS aims to provide innovative, practical and timely input on national and strategic affairs to decision makers.

CISSS will strive to become the go-to think tank for academics and intellectuals in Sindh and beyond.

CISSS will provide opportunities to young scholars through research and analysis and fellowships programmes, essay competitions, virtual courses on nuclear deterrence and other interactive engagements.

Mission Statement

- Developing a better understanding of Pakistan's strategic narrative.
- Promoting strategic stability for peace and security in South Asia and beyond.
- Highlighting Pakistan's achievements in peaceful uses of nuclear and space technologies for sustainable development.

CISSS Activities

In order to achieve its goal of becoming a leading think tank of Pakistan, CISSS is carrying out several activities to promote Pakistan's narrative at national and international levels. Some of those activities include hosting conferences and seminars, guest lecture series, diplomatic segment, outreach programme and publications.

CISSS Advisory Board





Lt. Gen Tariq
Waseem Ghazi (R)



Lt. Gen. Khalid Ahmed
Kidwai NI, HI, HI (M),
(R) Advisor Development
National Command
Authority



Lieutenant General
Nadeem Zaki Manj, HI
(M) Director General
Strategic Plans Division
(SPD)



Brig. Zahir Kazmi, DG
Arms Control and
Disarmament Affairs
(SPD)



Mr. Anwer Mansoor,
former Attorney General
of Pakistan



Dr. Syed Shafqat Shah Jamote,
Industrialist, Agriculturist,
former Federal Minister for
Agriculture



Ambassador
Mustafa Kamal
Kazi (R)



Prof. Dr. Ataur Rehman,
former Chairman HEC and
Minister for Science and
Technology



Dr. Huma Baqai,
Associate Professor,
IBA Main Campus



Nusrat Mirza, Political
Scientist, Senior
Journalist. Author



Ms. Mehtab Akber Rashidi,
former Bureaucrat and TV
Personality



Mr. Iqbal Adamjee,
Industrialist,
Businessman



Dr. Shaista Tabassum,
former Chairperson IR
Department, UoK

Composition of Team CISSS

CISSS is headed by Executive Director and has twenty-two researchers: Two Directors Research, two Associate Directors Research, ten Research Officers and eight Research Assistants. Team CISSS is sub-divided into four Research Teams: two are headed by Directors Research and two by Associate Directors Research.



Ambassador Qazi M. Khalilullah (Retd)
Executive Director



Lt. Col. Azfar Bilal Qureshi TI (M) (Retd)
Associate Director Research-I



Dr. Saba Sahar
Associate Director Research-II



Mr. Mohid Iftikhar
Director Research-II



Mr. Aftab Hussain
Director Research-I



Abdul Samad (RO)



Tarique Ahmed Abro (RO)



Areesha Anwer (RO)



Anwer Ali (RO)



Syeda Sabiha Mehreen Rizvi (RO)



Zubaida Abbasi (RO)



Farzana Wahid (RO)



Safia Malik (RO)



Iraj Abid (RO)



Jawad Ali Shah (RA)



Muhammad Usama Khan (RA)



Sumair Ayoob (RA)



Areeba Azhar (RA)



Zeeshan Hyder (RA)



Saad Aalam (RA)



Usman Ghani (RA)

CISSS Introductory Workshop

An Introductory Workshop was held at CISSS from 5 July 2021 to 16 July 2021. The Workshop comprised six modules, namely: (i) National Security; (ii) Peaceful Applications of Nuclear and Space Programs (PANSP); (iii) Nuclear Safety, Security and Regulatory Regime (NSSRR); (iv) Strategic Stability and Deterrence (SSD); (v) Non-proliferation, Arms Control and Disarmament Regime (NACDR); and (vi) Geopolitics. Team CISSS also visited Karachi Nuclear Power Plant-2 (K-2 NPP) on 9 July 2021 as part of the Introductory Workshop.

As part of the Workshops, the following resource persons delivered talks at CISSS:



Lt Gen Khalid Ahmed Kidwai NI, HI, HI (M), (R), Advisor Development National Command Authority, speaking on Pakistan's Nuclear Programme – A Multi-Dimensional Deterrence Capability for National Security (5 July 2021)



Lt Gen Tariq Waseem Ghazi (R), former Secretary of Defence, speaking on National Sovereignty and Territorial Integrity of Pakistan – Challenges and Opportunities (6 July 2021)



Ambassador Zamir Akram (R) speaking on the International Security Environment and Foreign Policy Determinants for Pakistan (5 July 2021)



Dr Syed Shafqat Shah Jamote speaking on National Integration and the Challenges of Inter Provincial and Intra Provincial Harmony (6 July 2021)



Lt Gen Aamer Riaz (R) speaking on National Security Framework: Vision, Vital National Interests and their Pursuit (6 July 2021)



Maj Gen Amer Nadeem, Chairman SUPARCO, speaking on Pakistan's Space Program for Socio-Economic Development (7 July 2021)



Dr Mansoor Ahmed speaking on Nuclear Technology: Radiation, Fission, Fusion and Nuclear Fuel Cycle, Fissionable and Fissile Materials: Global Fissile Materials Stocks Estimates, and Nuclear Weapons (8 July 2021)



Maj Gen Ausaf Ali (R), Former DG Operations and Plans SPD, speaking on Emerging Technologies – Challenges and Opportunities of Pakistan’s Deterrence Policies, with Focus on Artificial Intelligence (14 July 2021)



Mr Muhammad Rehman, DG PNRA, speaking on Nuclear Safety and Regulatory Mechanism of Pakistan (12 July 2021)



Captain Dr Aqeel Akhtar (R), Deputy Director ACDA, speaking on Reducing Nuclear Risk (16 July 2021)



Brig Zahir Kazmi, DG ACDA, speaking on Nuclear Lexicon, the Concepts of Strategic Stability and Nuclear Deterrence, the Nuclear Order (13 July 2021)



Brig Imran Hassan, Director ACDA, speaking on the Evolution of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Regime (15 July 2021)



Dr Lubna Kidwai speaking on Epistemic Beliefs and Responses to Information and Perspectives in World of Media (13 July 2021)



Brig Haroon Rasheed, Director ACDA, speaking on Strategic Exports Control Regime: Pakistan and India (16 July 2021)



Air Cdr Waseem Qutub, Director ACDA, speaking on History of US-Russia Arms Control and Disarmament, and the China Factor (16 July 2021)



Dr Huma Baqai, Associate Professor IBA Karachi, speaking on Indo-US Strategic Partnership: Past, Present and Future (10 January 2022)



Team CISSS visited K-2 NPP as part of introductory workshop (9 July 2021)

BTTN-CISSL Joint Study Tour

Team Balochistan Think Tank Network (BTTN) visited Karachi on 7-14 November 2021 for joint study tour with the Team CISSL. The study tour programme had three components: (i) Strategic Get-to-Know Seminar; (ii) Visit to national facilities; and (iii) Social events.

AD NCA, Lt Gen Khalid Kidwai, addressed the Strategic Get-to-Know Seminar during which presentations were made by Teams CISSL and BTTN.

Visits to national facilities included K-2 NPP and SCF-K Directorate SUPARCO. Visits were also organised to Maritime and PAF Museums. The social component included visit to Nathiagali Beach and dining out.

Dr Lubna Khalid Kidwai delivered a lecture on “What matters in academic writing?”



CISSL Participation in the International Conference on Strategic Stability & Nuclear Security

Team CISSL participated in the International Conference on Strategic Stability and Nuclear Security: Global and Regional Perspectives. It was jointly organised by the Center for International Strategic Studies (CISS) Islamabad and International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) London on 8 December 2021, in Islamabad. The Keynote Address at the conference was delivered by former DG SPD Lt Gen Khalid Ahmed Kidwai NI, HI, HI (M), (R), AD NCA (Annexure 1)



CISSS Diplomatic Segment

As part of the Diplomatic Segment, three retired Ambassadors of Pakistan delivered talks on various issues at CISSS.



Ambassador Naghmana Alamgir Hashmi (R) speaking on Pakistan-China Relations in the Era of Great Power Competition (21 December 2021)



Ambassador Mustafa Kamal Kazi (R) speaking on Pakistan-Russia Relations: Past, Present and Future (28 December 2021)



Ambassador Najmuddin Shaikh (R) speaking on Expressing Solidarity with the Brutalized People of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) (4 February 2022)

CISSS Outreach Programme

As part of its Outreach Programme, Team CISSS delivered talks on strategic issues at DHA Suffa University and Institute of Business Administration (IBA) Main Campus, Karachi.



Executive Director CISSS Amb Qazi M. Khalilullah and Director Research Mr. Aftab Hussain speaking at DHA Suffa University (20 January 2022)



Executive Director speaking during the Q&A session at IBA main campus Karachi (28 February 2022)

Visit to National Centre for Artificial Intelligence (NCAI) NED University Karachi

Team CISSS visited Smart City and Neuro-Computation Labs under National Centre for Artificial Intelligence (NCAI) based in NED University Karachi on 7 March 2022. The purpose of the visit was to familiarize Team CISSS with the status of Artificial Intelligence in Pakistan.



Team CISSS being briefed on AI-based applications at NCAI (7 March 2022)



Group photo of Team CISSS at Smart City Lab, NED University (7 March 2022)

Annexure 1

Keynote Address by former DG SPD Lt Gen Khalid Ahmed Kidwai, NI, HI, HI (M) at The Center for International Strategic Studies (CISS) International Conference Islamabad 08 December 2021

1. Ladies and gentlemen. Good evening, and good morning, to all of you in your different time zones. I start with good wishes for everyone and the hope that since I last spoke at the IISS-CISS Workshop on the 6th of February 2020 at London everyone has remained safe from the ravages of the Covid-19 Pandemic which started to engulf the world just about the time as we dispersed that day.
2. Given the construct of today's topic the way I see it, there are four clear notions that need to be addressed in an integrated manner: there is Strategic Stability; there is Nuclear Security; Global Perspectives and Regional Perspectives on these. And because of the cooperative nature and context of the IISS-CISS traditional academic focus, when we will talk of regional perspectives South Asia will take center stage as the relevant context. Further, since today's event is in the nature of a continuum, I have considered it appropriate in my talk to first reconnect with the essence of what I had to say on the 6th of February 2020 as a recap, and from there pick up the threads of international and regional developments that have taken place during the last two years in as much as these are relevant to today's topic.
3. To recap I am highlighting three main points that I had made in the context of South Asian Strategic Stability two years ago in London:
4. The first point I made was that in the strategic stability-instability paradigm of South Asia it has become Pakistan's responsibility to ensure that strategic stability will not be disturbed to Pakistan's disadvantage at any stage despite India's consistent efforts to swing the pendulum towards instability. At each stage of the swing of the pendulum towards strategic instability Pakistan restored the strategic balance through appropriate and effective counter measures. In the last two years, the upward trend has continued unabated with India inducting, amongst others, destabilizing systems like the Rafael fighters, the S-400 System, the Predator Drones and generally upping the ante while pursuing the nuclear triad on land, air and particularly in the Nuclearization of the Indian Ocean. Pakistan will not let these destabilizing inductions or even doctrines to create instability; strategic stability will be maintained or re-established at all cost. Pakistan's responses should therefore be seen in that context.
5. The second point I made was with reference to India's failed air strike against Balakot in mainland Pakistan on 26th February 2019 consequent to its false flag operation at Pulwama, as a reckless strategy for domestic electoral purposes. In this regard I had said two things:
 - (1) One, that Pakistan's nuclear policy of Full Spectrum Deterrence had prevented the conflict from escalating to higher dangerous rungs and further therefore, I had cautioned India not to consider Pakistan's robust nuclear capability as a bluff as was then evident in the flawed thinking and statements of most in India's civil and military higher echelons.
 - (2) Two, if an irresponsible military adventure were to be undertaken by India, Pakistan will respond forcefully under its retaliatory doctrine of Quid Pro Quo Plus. And indeed Pakistan did lay out an effective practical demonstration of the Quid Pro Quo Plus doctrine successfully the very next day of Balakot on the 27th of February 2019. Pakistan launched retaliatory air strikes around, not one, but three sensitive Indian military targets, shooting down two Indian fighters in the process, capturing one of the pilots (and letting him go home), creating operational paralysis in the IAF system of forces leading to the shooting down of an Indian helicopter by India's own air defences, generously sparing the Indian Army's very senior military leadership present at one of the ground targets and, at sea, allowing one Indian Naval submarine which had deliberately entered into Pakistani waters on an operational mission, to turn around



and go home safely with a warning only. These Pakistani responses on land, air and at sea, I think, were ‘plus’ enough for one Balakot – and for one day! Let me caution India once again that if challenged Pakistan will do it again. I say this with emphasis because one hears again the whispers of a possible false flag operation by India as a signature Modi/BJP electoral strategy prior to the upcoming State Elections in February 2022 in 5 States including the critical States of Uttar Pradesh and East Punjab.

1. The third point I made was with reference to India’s unfortunate transition from a vibrant secular democracy to a religious extremist-cum-fascist autocracy. I had said, and I quote, “.....the gloves are off, the mask is off, and the veneer of secularism is dead. India in 2020 is now well and truly Hindustan, of the Hindus, by the Hindus and for the Hindus. The transformation from India to Hindustan, over a period of 72 years, now carries the duly stamped ownership of the vast multitudes of the Hindu population which voted for the BJP/RSS heavily,” unquote. Today, at the close of 2021, India’s transition stands consolidated as reflected in India’s formal state policies inside India, inside occupied Jammu and Kashmir, all across on the streets of India, in acts, in deeds, in formal legislation, and in the psycho-social schisms between communities and castes that have been promoted and encouraged by the State. These trends run contrary to the accepted norms of civilized societies and civilized behavior, and carry within them the germs of not only internal social mayhem for India but also from Pakistan’s perspective, the potential to destabilize the region at large. The hardened extremist mindsets and attitudes prevalent in India today prevent rational thinking, discourage dialogue and diplomacy as instruments of peace and security, choose instead ill-considered indirect military and intelligence based strategies as simplistic solutions to complex regional conflicts. The cumulative effect of India’s transformation from a vibrant secular democracy to a religious extremist autocracy has put at serious risk the notions of regional strategic stability and security; it is unsettling for India’s neighborhood.
2. Having recapped the three essential points that I had made in my talk two years ago, I shall now move on to recall some of the major global and regional events that have shaped geo-politics broadly in the last two years and how these have impacted strategic stability and security especially in South Asia.
3. While the world grappled with the pandemic, global and regional competitions and confrontations did not take a back seat. If at all the contours of the competition and confrontation have assumed sharper and more defined shapes with fallout effects everywhere especially, from our perspective, in South Asia. Strategic stability and security of nations continues to remain under pressure and the four countries directly affected, that is, the US, China, India and Pakistan continue to make policy adjustments according to their respective national interests. This is history in motion and in the making even as we enjoy observing it from our ringside seats. The final outcomes will perhaps be more clearly visible in the coming years only when the dust has settled and hopefully the strategic competitions have stabilized into a more manageable pattern.
4. The US election in November 2020, even though disputed strongly by both sides, resulted in President Joe Biden replacing President Trump in January 2021. The change of guard however signified no significant change in what may be labeled as a defining US C3 policy against China: Containment, Competition and Confrontation, not necessarily in that order. The threat of a rising, and some think an already risen, China has focused sharply the undivided attention of the US and its allies. If at all the C3 policy has become only more strident generating far reaching global and strategic effects in different regions. While the C3 Policy is likely to vary in intensity and emphasis, on Containment, on Competition, on Confrontation according to the demands of a particular time, it does somewhat unfairly compel countries to choose sides reminiscent of the two decades ago syndrome of “you are either with us or against us”. Many countries find that discomfoting.
5. The world now seems to be on the cusp of a new cold war; groupings interestingly are being defined in near geometric terms and shapes. While we had long gotten used to the shape of the Pentagon as an international driving force but then we got the Quadrilateral or the Quad, and now recently the Triangular AUKUS. Nevertheless, the effects of the rise of China and the US C3 policy now being articulated through some of these groupings touch South Asia in different ways.
6. In this context I would like to mention two recent developments, one political and the other military, which are open to interpretations in more than one way but whose immediate effects have been felt but long term implications will take time to emerge.

7. First, the virtual meeting between President Biden and President Xi Jin Ping. It was historic, it was timely but above all it was an act of statesmanship. While future results will take time to emerge, one immediate effect probably should be to bring down by a degree or two the geo-political global warming and that undoubtedly is good for global and regional strategic stability. Pakistan welcomes the dialogue.
8. Second, the test by China of a nuclear capable missile carrying a hypersonic glide vehicle including the launch of a separate missile from that vehicle after the vehicle had flown into space and completed a partial orbit of the earth. To put it mildly, it was impressive, it was unprecedented, and it was a surprise for most, some of whom quickly termed the event as a possible Sputnik moment! Whether it was a Sputnik moment or not, the impact of the test on global and regional strategic stability or instability will be determined in the coming years. There lurks, however, the danger that the missile test and the reported alarm about the exposure of a serious technology gap would be used or hyped to secure greater military budgets under the garb of closing the reported technology gap. This may open another avenue for an arms race down the strategic chain, a sure recipe for strategic instability globally and in regions like South Asia.
9. From global developments of the last two years I shall now move on to some of the key regional developments that from Pakistan's perspective have either impacted or have the potential to impact strategic stability and security in South Asia. Amongst these I shall count Kashmir, the Indo-China clashes of the summer of 2020, Afghanistan and the consequences of US withdrawal.
10. First Kashmir. The strategic effects both political and military of the revocation of Articles 370 and 35-A of the Indian Constitution on the 5th of August 2019 continue to reverberate strongly in the region. The Indian action of unilaterally declaring the territory of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh as Union Territories has had politico-military consequences which are not going to go away. Both China and Pakistan rejected the action instantly as did the under occupation hapless Kashmiris who continue to suffer immense barbarities at the hands of nearly 900,000 Indian occupation forces as well as an open ended inhumane lockdown of their lives and society. 7 million human beings have been locked up in prison. That does not however weaken in any way the well-recognized fact that the Kashmir conflict remains the fundamental source of strategic instability in South Asia and an internationally acknowledged nuclear flashpoint.
11. Second, the Indo-China clashes on the Line of Actual Control (LAC). The undemarcated borders between India and China have a long history of being unstable which in the past led to the Indo-China War of 1962, the routing of India's Army, loss of territory and in 2017 to the Doklam standoff. The 1962 War has left indelible scars on India's politico-military psyche. Despite this, India's ill-considered expansion of its road communications network and infrastructure development in the disputed areas of Ladakh on the Line of Actual Control with China together with the unilateral announcement of the absorption of Ladakh as Union Territory in 2019 invited what one might call the self-inflicted disaster in the summer of 2020. Consequent to China's reactions to the provocations, India reportedly lost over a thousand square kilometers of claimed territory without firing a bullet and was humiliated. Some of the strategic consequences of the clashes were:
12. Political acceptance of the losses by India's political leadership as fait accompli when Prime Minister Modi declared with a straight face that "no post has been lost, no territory has been lost". It amounted to capitulation indicating neither the capability nor the intention of recovering the lost territories.
13. The Indian military's follow on redeployments on the Chinese border of nearly 3800 kilometers from Ladakh in the west to Arunachal Pradesh in the east following the major intelligence failure and operational paralysis in mounting a response at Ladakh may affect its strategic and operational capabilities on its western borders with Pakistan. These redeployments in the north over time may even become permanent exacting a cost in men and materials as well as in strategies and doctrines in the coming years.
14. The emergence of a massive logistical effort in the extreme cold, barren winters of Ladakh at altitudes close to 14000 feet plus, is many times the size of the logistical effort required to maintain the Indian military occupation of the disputed Siachen Glacier.
15. To begin with, India made an exaggerated choice of strategic over reach in the last two years, driven by gung ho political over drive rather than military logic. Resultantly today, India is riding three tigers

simultaneously; the LAC (Line of Actual Control with China), the LOC (Line of Control with Pakistan) and the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Now having trapped itself in a strategic quandary, India is propagating and selling the effects of its ill-considered strategic over reach under the bogus threat of a two front war scenario with China and Pakistan. This in order to appeal to its distant allies for more and more military and advanced technological assistance and play on the concerns of the US C3 Policy against China; this is typical and reminiscent of what India did post the 1962 Indo-China War debacle. If India's allies buy into these clever politico-military ploys of India, which they seem to, and introduce technologically advanced weaponry in the region, strategic stability in South Asia would be poorly served. It will create the effects of instability for Pakistan and will be unacceptable. Pakistan will be compelled therefore to respond as it deems fit and enhance reliance for its security in cost effective deterrence areas of its choice. History is witness to Pakistan's determination.

16. Third, the developments in Afghanistan. The successful conclusion of talks between the Trump Administration and the Taliban at Doha culminated in a framework agreement for withdrawal of US and allied troops from Afghanistan. However, in the implementation stage under the Biden Administration, the chaotic withdrawal of US and allied troops from Afghanistan together with the surprisingly rapid collapse of the Afghan National Army and the Ashraf Ghani Government led to the takeover of Kabul by the Taliban on the 15th of August this year. This was followed by a relatively short consolidation phase as the Taliban established their writ across all of Afghanistan including the Panjshir Valley.
17. The rapidly emerging adverse situation in Afghanistan came as a body blow to India as its two decades old strategy of bleeding Pakistan on its western borders through blatantly organized state terrorism collapsed overnight. The Indian contingents found safety in beating a hasty retreat from Afghanistan and India was in a state of shock over the debacle. India not only lost its politico-military-intelligence network and influence but also its heavy monetary and strategic investment in Afghanistan. Pakistan for now breathes easy because the security situation on the western border has started to improve.
18. At another level with reference to Afghanistan, however, Pakistan has been disappointed by the post-withdrawal policies of some in the international community towards Pakistan. Despite Pakistan's sincere cooperation and facilitation in the Doha talks for nearly two years, subsequently in the evacuation of foreign citizens from Afghanistan, Pakistan has been scapegoated ruthlessly for the failings of others. A strange narrative was coined whereby Pakistan was held responsible for 20 years of follies. It remains quite beyond Pakistan's comprehension. As an important and responsible regional country, Pakistan nevertheless will exercise strategic patience for the headwinds to blow away and the dust to settle. Pakistan is a pivotal regional country and cannot be ignored for long.
19. In the meanwhile, in the immediate aftermath of the rapid power transition in Afghanistan, Pakistan has a vital role to play in preventing a looming humanitarian disaster in Afghanistan in the upcoming winter. Pakistan has taken a series of urgent steps in terms of sending large quantities of wheat, food, medicines and other relief goods to the stricken people of Afghanistan. Pakistan has also gone the extra mile in making an exception on humanitarian grounds and allowing the flow of 50000 Metric tons of wheat and medicines by road from India to Afghanistan. Pakistan stands ready to offer facilitation in this respect; this has got to be beyond politics.
20. And finally a few thoughts on the notion of nuclear security. In this context, let me start with recalling one of the fundamental principles of global perspectives on nuclear security. The fundamental principle that was agreed upon at the conclusion of the initiative taken by President Obama in the series of Nuclear Security Summits (NSS) was that nuclear security was a national responsibility. Let me repeat for emphasis nuclear security was a national responsibility. These summits were meticulously planned and professionally conducted by top ranking experts from a large number of countries after much debate. We are grateful to the experts for making the world a safer place
21. Pakistan values and follows the NSS conclusions in letter and spirit. Post 9/11, with the commencement of the War on Terror there were serious concerns the world over about nuclear materials falling in the hands of terrorists. The specter of a nuclear Armageddon as a consequence of such an eventuality happening, or at the very least the possibility of a dirty bomb exploding in cities, became a catalyst for

laying the highest emphasis on securing nuclear materials and infrastructure the world over – but as a national responsibility. That is the global perspective. I recommend strongly that the focus on worldwide nuclear security must remain; however, the focus must be apolitical and not a tool for selective political intimidation.

22. As for Pakistan, we took our responsibilities and obligations with the seriousness that nuclear security demanded not only to address the broader international concerns on the issue but in Pakistan's own interest as a responsible nuclear power. Not after the post Nuclear Security Summit process but 11 years before that since the establishment in April 1999 of Pakistan's National Command Authority and the Strategic Plans Division as the one window institution for all matters nuclear in Pakistan, nuclear security of men, materials and infrastructure became a leading Pakistani priority. A professionally conceived comprehensive national nuclear security plan was implemented across the country in quick time. Some of the elements comprised of robust physical security including the raising of a variety of dedicated, well trained and well equipped security and intelligence forces, Personal Reliability Programmes (PRP), Material Control and Accounting (MC&A), establishment of a state of the art Training Academy, later renamed as PCENS or Pakistan Center of Excellence for Nuclear Security. PCENS has earned the distinction of recognition by the IAEA as a nuclear security regional training hub and is open to visitors. Similarly, on the diplomatic side, Pakistan entered the mainstream of a variety of international nuclear security related regimes. We went to the extent of saying that for nuclear security there were no upper limits to education. Where we felt necessary, we did not hesitate to cooperate and learn from the world while retaining our red lines.
23. I would like to say that like education in nuclear security, we also strongly believed that there were no upper limits to investment in nuclear security. Nuclear security is a process, a continuous process, where more and more investments reward you with more and more professionally satisfying solutions to different threats and instills confidence. Pakistan invested heavily and today draws the benefits, comfort and confidence of a nuclear weapons power that has secured its nuclear men, materials and infrastructure according to the highest international standards. I would like to mention with satisfaction that in Pakistan, despite the geographical spread of vast numbers of nuclear facilities, there has not been a single instance of a nuclear security lapse; this includes the most intense period of foreign sponsored terrorism inside Pakistan between 2007 and 2014. Now that Pakistan has won its own war on terror through determined and professionally conducted operations, the overall internal threat has largely receded and the security environments have vastly improved. Having said that, the process of continuous improvements in nuclear security must go on because there must never be complacency. There are countries that I believe have strong National Technical Means (NTMs). I am sure they must have made good use of these because a large number of responsible international personalities whether visiting Pakistan or not, appreciated and expressed confidence on record in Pakistan's efforts in the areas of nuclear security.
24. Before I end, ladies and gentlemen, I would like to express Pakistan's disappointment with the revival lately of uncalled for insinuations about Pakistan's nuclear security in the aftermath of the developments in Afghanistan post 15 August. First, in a consistent pattern of negative media reporting as an extension and veritable arm of pressure policy. Second, strangely enough, by some senior important personalities who I thought ought to know better from the vantage points of professional information and their high offices. The apprehensions expressed in certain otherwise responsible quarters about events in Afghanistan impacting Pakistan's nuclear security, are not only misplaced and ill-founded but, in my opinion, stretch one's professional imagination beyond reasonable logic.
25. Nuclear security is too serious a business to be used as tools of political intimidation, point scoring or subjected to inadequately deliberated statements. Pakistan would expect that considered opinions must reflect objectivity, evidence, professionalism, and meet the high standards of confidentiality lest these become counter-productive. If the canvass of genuine concern for global and regional nuclear security were to be broadened, politically and geographically, I can recommend areas in Pakistan's immediate neighborhood which need more focused attention and help in order to prevent smuggling of nuclear materials leading to international catastrophes.
26. I thank you ladies and gentlemen.

Delta narrative against Pakistan

Western bias can be called Delta Narrative, is marinated in Indian animosity towards Pakistan

Qazi Khalilullah September 21, 2021



The writer is Executive Director Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh and Former Ambassador of Pakistan to Russia

Owing to the willful negligence of the West, the world has failed to prevent the spread of Delta variant of Covid-19, which originated in India. Consequently, more than 130 countries have been affected by the so-called Delta variant that has caused colossal human and economic losses. There are consequences of keeping doors open to Indian Delta carriers, despite irrefutable evidence that the country is an epicentre of Covid-19.

Since the Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan on 15 August 2021, West is a victim to sinister Indian narrative scapegoating Pakistan for the American rout. This Western bias can be called Delta Narrative. It is marinated in Indian animosity towards Pakistan to undermine Afghanistan's prospects of peace, stability and economic development.

Former US national security advisor John Bolton ranks high among Indian apologists and has a history of Delta Narrative. On 23 August 2021, in a piece in WaPo, he ill-advised the US to commit to a policy that would fuel conflict and instability in the region.

One gets astounded at the flight of Bolton's imagination about the possible impact of Taliban-led Afghanistan on Pakistan's future and its nuclear weapons. He advocated accelerating the US tilt towards India and punitive measures against Pakistan.

Bolton's Pakistan-itch is as well-known as his taste for new American conflicts around the world. He is considered as a foreign policy hawk, nationalist, neoconservative and a warmonger. It is believed that President Trump fired him for such inconsistencies in judgement. Although he lacks credibility, the former NSA's inaccurate statements must not go unchallenged.

Notwithstanding Bolton's "compelling reasons" to endlessly sustain the US and NATO military presence in Afghanistan, the policy decision of Trump, and of President Biden, to withdraw from Afghanistan and push for a political settlement was right.

A military solution was never a panacea for Afghanistan. Without any evidence, Bolton pinned the blame for failure in Afghanistan on Pakistan. Is it Islamabad's fault that the 300,000-strong Afghan National Defense and Security Forces, trained by the US, collapsed like a house of cards? Is Pakistan responsible for the wastage of at least \$83 billion of the American taxpayers' money? The former NSA should have looked up various American assessments that expose lack of governance, corruption, desertions and ghost soldiers that led to the failure in Afghanistan.

The so-called war on terror has cost Pakistan dearly in blood and treasure — 80,000+ casualties and at least \$150 billion. Islamabad partnered with the US to defeat al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups. The blowback was enormous: urban centres were bombed, millions of people were displaced, and India used this as an opportunity to wage terrorism in Pakistan through Afghanistan. Regrettably, instead of receiving appreciation, Islamabad has been a target of propaganda from the likes of Bolton.

Pakistan benefits the most from peace and stability in Afghanistan but India and some others do not. In his recent book, Bolton claimed that one of the primary reasons for American presence in Afghanistan was to keep an eye on Pakistan's nuclear programme.

Conversely, Pakistan has been facilitating the efforts for a political settlement in Afghanistan to reap dividends of economic security and regional connectivity.

Bolton also claimed that Pakistan's nuclear assets will end up in the hands of terrorists. That is an unfounded and politically motivated expression of concern. Although Islamabad does not need any external certificate for its nuclear safety and security credentials, it is worth recalling that IAEA and several American top officials have praised Pakistan's nuclear safety and security regime. It is obvious that Bolton neither chose to take these into account nor did he have the good sense to point out the recent grave nuclear security lapses in India.

Pakistan's national nuclear security regime is governed by the National Command Authority, which is a well-defined nuclear command and control structure, chaired by the PM. The regime is based on extensive legislative and regulatory framework governing the security of nuclear materials. Pakistan also has a stringent Personnel Reliability Programme and elaborate intelligence and security setups to deal with issues related to nuclear security.

The system has worked effectively for well over two decades in ensuring security of the country, security of the assets themselves, radiating the necessary deterrence effects and has facilitated the development of strategic weapons as per the policy of Credible Minimum Deterrence, evolving over time to the policy of Full Spectrum Deterrence in 2011.

It is the confidence in the efficacy of the system validated over time including the peak periods of terrorism in the country that allows Pakistani decision-makers to reassure the nation and the international community about the safety and security of the strategic assets.

Being a party to various international instruments that are aimed at strengthening national and global nuclear security architecture, Pakistan has engaged with the international community for years to dispel the myths and ludicrous insinuations that were carried in Bolton's piece.

There is a need to worry about the nuclear arsenal of India, which at present is in the hands of a Hindu extremist party, where extremism is on the rise, whose propensity for revisionism and conflict is well-known, and whose Prime Minister has openly boasted about India's nuclear arsenal not being for fireworks. India is the only nuclear-armed state that has committed an act of aggression against another nuclear power.

For geopolitical reasons, the world looks the other way on India's irresponsible nuclear behaviour. India acted irresponsibly when its fighter aircraft intruded Pakistan airspace on 26 February 2019 and dropped bombs in Balakot. India was given a waiver by the Nuclear Suppliers Group and also allowed to operate eight reactors outside the IAEA safeguards. The three cases of nuclear material trafficking that surfaced recently in India have not rung alarm bells because of political reasons. Yet, Bolton advocates an accelerated US "tilt" towards India.

Bolton should understand that scapegoating one's failures never helps. Unfounded and unwarranted allegations made in his piece against Pakistan must therefore be rejected, with the contempt it deserves.

Pakistan has always been a peace-loving and peacemaking country. Islamabad worked closely with the US, China, Russia and other countries to facilitate dialogue and agreement between the US and Taliban. It also facilitated reconciliation process between Taliban and Ashraf Ghani-led government, but he fled the country. Pakistan is a leader in extending assistance to international community evacuating from Afghanistan.

Islamabad has no favourites in Afghanistan and supports an inclusive government in Kabul. Conversely, Bolton and his likes have always had favourites and continue to pay the price for that. An Afghanistan which is at peace with itself as well as at peace with others is in the best interest of everyone. Afghanistan needs a healing touch. Pakistan is willing to work with international community to extend all possible assistance to the people of Afghanistan.

To conclude, it is worth recalling that in January 2011, during his visit to Pakistan, the then Vice President Biden said, "... we have learned from the past that only a productive way forward, the only productive way forward is a long-term enduring partnership [with Pakistan]."

Pakistan hopes that President Biden will not cloud his judgement by the birds of Bolton's feather. He has extensive experience in the region and would not pay heed to the Delta Narrative against

Pakistan, spoilers and primary architects of the debacle, who are least qualified to offer suggestions and are unable to draw any lessons from the history.

Published in The Express Tribune, September 21st, 2021.

Deconstructing India's two-front Mantra | By Abdul Samad

By
News desk Pakistan Observer

-
February 2, 2022

ACCORDING to the international security expert Barry Buzan, nation states construct threats through framing, speech acts and referent objects.

One of the central concepts in securitization theory is 'showing the rhetorical structure of decision-makers when framing an issue and attempting to convince an audience to lift the issue above politics'.

India's much trumpeted mantra of fighting a two-front war fits into Professor Buzan's argument and reflects the subjective construction of a collusive threat from Pakistan and China.

The smokescreen of a two-front challenge has been constructed by New Delhi for multiple self-serving purposes.

In essence, India uses this mantra as a ploy to extract political and military concessions from the West.

Internally, the Indian military amplifies the threat to secure more funding under the guise of combat readiness.

This façade also serves to hide India's own follies under the Modi government.

In actual fact, India's unilateral measures of 5 August 2019 to revoke the special status of Kashmir and incorporate occupied Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh as Union exacerbated tensions with China over the status of Ladakh.

Modi's political blunder also stoked anti-India sentiment in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Both Pakistan and China rejected Indian illegal actions. In public pronouncements, senior Indian military officials such as the late General Bipin Rawat and former Indian Air Chief R K S Bhadauria have called for operational readiness using the two-front mantra.

This has been packaged as a collusive threat and propagated through a compliant media.

Academic discourse from within India, however, testifies to the reality that India's two-front narrative is fallacious and politically motivated.

Evidence for this comes from saner voices such as that of Sushant Singh, a retired military official who has served as Deputy Editor of the Indian Express.

In an April 2021 Stimson issue brief, Singh explains how India has concocted the two-front challenge and its military command has amplified it in order to ‘provide an unambiguous political and military focus on strategic and operational initiatives to ensure readiness’.

India’s Cold Start Doctrine against Pakistan has been formulated using the same language of combat readiness and troop mobility.

In India’s strategic calculus, there is realization that a two-front war might never materialize.

Indian generals recognize that the People’s Liberation Army of China is a vastly superior fighting force that is rapidly building capabilities in artificial intelligence, hypersonic missiles and electronic warfare.

China’s formidable military modernization has raised alarm bells even in Western capitals, suggesting that New Delhi is no match for China.

Questions can and have been raised on the capability of the Indian military to fight even on a single front.

India’s array of weapon systems lacks interoperability which reduces their effectiveness at the operational level.

Late General Bipin Rawat during his tenure as Army Chief in 2019 acknowledged that for intense war fighting with China, the Indian military would require 30 days of ammunition stock, which it did not possess.

War on two fronts would also involve the ‘separation of forces’ as it would be difficult to move troops from one theatre to another, thereby reducing inter-theatre mobility.

The Stimson report therefore recommends that the ‘smartest choice for New Delhi is to neither fight nor prepare to fight a two front-war’.

It belies logic that a ‘resource constrained, overstretched and vulnerable’ military can sustain combat on two fronts.

As a matter of fact, India has recently faced humiliation at the hands of both Pakistan and China.

Pakistan shot down two intruding Indian Air Force aircraft on 27 February 2019 and captured one of the pilots Wing Commander Abhinandanin response to Indian aggression against Pakistan. India lost 20 soldiers in skirmishes with China in the Galwan Valley in June 2020.

Pakistan itself faced a two-front war scenario over the last two decades. Pakistan’s Eastern border with India has remained a permanent front since independence.

India opened another front for Pakistan by using Afghan soil to foment terrorism in Pakistan.

Additionally, the conflict in Afghanistan over the last two decades has had devastating spill over effects into Pakistan.

Despite the dual challenge of Indian state-sponsored terrorism and tensions on the Loc, Pakistani Armed Forces have been able to effectively counter these threats.

It is globally recognized that through sustained diplomacy, engagement with all stakeholders and dialogue, Pakistan was successful in promoting peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan by working closely with interested countries, in particular the United States, China and Russia.

Pakistan's participation in the Moscow Format of Consultations and the extended troika meeting on Afghanistan have been instrumental in this regard.

Pakistan's support for Doha Peace Talks enabled the US and Taliban to sign a landmark agreement on peace and reconciliation and withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan.

Pakistan's peace-oriented approach was thus able to transform a security threat into an opportunity for win-win cooperation.

Pakistan has been consistent in its desire to engage with India on all outstanding disputes including Kashmir.

The tendency on the Indian side has been to construe Pakistan's desire for peace as a weakness.

However, Pakistan has time and again demonstrated its capability and resolve to respond effectively to any Indian misadventure.

The Balakot incident is a case in point. Given these ground realities, India's counterforce temptations towards Pakistan and talk of so-called surgical strikes inside Pakistani territory can only be explained through the prism of political opportunism, hegemonic designs and brinkmanship.

Modi's warmongering and temptation to seek electoral gains through false flag operations in IIOJK have undermined prospects for regional peace and stability.

Needless to say, in a nuclear Southern Asia, talk of a two-front war is fraught with danger.

Given the monumental challenges of poverty alleviation, sanitation, COVID-19 pandemic and development facing India, it would be prudent if New Delhi were to resolve disputes with its nuclear neighbours peacefully through dialogue and join connectivity projects that hold the promise of promoting regional and global prosperity.

—The writer is Research Officer at Centre for International Strategic Studies Sindh (CISSS).

Time to import LNG from Russia



QAZI M. KHALILULLAH

February 24, 2022 13:50

Short Url

<https://arab.news/6qrpm>

According to media reports, Italian LNG Company ENI and Singapore-based GUNVOR have cancelled their term LNG cargoes, scheduled for delivery to Pakistan in March 2022. Since the signing of the term agreement by Pakistan LNG Limited (PLL) in 2017, ENI has defaulted four times and GUNVOR two times on term LNG cargoes. The reason for the default is believed to be higher spot prices, prompting these companies to sell LNG cargoes meant for Pakistan in the spot market. The present gas crisis in Pakistan is mainly due to unethical practices of these two companies.

Due to the devastating impact of gas shortages on households, industry, businesses and the transport sector, Pakistan needs reliable partners for sourcing LNG. For some time now, Pakistan has viewed Russia as a source for LNG import. Russia too has looked at Pakistan as a potential market for its LNG export. This mutuality of interest resulted in the signing of a Government to Government (G2G) Agreement between Islamabad and Moscow on 13 October 2017 on “Cooperation in the Sphere of Liquefied Natural Gas Supplies.” Russian Public Joint Stock Company Gazprom and PLL were nominated for implementation of the agreement. However, the agreement has remained dormant ever since. According to reliable sources, Russia, nevertheless, remains keen on cooperating with Pakistan in the sphere of LNG.

Prime Minister Imran Khan’s visit to Russia on 23-24 February 2022, which marks the culmination of sustained efforts made by both Pakistan and Russia over the last one and a half decades to enhance relations in diverse fields, offers an opportunity to explore the possibility of concluding a long-term arrangement with Russia on provision of LNG to Pakistan. As an energy giant, Russia is a major supplier of piped as well as liquefied gas to many countries in Europe and elsewhere. India is also among the LNG importers from Russia.

Due to the devastating impact of gas shortages on households, industry, businesses and the transport sector, Pakistan needs reliable partners for sourcing LNG.

Qazi M. Khalilullah

Cooperation between Pakistan and Russia in the field of energy will, in any case, be a key item on the agenda of Prime Minister Imran Khan’s summit with President Vladimir Putin during the two-day visit, as both countries seek to implement the bilateral agreement signed in Islamabad in 2015 on the 1100 km long North-South (renamed Pakistan Stream recently) gas pipeline that would be built by Russia from Karachi to Kasur with investments of over US\$ 2 billion.

Energy cooperation has always been one of the most important topics during the meetings of the leaders of the two countries as well as Russia-Pakistan Intergovernmental Commission (IGC) on Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation. Seven meetings of the IGC have been held so far. The last meeting was held in the Russian city of Yekaterinburg on 24-26 November, 2021. It was chaired by the Minister for Economic Affairs Omar Ayub Khan from the Pakistan side and Minister for Energy Nikolai Shulginov from the Russian side.

At the seventh IGC meeting, apart from reiterating their respective commitment to the Pakistan stream gas pipeline, the two sides agreed to explore cooperation in many other areas of mutual interest in the energy sector including offshore and onshore oil and gas exploration, non-destructive testing of oil and gas transport infrastructure, joint projects in pipeline construction, geological exploration for hydrocarbons and joint development of oil and gas fields. Both sides also discussed the possibility of investment by Russian companies in setting up oil refineries and building strategic oil and gas storage in Pakistan.

Pakistan and Russia also have interests in a regional undersea gas pipeline. In this connection, Inter-State Gas Systems (ISGS) of Pakistan and Gazprom of Russia signed an MoU in February 2019 on conducting feasibility studies for a subsea pipeline from Middle East to South Asia. Russia and Pakistan can also cooperate on other regional projects such as TAPI gas pipeline project from Turkmenistan to Pakistan and India through Afghanistan and CASA-1000 power transition project from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan to Pakistan through Afghanistan.

In view of depleting gas reserves in Pakistan, strengthening cooperation with a reliable partner like Russia is critical for Pakistan's energy security. Prime Minister's visit to Russia is therefore not only timely but also an opportunity to further strengthen cooperation with Russia, inter alia, in the important field of energy. Needless to say, the Prime Minister's visit to Moscow will take Pakistan-Russia relations to a new level.

**The writer is Executive Director Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh and Former Ambassador of Pakistan to Russia, Cuba and Myanmar. He can be contacted at qzkhalilullah4@gmail.com.*

AUKUS and Its Implications on Maritime Security **SITUATION REPORTS Geopolitical Monitor- March 14, 2022**

By **Mohid Iftikhar & Muhammad Usama Khan**



Maritime security scholars and practitioners are on a constant watch in assessing developments in seas. Today the scope of maritime security has widened because geopolitical conceptualization has become its major

tenet. As rightly noted by Germond, “the geopolitical dimension of maritime security accounts for the way geography constrains and informs (directly or indirectly) maritime security policies, regulations, measures and operations, as well as how states take (tacitly or explicitly) geography into account when developing their maritime security strategies.” It is thus the very logic of the geographic realm that defines opportunities and constraints in the seas which directly affect regions and state behavior.

There is abundant literature in social sciences that explains maritime security issues from a traditional lens such as drug trafficking, illegal fishing, piracy, and environmental crimes. However, the contemporary understanding of geopolitics in spheres of maritime security in wider policy debates remains inadequate. The recent AUKUS deal signed between Australia, the UK, and the US is a geopolitical development with strong linkages to maritime security. Simply, the most imminent challenge posed by the AUKUS is evolving strategic competition in the region. This logic can be elucidated from Bueger, Edmunds, and Ryan’s understanding that “the contemporary maritime security agenda should be understood as an interlinked set of challenges of growing global, regional and national significance, and comprising issues of national, environmental, economic and human security.” Therefore, geopolitical developments in the seas are integral to maritime security as they can affect freedom of movement, seaborne trade, and sea lines of communication (SLOCs).

The AUKUS is a strategic defense alliance between Australia, the US and the UK that came into being in September 2021. A joint statement issued by prime ministers Johnson and Morrison and President Biden stated that AUKUS is an “enhanced trilateral security partnership.” In addition, there is consensus between AUKUS members that it “will help sustain peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific.” To some degree, this signals a paradigm shift in the Asia-Pacific (APAC) maritime structure.

We must understand why geopolitics remains at the core of contemporary maritime security. Great and regional power competition in the seas has historic origins. For instance, we can review the balance of power structures during World Wars I and II and how it led great and rising powers to develop formidable navies to secure new economic resources. Today, it can be observed that the cross-currents of political geography such as US-China and US-Iran tensions have threatened maritime trade and freedom of navigation. According to United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Secretary-General Mukhisa Kituyi concerning US-China tensions 2018-2019, “the dip in maritime trade growth is a result of several trends including a weakening multilateral trading system and growing protectionism.”

One way to understand the effects of geopolitical events on the maritime economy is rising marine war insurance premiums. For instance, S&P Global notes that “marine hull war rates for ships heading to the Gulf jumped in mid-2019 following a spate of attacks on oil tankers in the Strait of Hormuz, a key shipping channel, in May and June of that year, and the seizing of British-flagged vessel Stena Impero in July.” In addition, reported by the Wall Street Journal international operators such as Maersk Line and Mediterranean Shipping Company were winding up their shipping operations in Iran due to the US sanctions in May 2018.

Now the recent US, UK, and Australia “AUKUS” agreement for transferring the latter; nuclear submarine technology, high-end artificial intelligence, cyber, quantum technologies, and undersea capabilities including underwater sensors and drones, raises important questions. At the diplomatic level, one, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi highlighted “five harms to the region” mainly nuclear proliferation, a new round of arms race, undermining regional prosperity and stability, sabotaging the building of a nuclear-free zone in Southeast Asia and the resurgence of the Cold War mentality. Two, AUKUS temporarily hampered French ties with the US and Australia. This raises novel policy concerns in regards to China’s response and the cohesiveness of the American-led alliance system.

More recently in December 2021 Australia, the UK and the US held trilateral meetings of the Joint Steering Group for Advanced Capabilities and the Joint Steering Group for Australia’s Nuclear-Powered Submarine

Program in the Pentagon. The text by the White House reinforces how the AUKUS deal seeks to enter a new phase of geopolitical competition that would set a tone for a paradigm shift in maritime security. Primarily, the text highlights commitment to Australian capabilities and emphasizes the security of the Indo-Pacific alongside four central areas of focus “cyber capabilities, artificial intelligence, quantum technologies, and additional undersea capabilities.”

While AUKUS remains a long-term project, however, once Australia acquires nuclear-powered submarine capabilities, the maritime security dynamics in the APAC region may face political risks. According to the former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans “from one point of view, it is not bad that China gets the message – as it no doubt also has from the emergence of the Quad grouping, bringing together the US, Japan, Australia, and India – that there is an evolving will among other significant regional players to build stronger defense capability and cooperation.”

Further, regional economic stability due to seaborne trade also remains a pressing concern. It is crucial to mention that the Asian region’s global maritime trade accounted for 41% of total goods loaded in 2020. Moreover, the Asian region’s port significance includes eight out of the top ten ports which include five in China. Therefore, the security and stability of the SLOCs are vital for regional states in Asia.

What remains a concern in the South China Sea for geopolitical and trade experts is that “a worst-case planning scenario entails all three straits (as well as other possible Southeast Asian SLOCs) being unavailable for commercial traffic, forcing vessels to sail around the southern coast of Australia.” This would result in weeks of delay in the global supply chain and through economic modeling, it is found that “Singapore’s economy would fall by 22%, according to the baseline estimate. Hong Kong, Vietnam, the Philippines and Malaysia would suffer falls of between 10% and 15%...Australia would suffer a drop of between 1.9% and 3.1%. The economies of Japan and South Korea would fall by between 2% and 3%.” In such a hypothetical scenario closure of maritime access due to longer port distances would result in changing global trade costs.

The complex security dynamics are also at interplay because of missile technology transfer under the AUKUS. According to Ogilvie (2021), and Rear Admiral (R) John Gower Former Assistant Chief of Defense Staff (UK), “the transfer of Tomahawk cruise missiles to Australia highlights two issues: a potential broadening of the risks of accidental war and a weakening of the Export Control Regime that deals with sensitive missile technologies (the MTCR).” Further, Moloney observes that for Australia after signing the AUKUS deal “for starters, where will the fuel come from? Will Australia eventually be required to process and enrich uranium?” Importantly, the dimensions of nuclear proliferation under the AUKUS must be carefully calculated.

The AUKUS deal is a geopolitical development with strong linkages to maritime security. While the deal is yet in its early stages, it does provide strong indicators through texts such as by the White House that the US through its alliance-based structure seeks to reinforce its policeman role in the so-called Indo-Pacific. Lastly, Australian direction under the AUKUS yet poses several puzzles, therefore, overestimations of a geopolitical conflict remain adverse to social scientific norms. Scholars and policy-makers must carefully weigh and evaluate the sequence of events that unfold through the AUKUS.

Mohid IFTIKHAR (PhD) specializing in IPE and Geopolitics is Director (Research) at the Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh (CISSS)

Muhammad Usama KHAN is a Research Assistant at the Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh (CISSS). He has a Bachelor’s degree in Ship Navigation and is soon to graduate with a Master’s in International Relations. His research interests include maritime security and great power competition.

COP26 and climate developments in Pakistan

The implementation of COP26 pledges is essential for the states such as Pakistan, as it is one of the most vulnerable states being affected by climate change. It must be observed that Pakistan contributes less than 1% to global carbon emissions. However, Global Climate Risk Index 2021 observes that Pakistan ranks eighth on the list of countries that are most affected by climate change.

ByNews Desk

15 March 2022



Written by: Mohid Iftikhar and Farzana Wahid Buksh

The climate change dilemma has taken a new toll where rising temperatures, food insecurity, mass migrations, and socio-economic instability have become the center of debates. There is a lot of literature and evidence in both environmental sciences and public policy that discusses the causes of climate change as well as its implications on social well-being. Rightly pointed out in a study on climate change that “under continued global warming, extreme events such as heatwaves will continue to rise in frequency, intensity, duration, and spatial extent over the next decades.”

In relation, this dramatic path has led global institutional instruments such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) through the Conference of the Parties (COP) to strengthen consensus and cooperation amongst states to limit global warming for avoiding the catastrophes of climate change.

Understanding more about COP26

The earliest COP dates back to 1995 and its outcomes were mainly policy discussions concerning its institutional structure and mechanisms. Over the years COPs have generated much attention as they have been able to disseminate awareness on issues of climate crises. More recently, COP26 was held from 31st October to 12th November 2021, in Glasgow, where policy actions regarding climate

change were at the center. It is vital to note that instruments such as COPs naturally involve various stakeholders such as sovereigns, corporations and citizens as they seek to understand how international institutional structures steer political and economic directions yoked to climate change.

Students of the political economy need to understand linkages between global instruments of climate change and states' domestic structure. As COPs, while being structural often are constrained due to states' political-economic system. It must be recalled that the discussions that took place at the Paris Agreement in 2015 aimed to promote measures and investments related to a sustainable low carbon future. According to the UNFCCC "Paris Agreement's central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius." Despite the consensus at the Paris Agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouses gases have kept rising.

It is rightly pointed out that the pledges made by 196 countries under the Paris Agreement have not been implemented by most countries. Further, scientists observe that many countries would continue to increase their emissions, especially after global economic recovery due to the lifting of pandemic restrictions. At COP26 nearly 200 states parties participated and focused on keeping global warming at 1.5°C. An important development was the U.S.-China Joint Glasgow Declaration on Enhancing Climate Action in the 2020s.

This focused on US-China intended cooperation in areas of "regulatory frameworks and environmental standards related to reducing emissions of greenhouse gases in the 2020s; maximizing the societal benefits of the clean energy transition; policies to encourage decarbonization and electrification of end-use sectors; key areas related to the circular economy, such as green design and renewable resource utilization; and deployment and application of technology such as CCUS and direct air capture."

In addition, COP26 was the first-ever conference where over 40 countries agreed to cut coal usage as it accounts for nearly 40% of annual CO₂ emissions. However, due to China and India's last-minute concern, it was agreed to "phase down", rather than "phase out" coal usage. It must be pointed that the domestic political economy structures remain a central factor in shaping such state behavior. For instance, energy needs, market conditions and bureaucratic structures are some key factors determining the implementation of global climate policies.

It must be recalled how the Trump Administration pulled out of the Paris Agreement. According to Zhang et al (2017) "the fossil fuel industries hold powerful political clout over the Trump Administration and the Republican Party: It has been reported that Trump himself, Vice President Pence and EPA Administrator Pruitt are all personally closely associated with the petrochemical mogul Koch Industries. Once the U.S. withdraws from the Paris Agreement, the Trump Administration will seek to repeal climate regulations to benefit energy companies including Koch Industries."

Climate finance is also a central agenda of COPs

The main challenge that remains towards global climate finance is its fragmentation because of the numerous stakeholders involved and their interests. For instance, climate finance impediments arise due to diversification in funding sources, execution networks and prioritization by sectors. Further, alongside states' domestic political-economic system,

multilateral channels of climate finance mainly the Climate Investment Funds (CIF) under the UNFCCC and Green Climate Fund (GCF) are the primary instruments of global climate finance. However, these “funds’ histories and governance shape their strategic outlook and coordination with other climate finance actors.” Hence, the lack of coherence in the distribution of climate finance funds remains a core issue.

While at COP26, “parties welcomed new financial pledges made to the Adaptation Fund (totaling over USD 350 million) and to the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) (totaling over USD 600 million) that will translate into helping vulnerable people bolster resilience.” However, patterns from previous COPs are vital to comprehend as they allow us to measure the magnitude of the outcomes. For instance, the previous pledge to deliver \$100 billion climate finance by 2020 agreed at COP15 in 2009 has yet not produced deliverable outcomes. In essence, COPs, lack an enforcing mechanism that ensures states would implement policies of climate change.

It must be pointed out that there is no procedure of rewarding or punishing states regarding greenhouse gas emissions. At COP26 more than 100 countries pledged to prevent and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030. However, we must recall “the New York Declaration on Forests” of 2014 as it failed to achieve its goals because it was a non-legally binding political agreement. In this context, accountability and legal framework could play a viable role in the implementation of various agreements and pledges of COP26.

It is vital to point out is that COP26 displayed an umbrella of policy solutions. However, it lacks firm commitments to decrease emissions. Therefore, new scholarship must be advanced in political economy that explores complex policy mechanisms of state’s domestic systems and how they translate global climate change outcomes. For example, in India’s case, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA) “energy use has doubled since 2000, with 80% of demand still being met by coal, oil and solid biomass.” Moreover, while countries were urged to speed up the phase-out of “inefficient” fossil fuel subsidies at COP26, no clear deadlines were specified.

COP26 and its implementation on Pakistan

The implementation of COP26 pledges is essential for the states such as Pakistan, as it is one of the most vulnerable states being affected by climate change. One, it must be observed that Pakistan contributes less than 1% to global carbon emissions. However, Global Climate Risk Index 2021 observes that Pakistan ranks eighth on the list of countries that are most affected by climate change. The Germanwatch report 2021 notes that Pakistan has witnessed 173 extreme weather events from 2000 to 2019 and has lost 0.52% per unit of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) due to climate change.

For instance, the seriousness of climate implications can be seen in the case of Lahore city which contributes 11-12% to the national GDP. According to a Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) Pakistan study (2000) the widespread fog found in northeastern Pakistan is primarily due to carbon emissions emanating from fossil fuels such as coal-burning used in the industrial sector and thermal power plants located in northern India. Further, in a related report, BBC (2019) highlighted that NASA satellite has captured high levels of fire on the Indian side.

This is reinforced by a Rand report (2019) underlining that “the October–November postmonsoon burning mostly occurs in India’s Punjab State.”

In turn, this contributes to winter smog in Lahore and has severe health and socio-economic implications such as the disruption of air traffic and road transportation and “exacerbation of asthma, allergies, eye infections, respiratory tract infections, and cardiac pathologies leading to premature death.”

The government of Pakistan has adopted a gradual approach towards climate change by taking several policy initiatives. One, by 2030 Pakistan aims to shift to 60% of renewable energy resources, banning coal imports and transferring 30% of vehicles to electric mode. Due to a combination of initiatives by the government of Pakistan such as nature-based solutions, energy efficiency, economic growth alongside implications of Covid-19, there is a reduction in emissions “of 8.7% emissions between 2016 and 2021.” For instance, 1.5 billion trees have been planted in Pakistan and it is expected that 3.2 billion trees would be planted by 2023, and lastly, 10 billion trees are to be planted by 2028.

Importantly, as part of Pakistan’s efforts to achieve climate-sensitive economic growth and development, two proposed 2400 MW coal power facilities under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) have been shelved. As a result, Pakistan has switched to a hydropower project of 3,700 MW under the China-Pakistan-Green-Economic Corridor. Other initiatives taken by the government of Pakistan include the Eco-System Restoration Initiative, Protected Areas Initiative and Clean Green Pakistan Index.

In addition, climate finance is a central strategy for Pakistan as it “intends to set a cumulative ambitious conditional target of overall 50% reduction of its projected emissions by 2030, with 15% from the country’s own resources and 35% subject to provision of international grant finance that would require USD 101 billion just for energy transition.” However, due to structural constraints mainly disbursement of international climate financing, Pakistan does face challenges for sustainable and clean development.

It remains vital for Pakistani Policymakers to navigate through global climate-related developments, as according to the World Bank execution of such policies is not a simplistic task. This is because the domestic political economy has pre-existing structures that link to “energy and transport systems, construction, and industrial and food production.” Despite the structural constraints, Pakistan at COP25 secured six positions under the UNFCCC for various committees hence, showing promise for climate change mitigation.

Furthermore, while the fiscal space is restraint in Pakistan alongside hurdles of global climate finance disbursement, domestic strategies such as public-private partnership (PPP) and zero-emission clean energy projects such as nuclear, wind and solar must be central for sustainable development.

Although there is a need for implementing pledges of COP26, overambitious strategies at the domestic level may result in policy hurdles. A logical path would be to examine energy transition in phases through consultations with the environmental and climate technocrats.

Written by: Mohid Iftikhar and Farzana Wahid Buksh

Mohid Iftikhar (Ph.D.) is Director of Research at the Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh (CISSS).

Ms. Farzana Wahid Buksh is a Research Officer at the Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh (CISSS). Her interests include climate change, energy security and great power contes

The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the editorial policy of Global Village Space.