

Strategic Assessment 2017

Saima Aman Sial & Muhammad Sarmad Zia

Introduction

The global strategic environment in 2017 remained mired in major crises. The international security landscape has mainly been characterized by a global wave of ultra-nationalism, divisiveness, and increased incidence of conflicts. A continuous worsening of international security and strategic stability in key global regions was witnessed especially in Asia, with North Korea's new range of nuclear capabilities and belligerence towards US; continuing US military campaign in Afghanistan, worsening conflicts in Yemen, Syria and seething anger in the Muslim world consequent to recognition of Jerusalem as Israel's capital by the United States. US relations with key global powers like China and Russia also witnessed fluctuations owing to the North Korean and Syrian imbroglio, respectively. In South Asia, the belligerence of India, manifested through its efforts to diplomatically isolate Pakistan and US South Asia strategy of putting more pressure on Pakistan, led to an overall worsening of the regional scenario.

In the global non-proliferation regime the main issues that remained in the limelight included: the continued challenges to global norms of non-testing as well as nonproliferation by North Korean nuclear program (with capabilities to target mainland US), Indian diplomatic initiatives to isolate Pakistan through global diplomacy, deterrence stability challenges posed by Indian nuclear modernization as well as shifts in nuclear posture and Pakistan's efforts to mainstream itself in the global nuclear order through international diplomacy.

The global outlook in 2018 is likely to be more polarized, divisive and conflict-prone. The geostrategic and political landscape of the

world and especially South Asia is uncertain, with hostility for Pakistan from the neighborhood as well as the US.

Strategic Assessment of 2017

The global strategic outlook in the year 2017 was shaped by several key events and narratives. Some key issues are discussed below from Pakistan's perspective.

Mainstreaming Nuclear Pakistan

2017 did not bring any tangible progress to Pakistan's objectives in terms of the debate on mainstreaming. Pakistan has been consistently arguing that if the nonproliferation regime has to be made comprehensive and all-encompassing, it has to shed its discriminatory character, and that Pakistan as a nuclear armed state is fully qualified to be mainstreamed in the nuclear order.

However, some factors which will seriously undermine Pakistan's prospects for mainstreaming include India's membership of the MTCR,¹ the Wassenaar arrangement² and the Australia Group.³ This development would not only raise New Delhi's stature in the non-proliferation regime but will facilitate it in the acquisition of critical technologies. India's membership of MTCR and its implications for South Asian strategic stability are already manifesting themselves. India, after gaining membership of the MTCR, has already started cooperation with Russia and other participating governments to increase the range of its missiles,⁴ for instance range of BrahMos Cruise missile has been increased to 800 kms apart from access to state-of the art UAVs technologies.⁵

For Pakistan, the current debate on mainstreaming has to be supplemented with discussion on substantive measures that Pakistan can prospectively consider as well as dissemination of the nonproliferation measures that it has already undertaken. However, Pakistan can consider undertaking some additional

measures, after a careful and detailed analysis, including the separation of the civilian and military program; signing of the additional protocol and mobilizing support among key states bilaterally and at all multilateral forums. Pakistan needs to present its perspective on key nonproliferation issues and the likely benefits of its inclusion - based on its non-proliferation credentials – to the participating governments of NSG. This should include formulation of more proactive strategies to seek broader convergences with participating governments to make them understand the logic behind Pakistan's stance. Whereas Pakistan should consider additional measures/initiatives to demonstrate its credentials as a responsible nuclear state, however, these should be undertaken while keeping in consideration Pakistan's security interests and without compromising on critical deterrence requirements. Amongst these additional measures, applying to the other multilateral regimes like Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), Wassenaar arrangement, and Australia Group would be considered.

Nuclear Suppliers Group Membership (NSG)

Since the assumption of office by US President Donald Trump, the diplomatic initiative as well as the administration's interest in lobbying/pushing for India's membership has somewhat waned. Just before the last NSG Plenary, India's External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj remarked that India will take Russia's help "to convince China"⁶ of the merits of its case for membership of the NSG. However, in the June Plenary⁷ of the NSG, contrary to the popular perception, no meaningful progress was reported on account of India's candidacy. The special meeting that took place later in November⁸ for considering the Non-NPT nuclear weapons states candidacy also went mostly unreported with no major headway. Later, Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister, while talking about India's membership in Wassenaar arrangement stated that,

“unlike some other countries that only speak of support, Russia takes actual steps to help and actions speak more than words...We make this point in the contacts with the Chinese at different levels, and India should be confident of Russia’s assistance.”⁹ However, any persuasion of China would only be possible if Russia agrees to bring Pakistan in the regime simultaneously with India.

Indian membership in other multilateral regimes is setting a precedent for the participating governments of the NSG to be more amenable to an Indian membership. This is in contrast to the earlier debate where there was a greater emphasis on developing criteria for membership.

Meanwhile, there is still no clarity on what a prospective criterion should entail. The Grossi formula¹⁰ was sort of a last effort by the outgoing Obama administration to slip India into the NSG based on the already given exemptions. This serves as an opportunity for Pakistan to stress upon the need for criteria based approach while highlighting the effectiveness of its export control system, its enforcement mechanisms and international cooperation, rather than criteria heavily burdened by political conditionalities.

Membership of the NSG is a crucial step now for Pakistan as it moves towards developing indigenous nuclear power reactors. Up till now Pakistan’s nuclear reactors have been imported from China and hence they are under IAEA safeguards however indigenization would make putting them under safeguards optional and hence there is an incentive for the international community to engage with Pakistan and bring it into the fold of the nonproliferation regime by making it part of the export cartels/groups etc. Moreover, it would also open up avenues of nuclear exports for Pakistan.

Pakistan is an advanced nuclear state with the technical expertise as well as ample experience in safe and secure nuclear reactor operation and with legitimate socio-economic need for energy diversification due to chronic power shortages. If a state with

advanced nuclear capabilities is outside the regime, it would be disadvantageous to the regime as much as Pakistan.

Non-proliferation Trends

Given the prevailing global environment it would not be prudent for Pakistan or India to give up their options for further testing at point in time. In any case there seems to be no interest on part of the current US administration to carry forward the CTBT ratification. The main thrust of President Trump's National Security Strategy (NSS) is in line with his policy emphasis on "America First".¹¹ The NSS explicitly states the growing salience of nuclear weapons for US national security¹² and hence any forward movement on curtailing vertical proliferation is unlikely. With the US itself committing to proceed with its plans for strategic modernization worth trillions of dollars¹³ over the next decades and with the growing North Korean nuclear threat, there would be increasing reliance on extended deterrence¹⁴ which will further reduce the chances for arms reductions globally as well as regionally.

Deterrence Stability Challenges in South Asia

Several new challenges emerged for the South Asian deterrence stability in the current year. Broadly the year was marked by Indian belligerence and hostility¹⁵ (diplomatically isolating Pakistan, keeping LoC hot, fomenting terrorism inside Pakistan) and absence of any dialogue; which remained a major challenge. It was further accentuated by the continued induction of modern military hardware¹⁶ and doctrinal shifts¹⁷ in the direction that are likely to undermine the stability of strategic deterrence between India and Pakistan.

According to the 2017 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) fact sheet, India has been a major arms importer in the world from 2011 to 2016.¹⁸ In early April India's latest Joint Armed Forces Doctrine was made public. The document offered insights into the principles that guide the Indian military's approach

to warfighting. Important tenets included the emphasis on continuation of the so-called “surgical strikes” as a formal part of India’s retaliatory toolkit against “terror provocations.”¹⁹ Moreover, it dropped the concept of ‘Credible Minimum Deterrence’, (CMD) which has thus far been fundamental to the stated principles of the Indian nuclear doctrine, in favor of “credible deterrence.”²⁰ It also gave indications of a shift towards a possible conventional counter-force first strike against Pakistan’s nuclear command and control.²¹

On the issue of deterrence capability, a Harvard Belfer Center’s study has made important revelations about prospective Indian nuclear capability in the aftermath of the Indo-US strategic cooperation. The report states that India has begun construction of four 700 MWe heavy water power reactors.²² This will be more than double the unsafeguarded power reactor capacity from the current 2350 MWe. This capacity enables the production of over 2.5 tons of weapon-usable reactor grade plutonium. One 220 MWe reactor can be used to produce 150-200 kg of weapons-grade plutonium every year sufficient for 38 to 50 plutonium weapons.

In early November 2017, India tested a subsonic long-range land attack cruise missile Nirbhay, capable of being armed with a 300-kilogram warhead and with an estimated strike range of around 1000 KM.²³ Various news stories report that the DRDO is working on the air and sea versions of the cruise missile as well. Later India tested the air launched BrahMos missile, a 2.5-ton supersonic air to surface cruise missile, with a range of over 400 kilometers.²⁴ This particular missile test expands India’s anti-access capabilities in the Indian Ocean.

Owing to its accuracy, a cruise missile is well suited for a counterforce role. Due to their ranges, the Brahmos and Nirbhay would provide India with a strategic standoff capability on land as well as at sea.²⁵ These aided with capabilities like the P-8 maritime patrol reconnaissance aircrafts and experience gained from the

anti-submarine warfare exercises between Japan and India²⁶ (twice in this year), project the Indian Ocean as the new area for strategic competition, with the potential to challenge Pakistan's nuclear deterrence.

The year also witnessed a heated debate about India's nuclear doctrine pointing to a possible shift in India's nuclear doctrine²⁷ from massive retaliation to that of a splendid first strike/preemptive counterforce strategy. The combination of ballistic missile defense, nuclear submarines, as well as cruise missile capability could enhance India's confidence in undertaking a splendid first strike against Pakistan.

India's development of an assured second strike capability and the accompanying deterrence challenged, Pakistan in January 2017 to test Babur-III cruise missile, with a range of 450 km, providing Pakistan - which thus far relied only on land/air-based nuclear capabilities - a credible second strike capability.²⁸ The Indian nuclear submarine, armed with K-15 Sagarika submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM), is a Pakistan specific capability. Hence, a naval nuclear deterrent force, though limited, enhances the stability of the deterrence equation between India and Pakistan. Babur-3 can therefore be considered as the first step in moving towards developing a nuclear triad by Pakistan.

Babur III test was followed by the testing of Ababeel, a MIRVed missile, which would be especially effective against the Indian BMD systems, as the statement accompanying the test amply manifested that the development of the Ababeel weapon system was aimed at ensuring survivability of Pakistan's ballistic missiles in the growing regional Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) environment. Both Babur III as well as Ababeel are indicative of Pakistan's efforts to maintain the strategic deterrence equation with India.

A statement issued after a meeting of Pakistan's National Command Authority in December 2017,²⁹ noted with concern certain destabilizing actions in Pakistan's neighborhood, which are in

contravention to the objective of maintaining strategic stability in South Asia. These include the massive arms build-up in the conventional domain, nuclearization of the Indian Ocean Region and plans for the development/ deployment of BMDs. It reiterated Pakistan's policy of full-spectrum deterrence within the purview of CMD.³⁰

Overall, an assessment of the deterrence situation posits a scenario where advancements in technology are translating into challenges to the deterrence stability in South Asia. Even more alarming is the international bias with which such technological advancement is reviewed by the international community. India's development of weapon systems like BMDs, nuclear submarines, counterforce capabilities, and long range missiles are being aided and abetted by US without taking cognizance of their negative potential for South Asian deterrence environment. It is incumbent on Pakistani diplomats as well as intelligentsia to highlight the deterrence stability challenges posed by these destabilizing technological developments in India while continuing to explore suitable response options short of indulging in an arms race with India.

Relations with India

The conditions prevailing after the alleged surgical strikes by India have been further vitiated by India's declared policy of isolating Pakistan in the global arena. The overarching Indo-US convergence is encouraging India to put more pressure on Pakistan.

In recent times, the probability of improvement of relations between Pakistan and India seems to be dwindling with every passing day, despite efforts by Pakistan to improve the relations. The year 2017 has thus remained mired in controversies and Pakistan's relations vis-à-vis India have clearly seen a downward spiral. India's continued verbal attacks accusing Pakistan of supporting terrorism at forums such as the United Nations General

Assembly and BRICs Summits have only served to strain the already fraught relationship. Pakistan's Foreign Office has continued to keep a positive outlook, however none of Pakistan's friendly gestures towards India have evoked any reciprocity.

The Indian spy Kulbushan Yadav's death sentence by a Field General Court Martial further strained the relations between the two states.³¹ International Court of Justice is in the process of hearing India's petition with its fate hanging in the balance. In December 2017, Pakistan allowed the wife and mother of the convicted spy on humanitarian grounds. However, Pakistan's gesture was projected very negatively by the Indian media adding fuel to the existing acrimony.

Both Pakistan and India became full members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization during the year.³² SCO has north-east, central, and south Asian states as its members, it is the ideal setting to discuss mutual security framework, devise common counter-terrorism strategies and propose better security framework for the settlement of disputes. SCO offers Pakistan a unique opportunity to seek solutions to its security concerns because of its focus on regional integration and emphasis on security-related concerns, with organs like Regional Anti-Terrorism Structure (RATS) aimed at fighting separatism, militancy and terrorism, SCO can make a positive contribution to regional stability.

Similarly, India's fast growing nuclear weapons program and possible nuclear policy shifts created an unease in the region. In late 2016, India's entry into the naval nuclear domain in the shape of SSBM INS Arihant provided Pakistan with an impetus to address deterrence stability vis-à-vis India. Therefore, a nuclear cruise missile capable submarine, Babur-3 SLCM, retrofitted onto a diesel powered Agosta submarine was assimilated into Pakistan's nuclear command in 2017. On India's part, however, it seems that it is actively seeking to engage Pakistan in an arms race. Nonetheless, Pakistan has made it clear that it is not prepared to engage in an

arms race and continues to rely on its Credible Minimum Deterrence policy with an overarching Full Spectrum Deterrence umbrella to cater to any threats posed by India.³³

India's attempt to circumvent Pakistan to reach the Central Asian states and Afghanistan achieved a significant success with the inauguration of Iran's Chahbahar port,³⁴ which was developed with India's help. The port serves as an alternative to Pakistan's own Gwadar port. The impact of the new port for Pakistan has already become obvious as Afghanistan's President claimed that his country no longer needed to rely on Pakistan for its trade with the world.³⁵ Similarly, the use of the port by Indian naval ships during peace time needs to be checked and it must be ascertained whether the port would be available to India during a conflict between Pakistan and India. This uncertainty arises from the unavailability of information pertaining to use of the Chahbahar port in the Iran-India mutual cooperation agreement. It is also important to assess how Iran sees the Pak-China Economic Corridor (CPEC) as Chahbahar port can be construed as an Indo-Iranian bid to provide an alternative route to Central and East Asia. Of course there is a huge component of commercial activity and regional connectivity which would follow as trade commences, however the geostrategic impact of such a collaboration is also important for Pakistan to evaluate.

Relations with US

Under Donald Trump's Presidency, the already deteriorating relations between the two states have further plummeted. The US, has made its success in Afghanistan a barometer for judging the Pak-US relations. The new US Strategic Review published in December 2017³⁶ has highlighted what the US expects from Pakistan. President Trump's offensive statement against Pakistan wherein he noted, "for its part, Pakistan often gives safe-havens to agents of chaos, violence, and terror,"³⁷ belittles the efforts put in by

Pakistan in the Global War on Terror. Despite the acknowledgement of Pakistan's sacrifices in the same speech, the President voiced a clear shift in the US Policy towards Pakistan.

The visits by US Secretary of State Rex Tillerson³⁸ and US Secretary of Defence James Mattis³⁹ saw contrasting of styles of the message emanating from Pentagon and the White House but the essence of the message remained the same. Whilst both reiterated Trump's policy of 'do more', Secretary of State Tillerson stressed "that Pakistan must increase its efforts to eradicate militants and terrorists operating within the country."⁴⁰ The US Defence Secretary said that, "he was aware of the sacrifices rendered and the lives lost in Pakistan's fight against terrorism and extremism," and underscored the importance of continuing and deepening cooperation for the "common objective of eliminating terrorism from the region."⁴¹ The White House however, seems to be under heavy influence of the pro-Indian and anti-Pakistan lobbies some of whose members have even been assigned to the US National Security Council. For instance, India's growing influence in Afghanistan is a negative development from Pakistan's perspective, but the US seems prepared to give India a role there even at the risk of increased instability within Afghanistan and in the region.

With regards to the situation in Afghanistan, it is important to lay out some facts to explain the reasons for the US failure in controlling cross-border terrorism as well as provide an insight into the efforts made by Pakistan in border-management. In 2016, Pakistan had 43 border posts and more work has since been underway to construct an additional 338 border posts and forts for surveillance and security on its side of the border.⁴² These developments are taking place despite a dearth of resources available to Pakistan. On the Afghan side of the border, the number should at least match the numbers being made by Pakistan owing to the presence of coalition forces in the country. Even more so, the US emphasis on border security requisites an active border control and management on its

part. In 2016 Pakistan successfully completed digging an 1100 KM long trench on the Balochistan-Afghan border to prevent illegal immigration and intrusion into Pakistan.⁴³ This project alone cost Pakistan 14 Billion Rupees.⁴⁴ In 2017, Pakistan unilaterally started building a fence along its 2,611-KM long Pak-Afghan border to address mutual complaints of militant incursions.⁴⁵ Moreover, Pakistan's side of the border patrolling surveillance is much more efficient and active than the one on Afghanistan's side which is proved by the number of militants Pakistan has been able to arrest and eliminate in the recent years. Nonetheless, militants who cross over into Pakistan from Afghanistan or vice-versa are as much a problem to be catered for by the US and Afghan forces as it is for Pakistan. Therefore, Pakistan alone is in no position to stop this cross-border movement of militants, especially while the 1.5 million refugees remain on Pakistani soil.⁴⁶

Pak-US relations have also experienced the effect of a growing Indo-US nexus. Propping up India as a possible counter-weight to China serves as the single biggest reason for the deterioration of Pak-US relations. Moreover, US seems to be viewing relations in South Asia as a zero-sum game, which limits its options of continuing cordial relations with Pakistan with implications for US' military success in Afghanistan.

North Korean Crisis

The rampant nuclear and missiles testing by North Korea became a challenge for the non-proliferation regime and the major powers in 2017. Currently, the US is unable to figure out how it should address the North Korean problem as neither diplomacy nor use of force offer any satisfactory solutions. Left to its own devices, North Korea would set a negative precedent for other states which may be compelled to challenge the international non-proliferation order. They could well be motivated to pursue the development of latent nuclear weapons capabilities to meet unforeseen threats. On the

other hand, an attack on North Korea would spell disaster not only for the country itself, but the surrounding states as well. The humanitarian crisis resulting from such an event would pose a huge problem for China does which does not want millions of North Koreans rushing to its borders and territory – which is likely to happen following an attack by the US and its allies.

Meanwhile, the newly developed capabilities by North Korea such as the thermonuclear bomb test in September 2017⁴⁷ and the ICBM test in later November⁴⁸ have altered not only the nature of the nuclear debate between the US and North Korea but also the dynamics of how the war will be fought. Previously, there was no direct threat to the US mainland and was limited to US allies such as Japan and South Korea. This serious development implies that the US has to not only provide extended deterrence to Japan and South Korea but has to ensure deterrence against an attack against its own homeland. These developments have also induced a change in North Korea's attitude towards South Korea, which was visible in Kim Jong's New Year's Speech.⁴⁹

Middle Eastern Scenario

It is being claimed by both Iraqi and Syrian governments that ISIS has been defeated in their respective countries.⁵⁰ Syria's claim has been reaffirmed by President Putin of the Russian Federation who recently ordered the withdrawal of Russian forces and military equipment from the Syrian territory.⁵¹ This defeat of a self-styled terrorist organization is important for these countries in the Middle East. However, it is unclear whether the terrorists have been killed, or they have surrendered or have fled to other states. The statistics have remained shrouded in mystery as casualty figures claimed by the two opposing groups i.e. Syria-Russia-Iran-Iraq based information and the other being the Syria Rebels-US-Saudi Arabia based news make their authenticity doubtful. Nonetheless, the liberation of these countries from non-state actors is a welcome

development for peace and stability in the region. But political, ethnic and sectarian disputes with potential to flare up in the future have remained unresolved.

At the Riyadh Summit in May 2017, it was seen that US-Saudi relations reached a new pinnacle of cooperation upon the successful completion of an arms deal worth \$100 Billion.⁵² The 45 Muslim state meeting in Riyadh also stressed upon the need to continue the fight against militancy. The Islamic Military Coalition, an initiative of Saudi Arabia, was also discussed in detail. A significant outcome of the summit was to put in place a strategy to control Iran's rising influence in the Middle East. Shortly after the summit, the Qatar crisis emerged wherein a new rift in the region came to light. It can be assumed that Saudi Arabia's leadership has apparently been accepted by a majority of Muslim states. This includes the management and control of Iran's rise in the region for which Saudi Arabia has gathered support from several Muslim states as well as the US. At the same time, Saudi Arabia has signed a missile defence deal with Russia, which is Iran's traditional partner, and can be seen as an attempt to wean Russia away from Iran.

Relations with China

As a longstanding tenet of Pakistan's policy, with the added component of CPEC, Pak-China relations remained on the same trajectory as in 2016. China's support to Pakistan has been an ongoing phenomenon; it backed Pakistan after the US denounced Pakistan's role in Afghanistan by stating, "Pakistan has made enormous efforts and sacrifices for the fight against terrorism and has made an outstanding contribution to the global causes of counter-terrorism. The international community should acknowledge that."⁵³ China was also instrumental in supporting Pakistan's case at the SCO which resulted in success of Pakistan's bid for membership of the forum.

With the beginning of several projects under CPEC, a huge inflow of Chinese nationals began in Pakistan in 2017. This will have positive ramifications for business and economy of the country, however it will also pose security challenges. This people to people contact would further enhance Pak-China relationship.

Pakistan continues to support One-China policy, which Trump sought to question at the beginning of the year.⁵⁴ Pakistan also backed China's stance during the Indo-China standoff at Sikkim. Pakistan expressed concern over the reported Indian incursions into the Chinese territory and said that Pakistan fully supports the stance of China on Tibet.⁵⁵

Relations with Russia

This year has seen a remarkable change in the way Pakistan and Russia previously perceived each other. With the lifting of arms embargo against Pakistan, the bilateral ties have been improving in economic and military realms. Russia, on many occasions, came out to support Pakistan's stance on many issues and has welcomed Pakistan to join international forums. For instance, Russia supported Pakistan to become a full member of SCO and it did not buy India's propaganda in blaming Pakistan for terrorism during the BRICS Summit in India. Russia's ambassador to Afghanistan also rejected the US claims of Pakistan not doing enough and acknowledged Pakistan's efforts.⁵⁶ It indicates a policy change in the Kremlin. This relationship, with the transforming geo-political picture, is likely to strengthen in future. Russia has increasingly been looking at Pakistan as a partner in the region while the Indo-US nexus has given some stimulus to this. Russia also wants to promote its economic interests and views the provision of natural gas to Pakistan as a very lucrative project and the prospective investment of \$10 billion dollar into the project will be a significant development.⁵⁷

Russia has also shown interest in developing military to military relations with Pakistan especially the exchange of expertise in counterterrorism operations. A joint exercise and visit to the region previously under militants' control were highlights of growing military to military relations. It is an opportunity for Pakistan at a time when the realignment of interests for the US has disturbed the existing equations between the two states. This policy of diversification in its relations with major powers is vital for Pakistan to increase its ability to maneuver in the changing geostrategic situation.

Conclusion

Overall, the year 2017 saw Pakistan trying to balance its relations with different states through diversification of its foreign policy whilst exposing it to the challenges posed by relations with US and India in the context of cross-border terrorism allegations. These geopolitical and geostrategic realignments are manifesting themselves in Pakistan developing relations with a receptive Russia, sustenance of relationship with China, and balancing act in the Middle East plus efforts for retaining/enhancing its influence in the Indian Ocean. As regards the future of US-Pakistan relations, although a total break is not likely, the US will test Pakistan's red lines in terms of acting unilaterally along the Pak-Afghan border. Such a scenario will have negative connotations for the future trajectory of Pak-India relations as well translating into increasing tensions and continued war of the words. With Pakistan's elections on the horizon, the bilateral relations are likely to deteriorate further.

On the geostrategic front, the balancing act came in the form of development of a capability at sea and consolidation of existing capabilities. However, diplomatically Pakistan has to do a lot in terms of projecting its position as a responsible nuclear weapon

state by persuading the global capitals which are influential in shaping the debate on nuclear mainstreaming of its just cause.

Internal instability in Pakistan remained a major challenge which also negatively impacts the perceptions about the safety and security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons. However, with an effective deterrent under NCA and elaborate nuclear security apparatus in place, the negative propaganda does not requisite any response from Pakistan. Rather, Pakistan needs to strategize proactively on strategic issues, for instance contributing to the nonproliferation debate and highlighting its concerns by hosting global dialogue on strategic issues and putting across its strategic worldview to partners and develop like-mindedness on common regional security framework as well the global outlook.

*Saima Aman Sial is a
Senior Research Fellow at CISS*

*Muhammad Sarmad Zia is a
Research Assistant at CISS*

End Notes

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