Strategic Restraint in South Asia

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The national requirement for strategic restraint for any country is derived from its political judgment given its location and the prevailing strategic environment. The cutting edge lies in the military domain and the contours of the quantum of strategic restraint depend on the military capabilities of the country concerned and the threats it faces both current and foreseen. While the military potential has its own impact on objectives and developments, it is largely in the diplomatic field in which efforts are launched and sustained in bilateral and multilateral engagement to reach the political objectives which define strategic restraint, and to deal with situations in which calls for such restraint go unheeded.

Seven facts should be clear to any objective observer in the context of South Asia:

- First of all, Pakistan as the smaller country with a correspondingly smaller economy, defence budget and armed forces, has vested interests in better relations with India which include strategic restraint. This would allow Pakistan to devote a larger amount of its limited resources to nation building and the welfare of its people.

- Secondly, any such policy and objectives require a positive response from India.

- Thirdly, Pakistan has already experienced to its cost its division into two countries at the hands of a military intervention by India in 1971: the first example of a state being dismembered after the end of the Second World War.

- Fourthly, the international community has the ability to act in a manner which facilitates strategic restraint in South Asia or in a manner which leads to its destabilization.

Fifthly, the empirical approach of India has been to keep Pakistan off balance and to destabilize it through a number of actions. These include trying to control the flow of waters guaranteed by the Indus Waters Treaty, destabilization of Balochistan through Afghanistan, hostile propaganda at every level including in multilateral forums, and unwillingness to tackle core issues and disputes in the Composite Dialogue peace process which is switched on and off at India's will. Senior Indian strategists including

policy[1] makers continue to assert that India has no interest in Pakistan not breaking apart if it remains obdurate to Indian demands. Other influential Indian voices predict that Pakistan will break apart[2], a consistent theme since 1947 of the RSS and its offshoots as well as of numerous other Indian nationalists.

- Sixthly, Pakistan's strategic environment has deteriorated due to the occupation of Afghanistan which has led to the rise of extremism and terrorism within Pakistan as well as a now hot western border.

- Seventhly, the increasing narrative of the Western countries is that Pakistan must exercise strategic restraint by curtailing its rather limited fissile material production and its nuclear capability, including by supporting FMCT negotiations. Western analysts also advise Pakistan that developing and deploying tactical nuclear weapons would be counterproductive.

That is the *mise en scene*. In a talk limited to 10 minutes let me now concentrate on the strategic restraint dimension. As soon as both countries became overtly nuclear Pakistan offered to India its Strategic Restraint Regime (SRR) proposal, with its three interlocking elements of nuclear restraint, conventional balance and dispute settlement. The SRR has remained on the table since then and most recently has been re-offered to India in the current Nuclear and Conventional CBMs talks which began in 2004. India has consistently rejected Pakistan's SRR. Nor have the Western countries since 1998 demonstrated any interest in, or support for, this regime.

On the contrary the Western countries and Russia continue to build up India's strategic capabilities in both the nuclear and conventional fields. Massive conventional arms sales dominate the bilateral agendas of the major Western powers and Russia *vis a vis* India.

On the nuclear side the US-India nuclear deal, compounded further by the exemption which undermines the NPT given to India by the NSG, and followed by liberal bilateral nuclear agreements for nuclear technology and uranium supplies, demonstrates that rather than nuclear restraint, nuclear license is the Western objective for a combination of reasons commercial and geo-strategic. Paramount among these is the buildup of India as a key partner, both regionally and globally, particularly in the

[1] See former Indian Foreign Secretary's Kanwal Sibhal's speech on 'Indian Foreign Policy Options", at IDSA on 30th November 2012.
[2] Former Supreme Court Justice Katju, now Chairman of the Indian Press Council.

context of China. Support for India's candidature for Permanent Membership of the Security Council is a pillar of this policy

Conversely in respect to Pakistan which is more fossil fuel deficient than India, in a clearly discriminatory approach similar access to civil nuclear energy for power generation, critical for Pakistan's energy security, has not been given.

The US-India deal has excluded from safeguards 8 Indian reactors[3], well suited for weapons grade Plutonium production, which have the ability to produce 240 nuclear weapons a year. There was no justification for such an exemption by an agreement that the USA disingenuously termed an advance for the global objective of nonproliferation. The entire ambitious Indian 13 breeders reactors programme has similarly been left out of safeguards, despite the fact that the rationale for all breeder programmes worldwide has always been to extract the maximum from limited uranium supplies and not to produce unsafeguarded fissile material. The Indian Prime Minister stated in Parliament that no part of India's nuclear programme would be placed under safeguards if it was of a strategic nature. The dual use purpose of the breeders programme is therefore clear.

Supplies of uranium from NSG countries free up India's own limited uranium reserves for weapons production. Furthermore the overhang of India's unsafeguarded Plutonium has also been left out of safeguards. The International Panel of Fissile Material (IPFM) in its 2010 publication stated that India's 6.8 tons of unsafeguarded plutonium was sufficient for 850 nuclear weapons even if it be totally of reactor grade plutonium. Probably due to low burn up a significant portion would be of weapons grade plutonium. However, the nuclear weapons capability of this Indian Plutonium overhang is never taken into account by Western critics of Pakistan.

One measure of the level of discrimination in the energy field towards Pakistan is the fact that, unlike India, all of Pakistan's nuclear reactors for power generation are under safeguards, and the GOP has avowed that all future power reactors will also be safeguarded. In the US/NSG-India deal, India has been given the right to keep future reactors out of safeguards.

Pakistan, the last nuclear country to start fissile production, is criticized for increasing its modest plutonium production capacity from one to four dedicated reactors, but it would have to build some 150 more to match India's existing weapons grade plutonium production capacity.

[3] Pu production of the 8 unsafeguarded Indian reactors is annexed.

Another example is that while energy shortages constitute a very major challenge to Pakistan's economy and ability to generate resources for both development and internal security, the gas pipeline project with Iran is opposed by the USA which however, has taken no concrete action to initiate the gas pipeline project with Turkmenistan through Afghanistan which in its first incarnation began promisingly in the mid 1990s. In fact the US made UNOCAL withdraw and disband the Consortium, not heeding Pakistan's argument that beginning work on the pipeline would show all Afghan factions that from peace they would gain more than from war. Had that gone ahead the moderate Taliban would have come out on top and the history that followed may well have been different. The same holds true today. The Iranian pipeline is closer to completion now by far, although eventually over time South Asia will need at least two pipelines.

To the people of Pakistan it thus seems that they are consigned to the status referred in the Bible as "hewers of wood and drawers of water".

In the Peace Dialogue Pakistan has responded positively to India's main interests on trade and people to people contacts. However it has not budged on Pakistan's core concern of Kashmir or on resolving the Siachin and Sir Creek sea boundary disputes, and has hardened further its position on all three, as well as on the Indus Waters where it seeks not only to control their flow in violation of the Indus Waters Treaty but also objects to vitally needed Pakistani dams downriver to the extent of attempting to block construction assistance from the IFIs.

Even on progressing on Nuclear and Conventional CBMs and in observing those agreed upon India continues to drag its feet as if wanting to delink from Pakistan. It ignores the wise maxim coined in the environmental arena that a country must "think globally but also act locally".

Recently India carried out two SLBM launches which require prenotification to Pakistan under the terms of their bilateral legal agreement, but did not do so[4], coming up with a vague response -after much delay-that the missiles were not ballistic despite DRDO Press Releases to the contrary. This is a troubling development for a CBM that had worked well so far, better for instance than the Hague Code of Conduct. One hopes it is not the start of a trend.

[4] "Pakistan complained to MEA that is was notified about the missile test conducted on 27 January."Article by Suman Sharma, datelined New Delhi the Sunday Guardian. 16 February 2013.

India and Western analysts oppose Pakistan's Tactical Nuclear Weapons without taking into account the need to close the gap posed by the aggressive Indian Cold Start/Proactive Doctrine aimed at placing India in a coercive position to threaten Pakistan with strikes to seize territory while remaining under the nuclear overhang.

Pakistan is quite transparent that if forced to, *in extremis*, it can use nuclear weapons, including Tactical Nuclear Weapons, to defend itself. However paradoxically India and others who hold that Pakistan should publish a nuclear doctrine, criticize this unambiguous Pakistan assertion , implying that it is 'unfair' to limit India's otherwise available options accruing from its conventional superiority.

Hence when our friends are interested in discussing themes such as restraint with us, they should think of what would make sense to us. Even in this area their definition of restraint seems driven by the objective that we should slow down production of our nuclear weapons. They conveniently ignore the responsibility of their own countries to exercise restraint in supplying India with conventional, non-conventional and strategic weapons and technology. They have also showed no restraint in accommodating our neighbour into multilateral export control regimes, while denying us such participation. They do not object to Russia supplying nuclear submarines to India which can carry nuclear cruise missiles and critical technical assistance to India's nuclear submarine programme as acknowledged by the Indian Prime Minister.

It is curious to note that the major Western powers advocate bilateralism with India on the Kashmir dispute in order to create a comfort zone in which they do not annoy India. On the other hand when Pakistan insists on a bilateral approach on strategic issues in South Asia our Western friends follow the Indian position and bring in concern over China to excuse India from conventional or strategic restraint. This is despite the fact that the major part of India's military assets are deployed against Pakistan

In terms of the unilateral strategic restraint advocated for Pakistan, one can see what is in it for India and for its Western and Russian friends, but the question is what is in it for Pakistan. The 180 million people of this country cannot afford that the country falters or falls under external threat. The existence of a strong nuclear capable Pakistan is also considered a source of strength, like the concept in naval strategy of a "fleet in being", by Muslim countries and their people, the Muslims of India and also by the Muslim Diaspora worldwide at a time when Islam, and its adherents in Muslim countries and elsewhere, are perceived to be under threat.

Pakistan's proposals in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s in the nuclear and missile areas affirm the restraint DNA of Pakistan. The irony is that our friends advocate restraint only when they see Pakistan responding to a strategic environment facilitated and supported by them. They need to develop strategic clarity and realism as well.

To conclude with the way forward; much depends on India reciprocating Pakistan's objective and proposals for strategic restraint and much also depends on the international community supporting this objective in an even handed manner.

Ambassador Tariq Osman Hyder led Pakistan's delegations in Nuclear and Conventional CBM's talks with India between 2004-2007. This paper was presented by him, at the joint CISS-IISS Workshop on Defence, Deterrence and Nuclear Weapons in Islamabad on 7th March, 2013.

INDIAN POWER REACTORS, OPERATING AND UNDER CONSTRUCTION, WHICH WILL REMAIN OUTSIDE SAFEGUARDS - THEIR REACTOR GRADE AND WEAPONS GRADE PLUTONIUM PRODUCTION CAPABILITY

S.No.	Name of Reactor/Origin	Type/Capacity(Gross)	In Operation / Under-Construction	IAEA Safeguards (At Present)	Under separation plan/Likely to be IAEA Safeguards	Annual Estimated Fuel Requirement (t)		Annual Estimated Pu available in Spent Fuel (kg)	
						(Normal Burn up) MWD/t	(Low Burn up) 1000MWD/t	RGPu available in Spent Fuel	WGPu available in spent Fuel
1	TAPS-3 Indigenous	PHWR 540 MWe	Under Construction 2007 start up	--	No	88.5 (7000)	619.50	309.75	526.58
2	TAPS-4 Indigenous	PHWR 540 MWe	2005	NO	No	88.5 (7000)	619.50	309.75	526.50
3	MAPS-1 Indigenous	PHWR 170 MWe	1984	NO	No	19.27 (6700)	129.11	67.45	109.70
4	MAPS-2 Indigenous	PHWR 220 MWe	1986	NO	No	22.37 (6700)	149.88	78.30	127.38
5	Kaiga-3 Indigenous	PHWR 220 MWe	Under Construction 2007 start up	--	No	33 (6700)	221.10	115.50	187.85
6	Kaiga-4 Indigenous	PHWR 220 MWe	Under Construction 2007 start up	--	No	33 (6700)	221.10	115.50	187.85
7	Kaiga-1 Indigenous	PHWR 220 MWe	2000 start up	--	No	33 (7000)	231.00	115.50	187.85
8	Kaiga-2 Indigenous	PHWR 220 MWe	1999 start up	--	No	33 (7000)	231.00	115.50	187.85
					TOTAL (Tons)	350.64	2422.19	1.23	2.04

NOTE-1: Weapons Grade plutonium (WGPu) requires low burn-up, unlike for optimal power generation.

NOTE-2: 8 reactors if used as dedicated facilities for WGPu, total annual max capacity is 2.04 tonnes = 400 nuclear weapons

NOTE-3: However if run at 60% capacity for annual capacity approximately 1,200 WG Kg = 240 nuclear weapons . If run for both power generation and WGPu, given online refueling capability of these heavy water/natural uranium reactors, low-case annual capacity approximately 500 WGPu Kg = 100 nuclear weapons

NOTE-4: This is apart from India's dedicated DHRUVA and CIRUS reactors and its planned 13 Breeder reactors which will also be outside safeguards. There is no rationale or global precedent for keeping either power or breeder reactors outside safeguards.