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Pragmatic steps toward ideal objectives

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Confidence-building Measures in South Asia

Samina Yasmeen and Aabha Dixit[1]

The end of the Cold War has ushered the world into an era of mixed blessings. Conflicts in Somalia, Cambodia and the former Yugoslavia continue to highlight the instability inherent in the emerging international system. On the other hand, the end of bipolarity has paved the way for "regional detentes." Following the historic accord between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) in September 1993, the Jordanian Government also ended its hostility towards Israel in July 1994. Other countries in the region, especially Syria, are also inching towards some form of accommodation with Israel. In Southeast Asia, after bringing Vietnam into the mainstream of regional relations, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has also taken the lead in ending Myanmar's self-imposed isolation. Latin America has already seen a rapprochement between the two traditional rivals, Argentina and Brazil, highlighted by the conclusion of nuclear and missile nonproliferation agreements.

Unfortunately, the benefits of the changed international environment have eluded South Asia. The two major regional rivals, India and Pakistan, remain entangled in an adversarial relationship. The continuing controversy over Kashmir is the main political symptom of this conflictual relationship. Islamabad consistently demands a plebiscite in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and argues that the uprising in the Valley is proof that the Kashmiris wish to join Pakistan. New Delhi, on the other hand, asserts that the uprising in Kashmir has been perpetuated primarily by Islamabad's active support for the rebels. As for the plebiscite, the Indian Government routinely asserts that Kashmir is an integral part of the Union of India.

The continuing arms race between India and Pakistan is another indicator of their hostile relationship. Islamabad and New Delhi spend 6.5 percent and 3.1 percent of their respective Gross Domestic Product (GDP) on defense. This earns them a ranking among the top ten largest buyers of weapons among developing states. With its arms imports totalling $12.2 billion during 1988-1992, India tops this list. Pakistan, with its average annual arms imports of $697 million during the same period, ranks as the ninth largest arms importer.[2] These imports enable both India and Pakistan to compete with each

[1] The authors wish to thank Begum Sarfraz Iqbal and James Trevelyan for their help and ideas. Also special thanks are due to Vidyadhar Dhavle.

[2] United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report 1994* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 171.

other for a perceived strategic parity and/or sufficiency in terms of army, air and naval capabilities.[3]

Significantly, the Indo–Pakistani arms race has included weapons of mass destruction (WMD). With their nuclear programs dating back to the early 1960s and 1970s, India and Pakistan are believed to have the capacity to produce fifty and eight nuclear weapons, respectively. At the same time, they are engaged in a leisurely pursuit of ballistic missile capability. India has successfully developed a short-range missile, the Prithvi, with a range of 250 kilometers (km), and is in the process of developing an intermediate-range ballistic missile, the Agni, with a range of 2,500 km. Pakistan is engaged in a similar process with attempts to develop short-range missiles, the Hatf I & II, with a range of 80 and 300 km, respectively. With the help of China, Pakistan is also developing another missile, the Hatf III, with a range of 600 km.

This attention to and expenditure on defense contrasts sharply with the expenditure on other significant areas. Pakistan's military spending, for instance, is estimated to be 125 percent of the combined education and health expenditure. India's military expenditure, on the other hand, is estimated to be 65 percent of its combined education and health expenditure.[4] These sectoral imbalances have had serious repercussions for New Delhi's and Islamabad's performance in areas important for human development. India has the largest number of people living in absolute poverty (350 million, or 26 percent of the world total). Pakistan accounts for 2.7 percent of the world's total with 35 million people (over one quarter of its population) living in absolute poverty. India spends 3.5 percent of its Gross National Product (GNP) on education and has an adult literacy rate of 50 percent. Translated in real terms, this means that India has the largest number of illiterate adults (272 million in 1992) in the world. Pakistan spends 3.4 percent of its GNP on education and only 45 million people or 36 percent of its total adult population is estimated to be literate. In India, where life expectancy at birth is 59.7 years, 3.5 million children die before reaching the age of five, while another 69.3 million in the same age group remain malnourished. Pakistan's performance is no better; it has an infant mortality rate of 99 per 1,000 live births and the number of malnourished children under five is estimated to be 3.7 million. In India and Pakistan, approximately 844 million people have no access to sanitation facilities and an estimated 281 million have no access to safe drinking water.[5] Hence, India and Pakistan are ranked 135 and 137 out of 173 states on the Human Development Index (HDI) designed by the United Nations Development Program. Given that these two states are moving down the HDI ranking each year, it can be safely assumed that both India and Pakistan run the risk of

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[3] No standard definition of strategic parity and sufficiency exists in either India or Pakistan. While for some it denotes quantitative and qualitative equality, others favor proportional balance of power.

[4] United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report 1994*, 171.

[5] Ibid., 129-169. See also, United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report 1993* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); and Jayati Ghosh, "Development for the people," *Frontline*, July 1, 1994, 106-112.

further depriving their people of basic necessities unless they spend less on defense and more on health and education.

This reallocation, in turn, necessitates a real relaxation of tension between India and Pakistan. Can this relaxation — a South Asian detente — be achieved? What role can confidence-building measures (CBMs) play in this process and how? We attempt to answer some of these questions in this essay. To this end, the essay looks at the concept of confidence building and how it has been applied in the past in the South Asian context. It then assesses and analyzes the reasons for the only limited success of Indo–Pakistani CBMs. We argue that a perceptual blockage and an enemy mythology surrounding both India and Pakistan are the real impediments to the success of CBMs. Not only do they prompt governments of the two states to engage in hostile actions which reinforce the image of an enemy across the border, but they also prevent them from hearing each other's legitimate concerns. This, in turn, contributes to a perpetual state of hostility. The real route to confidence building lies in altering these myths by measures such as improving people-to-people contacts.

Confidence–Building Measures: A Problem of Definition

Defining CBMs is similar to the problem of defining life or love. Those experiencing or analyzing it have their own notions of what the process means but their understandings do not necessarily correspond. This accounts for frequent questions about the meaning of CBMs, the objectives they are designed to achieve, and their relationship with arms control. It also explains the different and often contradictory answers to these questions in the CBM literature. At one end of the spectrum, the concept of confidence–building measures is defined primarily in terms of military processes. Drawing and building on the experience in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), these definitions remain essentially incremental, developmental, and even cyclical in nature, with a focus on developing military procedures that would encourage transparency and openness between adversaries. The basic objective of these measures is crisis management and war avoidance. John Borawski, for example, defines CBMs in terms of deterring war (which may begin or threaten to begin by design or mistake) through a series of steps including information exchange, inspection of military maneuvers, and operational constraints.[6]

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[6] John Borawski, "The World of CBMs," in John Borawski, ed., *Avoiding War in the Nuclear Age: Confidence-Building Measures for Crisis Stability*, (Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1986), 9-10; See also, for example, Richard E. Darilek and Geoffrey Kemp, "Prospects for Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in the Middle East," in Alan Platt, ed., *Arms Control and Confidence-building in the Middle East*, (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press in association with The Henry L. Stimson Center, 1992), 9-42; Andrew Mack, "Confidence and Security-Building Measures and Military Security," Disarmament: *A Periodic Review by the United Nations* 13, no. 3 (Summer 1989), 142; Trevor Findlay, *Asia/Pacific Confidence- and Security-Building Measures: A Prospectus*, Working Paper no. 90, (Canberra: Australian National University, Peace Research Centre, 1990), 1.

Definitions with an emphasis on political and psychological dimensions of confidence building lie at the other end of the spectrum. Reflecting the stand taken by the former Soviet Union and developing countries, including Peru and India, these definitions question the validity of limiting confidence building to merely military and technical measures. They expand the concept by including measures in political, economic and social fields. Superimposed on this interaction are generalized statements of intent aimed at convincing the adversary of one's peaceful intentions. This understanding of CBMs, therefore, tends to incorporate both incremental and/or instantaneous declarations that may be followed by "a concrete and specific commitment."[7]

It may be argued that the first set of definitions is based on a realist understanding of world politics with its emphasis on power and the need to clarify the use of power to potential enemies. In contrast, the second set draws its inspiration primarily from an idealist view of relations between states and, therefore, focuses on nonmilitary processes. These two conflicting views are moderated by another eclectic approach to confidence building. As advanced in James McIntosh's analysis of the concept, this approach views confidence building in terms of procedural and psychological processes. The procedural aspects focus on "the true nature of potentially threatening military activities," and the psychological aspects focus on the need to reduce "misperceptions and suspicions."[8]

Irrespective of differences in emphasis and philosophical underpinning, it can be argued that the three types of definitions effectively address the question of the "security dilemma" under which states operate. Conflicts and near-conflict situations, including persistent arms races, normally result from the fear that another state (or a group of states) is pursuing policies that are essentially hostile and negative in nature. This perception prompts the concerned state(s) to undertake countermeasures that negate the measures taken by the enemy state(s). This, in turn, is perceived as being potentially hostile or negative by the other state(s) and causes them to take additional measures to restore the preferred ratio of power. In an international system without a supranational authority or effective jurisdiction, such an action-reaction phenomenon produces a vicious circle of

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[7] See, for example, Charles E. Flowerree, "CBMS in UN Setting," in John Borawski, ed., *Avoiding War in the Nuclear Age: Confidence-Building Measures for Crisis Stability*, (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 107-108; and paper presented by the Indian delegation to the second round of Arms Control and Regional Security (ACRS) Working Group of the Middle East Peace Process, Moscow, July 1992, cited in Aabha Dixit, *Confidence Building Measures: India's Approach* (Paper written as part of the CBM Project, Indian Ocean Centre for Peace Studies, Perth, July 1994), 15-16.

[8] James Macintosh, *Confidence- and Security-Building Measures: A Skeptical Look*, Working Paper no. 96, (Canberra: Australian National University, Peace Research Centre, 1991).

mutual insecurity, hostility, antagonism and negativity. Confidence building essentially attempts to reduce the negativity stemming from the security dilemma.

In essence, therefore, CBMs may be defined as mutually agreed actions taken by states, or groups of states, that set processes in motion that move parties from a condition of mutual hostility to one of reduced hostility or increased accommodation. These actions can be military-strategic or nonmilitary and, include political, cultural or social measures. They can be specific, formal, and publicly acknowledged actions or they can be general, informal, and publicly unacknowledged.[9] These actions may be taken by governmental and/or non-governmental actors. Some processes thus set in motion may be clearly identifiable and visible. Others may be invisible and psychological in nature. It is essential to remember that the processes may only contribute to and not cause a change in the nature of the parties' relationship. It is also important to realize that moving to a condition of reduced hostility or accommodation may not result in stable cooperation between the states concerned. Nor may the parties develop mutual trust to pave the way for permanent friendship. On the contrary, they may slip back into a condition of mutual hostility, a possibility that necessitates consistent efforts by the parties to ensure that the process of building confidence continues even after its success has been demonstrated. Finally, these measures may be limited in their applicability. While they may be useful in reducing tension between states or groups of states relatively equal in terms of their power capabilities, they may be unacceptable to states with unequal capabilities. Even if these states do agree to such measures, their adherence may be temporary in nature.

Defining confidence building in this manner enables us to move away from the situation–specific context of the CSCE process. The arms race in Europe and the fear of conventional or nuclear preemption within the context of the Cold War required an emphasis on military procedures. Recognizing that these measures need not be replicated in other areas under the name of CBMs, and that different measures and actions may be taken to suit the specific geopolitical or cultural contexts of a region, opens the door to a variety of confidence–building regimes. Within the South Asian context, it is possible to look at the history of Indo-Pakistani relations in a different light. It also enables us to suggest nonmilitary and issue-specific CBMs that may spill over into other issue areas and cumulatively contribute to the transition from a condition of mutual hostility to one of reduced hostility.

India, Pakistan and CBMs

A broader and more flexible definition of the concept suggests that India and Pakistan have engaged in confidence-building exercises since their independence in 1947. Initially, these measures remained predominantly declaratory, general, nonmilitary and political in nature. Both India and Pakistan made statements and proposals with an

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[9] Michael Krepon, "The Decade for Confidence-building Measures," in Michael Krepon, ed., *A Handbook of Confidence-Building Measures for Regional Security*, Handbook No. 1, (Washington, DC: The Henry L. Stimson Center, September 1993), 2-3.

avowed interest in maintaining peace. The list of proposals included a no-war pact between the regional adversaries (presented by India and Pakistan at different times) and joint defense of the Subcontinent (suggested by Pakistan). The two states also signed agreements on a variety of issues including commerce and trade, transportation and communication, demarcation of borders, rights of minorities, and prevention of border incidents and protection of places of worship. Significantly, India and Pakistan concluded the 1960 Indus Water Treaty aimed at sharing the waters of the Indus Basin. Not only did they agree upon a transitional period after which the division of the water resource was to be finalized, but also they set up an Indo-Pakistani Permanent Commission with the provision for arbitration of disputes.

The emphasis on nonmilitary CBMs, however, did not altogether exclude understandings in the military domain. In the Tashkent Agreement, concluded after the 1965 war, India and Pakistan agreed not to use force to settle the Kashmir issue. After the 1971 war, they established a "hotline" between their Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMO). In 1972, at Simla, they agreed to respect the Line of Control (LOC) in Kashmir resulting from the ceasefire and not to alter the situation unilaterally.

In the 1980s, the pursuit of confidence building began to shift in favor of military measures, but not to the exclusion of nonmilitary CBMs. Some declaratory measures were suggested by both states, including General Zia ul-Haq's idea of a no-war pact and Indira Gandhi's idea of a Treaty of Peace and Friendship between India and Pakistan. Also, agreements were concluded in nonmilitary spheres. For example, an Indo-Pakistan Joint Commission was established in 1982 to facilitate dialogue on a range of issues including trade, tourism, and communication.[10] Six years later, the two states agreed to avoid double taxation of income from international air transport. Nonetheless, the overall balance tilted in favor of military as opposed to nonmilitary confidence-building measures.

The shift to military CBMs resulted from the changed geopolitical situation arising from the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. Interested in rolling the Soviets back, the United States established a close relationship with Pakistan as the frontline state. At the same time, Washington attempted to improve relations with India. Fearful that India and Pakistan could drift into another war and create complications for its South Asia policy, the U.S. took on the role of facilitator. Drawing on its experience in Europe, Washington suggested military avenues to building confidence between India and Pakistan. Pakistan responded favorably to these overtures as a way of convincing Washington of its reliability as a partner in South Asia. India did likewise, motivated by its evolving interest in opening up to the United States and in limiting the costs to India of the renewed U.S.-Pakistan alliance.

This greater emphasis on military CBMs was most evident in the understanding arrived at between General Zia and Rajiv Gandhi in 1985. They accepted, in principle, that India and Pakistan should not attack each other's nuclear installations. This

[10] Ibid., 47.

understanding was extremely significant. By the early 1980s, both India and Pakistan were engaged in an undeclared competition in the nuclear arena. The competition essentially revolved around the idea of deterrence based on ambiguity. While it contained the possibility that neither India nor Pakistan would openly go nuclear it also enhanced fears on both sides of preemptive nuclear strikes. It was often pointed out that India or Pakistan might attempt to emulate Israel's raid on Osirak and launch a preemptive strike on the other side's nuclear installations. Such fears were especially voiced in India after the United States supplied F-16 aircraft to Pakistan. The understanding between Rajiv Gandhi and Zia reflected a sensitivity on the part of both governments that such fears had to be allayed. It also demonstrated a realization by both leaders that, by allaying such fears, the possibility of a preemptive nuclear strike from either side could be reduced. The understanding was formalized in December 1988 when Benazir Bhutto and Rajiv Gandhi met in Pakistan. During this meeting, India and Pakistan formally agreed to refrain from "undertaking, encouraging or participating in, directly or indirectly, any action aimed at causing the destruction of, or damage to any nuclear installation or facility in the other country."

The emphasis on military CBMs has increased further in subsequent years. The impetus was provided when the Kashmir issue resurfaced and increased the possibility of another war between India and Pakistan in April 1990. The process was facilitated by America's emergence as the only extra-regional actor capable of playing a significant role. Concerned about the possibility of the conflict escalating to a nuclear level, Washington intensified its efforts to promote the idea of CBMs. These efforts resulted in a series of agreements between India and Pakistan reminiscent of the European experience. On April 6, 1991, these states agreed not to violate each other's airspace, to provide advance notification of air exercises, and to follow agreed procedures for military flights within five to ten kilometers of the border. Another agreement concluded on the same day provides for advance notification of certain military exercises in specified areas. Then, on August 19, 1992, agreements were concluded on the complete prohibition of chemical weapons and on a code of conduct for treatment of diplomatic/consular personnel in India and Pakistan. In addition, India and Pakistan followed the Cold War model of keeping lines of communication open and by agreeing at the Male Summit to establish a "hotline" between the Indian and Pakistani Prime Ministers.[11] This contact was to supplement regular talks at the Foreign Secretary level. The "hotline" between the DGMOS which had been established in 1971 but used only intermittently was also reactivated. The two DGMOs contact each other on a weekly basis to exchange ideas or discuss problems in various sectors. These high-level contacts have been occasionally supplemented with exchanges between Indian and Pakistani military delegations.

[11] According to one source, the hotline has since been used to defuse tension between India and Pakistan.

CBMs and South Asia: An Assessment

To what extent have these CBMs been successful in South Asia? The answer depends on what these measures were designed to achieve. If CBMs are viewed primarily as a means for avoiding war, it could be argued that these measures have contributed to preventing full scale conflict between India and Pakistan during the last few years.[12] On the other hand, if the concept is defined in terms of enabling two parties to move from a condition of mutual hostility to one of reduced hostility and accommodation, it can be argued that these CBMs have not succeeded. While both states have pursued declared policies of preventing crises, their actions perpetuate a series of low-level mini-crises that are not conducive to real peace. Effectively, India and Pakistan remain trapped in a relationship of mutual hostility.

Evidence of this hostility and of the failure of CBMs can be found in the negation of the basic premises on which confidence is built among states. As identified in the Helsinki Final Act and later in the Stockholm Document, some of the prerequisites for building confidence are "the inviolability of frontiers, the territorial integrity of states, non-use of force and non-intervention in internal affairs [of other states]." Respect for these principles is weak in India and Pakistan. Although the two states have not fought a major war since 1971, they continue interfering in each other's internal affairs. While Pakistan supports certain militant groups in the Indian part of Kashmir, India interferes in Pakistan's troubled province, Sindh.[13] This interference, along with the supply of weapons to certain groups, effectively contributes to an "indirect" use of force and undermines the territorial integrity of both states.

More evidence can be found in individual agreements concluded to build confidence. The nuclear installations notification agreement, for example, is one of the major exercises undertaken to build confidence between India and Pakistan. However, the entire process of arriving at the agreement and its manner of implementation reveals this lack of confidence. As mentioned earlier, General Zia and Rajiv Gandhi arrived at an understanding in 1985 to exchange information annually about their respective nuclear installations and to refrain from attacking these installations. It was not until December 1988, however, that the understanding was formally converted into an agreement. The delay was largely a result of bureaucratic lethargy and refusal to accelerate the process of formalizing the understanding even after the agreement was ratified. In 1991, the hurdles to implementation were still not removed. The Pakistani government could have provided the list of its nuclear installations promptly, but refused to do so and supplied its list only days before the final deadline of January 1, 1992. The Indian government could have been more accommodating but it did not oblige either. Instead of

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[12] It would be rather difficult to establish a direct causal connection between these measures and the absence of war between the two traditional rivals. Given the existing regional balance of power, the logistical problem of conducting a full-scale war while simultaneously curbing insurgency in Kashmir and Sindh, and the loss of traditional extra-regional supporter suggests that, in any case, a war between India and Pakistan would have been an unlikely event.

[13] Interviews with senior Indian and Pakistani officials, January 1992 and March 1995.

accepting that the Pakistani government was free to provide the list of its nuclear installations as late as the last day of the year, it frequently drew attention to Islamabad's reluctance to supply the list of installations. Interestingly, India hardly needed to protest as a fairly accurate list of nuclear installations in India and Pakistan had been in the public domain for some time.[14]

The agreement regarding the prior notification of military maneuvers presents another example of the limited success of military CBMs in South Asia. After the two near–conflict situations between India and Pakistan in 1986-87 and 1990, Pakistan suggested that an agreement on advance notification of military maneuvers be signed.[15] India responded favorably but the two sides took one year to prepare the draft agreement due to their differences over the exact wording to be used. The final draft clearly spelled out the areas covered under the agreement, the type of exercises to be notified, and the period before which such notification must be received by the other side. It also covered information about inducting troops for internal security duties. Despite such clarity, however, some sources claim that the two sides do not always fully believe the nature of troop movements notified by the opposite side.[16] Nor do they see the information as removing the possibility of misreading the intentions of the other state. Instead, the information about troop movements is sometimes treated as inherently dangerous, and prompts the other side to mobilize its own troops as well. Essentially, therefore, an agreement which was designed to build confidence does not necessarily contribute to that end.

The signing and implementation of the "Code of Conduct for Treatment of Diplomatic/Consular Personnel in Pakistan and India" is another case in point. The agreement, signed in August 1992, was basically redundant as international conventions already provide for the protection of diplomatic staff. Nevertheless, given the frequency with which the two states expelled each other's diplomats, with occasional complaints of maltreatment by local authorities, the code of conduct was signed. The agreement prevents committing acts of physical violence against diplomats of the other state, avoids intrusive and aggressive surveillance and actions, and sets out procedures for resolving complaints. During the two years following the signing of the agreement, however, both India and Pakistan have continued to harass diplomats from across the border. There have been allegations of physical violence and arbitrary expulsions of diplomatic consular staff on a tit-for-tat basis. In mid-1994, for instance, India expelled two Pakistani

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[14] Personal interview with a senior Pakistani official, January 1992.

[15] In the first case, New Delhi conducted its biggest ever military exercises, Operation Brass Tacks to which the Pakistani Government responded by mobilizing its troops to the Indo-Pakistan border. The possibility of a major conflict was real and only averted after Zia's "cricket diplomacy." In April 1990, both India and Pakistan mobilized their troops amidst increasing tensions on the Kashmir issue, once again bringing the subcontinent to the verge of an all out war.

[16] It is important to point out that these suspicions mostly exist with respect to India's troop movements in the Indian part of Kashmir. Information on movements near the Indo-Pakistan international border, on the other hand, is treated as fairly reliable. (Personal interview with a senior Pakistani official, January 1992.)

diplomats in New Delhi. Pakistan responded in kind by expelling two Indian diplomats in Pakistan. The situation deteriorated to such an extent that the Indian and Pakistani Foreign Ministers had to decide once again in July 1994 that the code of conduct would be adhered to.[17] That this decision needed to be announced only two years after the agreement was concluded is a testimony of the failure of this confidence-building measure.

Perceptual Blockage and Enemy Mythology

What accounts for the relative failure of CBMs in South Asia? An answer to this question might lead to more successful measures in the future. It can be argued that the present situation is a symptom of a deeper affliction, a "perceptual blockage" and the "myth" of enemy which permeates through both Indian and Pakistani societies and governments. The process by which this blockage and mythology is perpetuated is cyclical and self-reinforcing in nature. However, given that both India and Pakistan essentially remain elite-dominated systems, the origin of this blockage could be traced to the images held by the elites in the two states. These images are mostly identical in essence and, sometimes, in form. The most dominant of these images is one of "enemy across the border." Interestingly, this image accords a unity and absence of dissension to the other side unknown in any "normal" political system. A large majority of the Pakistani elite is convinced that India speaks with one voice when issues related to Pakistan are involved. And Indians are generally convinced that no internal debate takes place in Pakistan on issues relating to India.[18] This image also imputes a notion of threat to the other side: for India, Pakistan is a threat and for Pakistan, India undermines the very basis of the state. For both these groups, the "other side" is manipulative, unreliable and prone to dramatics. Beyond this obvious similarity, the elites in both states differ somewhat on the attributes accorded to the "enemy." The dominant view of India among the Pakistani elite is one of an expansionist, arrogant and bullying state that did not accept the idea of partition and/or the basis on which the partition took place. Hence, India is credited with an uncontrollable urge to destroy Pakistan and reintegrate it with the larger India or at least to subjugate Pakistan and relegate it to a subordinate status. While this objective is to be achieved by military superiority, these Pakistani elites also view India as using political and cultural subversion to weaken and dominate Pakistan.[19]

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[17] During the 14th meeting of the Council of Ministers in Dhaka, Pakistani and Indian Foreign Ministers decided that they would adhere to the code of conduct. "Pakistan, India Will Follow Code of Conduct," *Nation* (Lahore), August 1, 1994.

[18] For example, in a USIS sponsored Worldnet Program involving Indian and Pakistan participants, one of the Indian participants, Bhabani Sen Gupta, said, "[W]e find here (India) a bit frustrating that in Pakistan there is hardly any dissent when it comes to policy discussion about India." A Pakistani journalist, Khalid Ahmad, responded, "I do agree that there is dissent in the Indian press on India's policies towards Pakistan, but it is not sizeable. It still looks as if the opposition to Pakistan in India is monolithic." *Worldnet Dialogue: Confidence Building in South Asia* (Islamabad: United States Information Service, June 3, 1991), 4, 7.

[19] The discussion of the Indian and Pakistani views of the "other" is based on interviews with a number of senior Indian and Pakistani civil and military officials, businessmen, academics and journalists.

The dominant view of Pakistan within the Indian elite is one of a theocratic, religiously fanatic and militaristic state that has not accepted its "South Asian" identity. It is also seen as denying its cultural links with the Indian civilization. Pakistan's failures in democracy and the military's ascendancy in the system is seen as contributing to these attributes. Pakistan is also viewed as suffering from a paranoia that India has not accepted the reality of partition and is determined to undo the Islamic state. At the same time, it is accorded a sense of vengeance which motivates Pakistan to undermine the secular basis of Indian polity by meddling in Kashmir, Punjab, and India's financial nerve center, Bombay.

These differences in attributes do not change the essence of images held by a large majority of the elites. The "other" side is generally viewed as the enemy intent upon posing a threat to the country's social and political fabric. These images are transmitted to the masses through the medium of education. The textbooks used in both India and Pakistan provide selective information to students about the identity of their country and its place in the region. It could be argued that the use of selective information is not unique to either India or Pakistan. Almost every state engaged in the process of nation-building makes selective use of the historical record. The relevance of this selectivity in the case of India and Pakistan, however, becomes obvious when one considers the manner in which the "other" side is treated. For instance, Pakistani students are encouraged to look at their country as an Islamic state with close relations with other Muslim states. India is portrayed as a state with "nefarious designs who (sic) always desired to damage Pakistan."[20] They are taught that not only did India try to deny Pakistan its legal share of assets after the partition but it also dismembered Pakistan in 1971.

This selective use of information extends not only to a discussion of the country concerned after independence but also applies to the history of the region. Pakistani textbooks ignore the "non-Islamic" history of the Subcontinent, with, for example, little mention of the Ashoka Empire. For them, the history of Pakistan starts with Mohammad Bin Qasim's arrival in the Subcontinent. The defeat of Raja Dahir, and the successful campaigns of various Muslim rulers.[21] Even the discussion of the Mughal Empire favors "good and pious" Emperor Aurangzeb over Emperor Akbar who married Hindu women and introduced Din-e-Akbari. Indian textbooks do not ignore the Islamic tradition of the region but the manner in which they present information is hardly value-free. While the Mughal Emperor Akbar is eulogized for his even-handed and enlightened policies, Aurangzeb is indirectly criticized for his religious fanaticism.[22] This negative portrayal of

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[20] See, for example, K. Ali, *A New History of Indo-Pakistan Since 1956* (Karachi: Pakistan Book Centre, 1992), 318-319.

[21] See, for example, M. Ikram Rabbani and Monawwar Ali Syed, *An Introduction to Pakistan Studies* (Lahore: The Caravan Book House, 1992), 11-12. This book, assigned for Secondary School classes, has 338 pages and deals with India before the advent of Islam in one page!

[22] See, for example, Rai Choudhary, *An Advanced History of India* (Oxford University Press, 1953).

Aurangzeb ignores the fact that Hindu culture flourished during his reign. Other examples of such selective use of information include references to the freedom movement. While Pakistani textbooks identify the Indian National Congress and Hindu leaders like Nehru as uncompromising and determined to suppress Muslims of the Subcontinent,[23] Indian textbooks refer to Jinnah in anything but a flattering manner. The partition is depicted as a fact accepted by Indians, but remains, nonetheless, a sad fact.

These and other similar ideas conveyed through textbooks help to create "scholarly" images among the young generations of India and Pakistan. Based on different selections of historical facts, educated people in the two countries learn to view their own country in a positive light. Simultaneously, the country across the border is viewed negatively. The media in the two states reinforce these images by highlighting negativity and ignoring most of the positive signs of developments across the border. For instance, a cursory selection of news in the Indian print media identifies Pakistan as supporting terrorism against India, weakening India by exploiting the situation in Kashmir and the cause of the movement to create Khalistan in the Punjab, pursuing a crusading foreign policy against India, and translating its rivalry with India into a race for acquiring more naval vessels and aircraft.[24] Equally interesting is the tendency of writing anti-Pakistani headings for news items that have little direct reference to Pakistan,[25] or needlessly comparing India with Pakistan.[26] A selection of news from the Pakistani media presents a similar picture. For example, India is portrayed as an uncompromising state which poses a threat to Pakistan's security. Not only is it acquiring threatening weapons like the Agni, but it is also attempting to undermine Pakistan's regional alliances.[27] It is accused

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[23] For example, K. Ali, *A New History of Indo-Pakistan Since 1956*, chapters 14 and 15. These chapters describe the reasons for Pakistan's creation, discuss the suppression of Muslims by Hindus, and describe the unresolvable differences between Hinduism and Islam.

[24] See, for example, "Pak. wants militants to kill innocent people," *The Hindu*, November 6, 1993; P. S. Suranarayan, "Pak's one-point foreign policy," The Hindu, December 25, 1993; "Pakistan's doublespeak," *The Pioneer* (New Delhi), November 8, 1993; Chandan Nandy, "Pakistan swells naval fleet," *The Telegraph* (Calcutta), March 29, 1994; and "ISI special camps for militants," *The Times of India* (New Delhi), April 14, 1993.

[25] For example, a 1,000 word news item on New Delhi's extension of President's rule in Kashmir included only 150 words about Pakistan but the article was titled "No decision yet on Pak invitation to Chavan," *The Times of India*, February 26, 1993.

[26] An interesting example is the opening paragraph of a review of Pakistani writer Bapsi Sidhwa's book, *An American Brat*, which starts with the following paragraph: "What is it about the Indian middle class mind that it has to react to anything Pakistani in just one mode: 'who is the fairer of us both?' Whether it is the arms race, our speech and manners, books and looks, our Imrans and Kapils, our Rajiv and their Benazir -- our collective subconscious is still tied by an umbilical cord that no F-16 shall tear asunder. *There is just one way, then, of assessing Bapsi Sidhwa's An American Brat -- how does it stand against similar writing in India?* (Italics added.) Ira Pande, "Losing Track: An all too familiar tale," *India Today*, July 15, 1994, 86-87.

[27] *The Frontier Post*, July 30, 1992.

of engaging in dialogue with Pakistan to project an image of cooperation while its approach to negotiations remains "evasive."[28]

Other examples of the media's contribution to negative image-building is the coverage of the problems surrounding the implementation of the code of conduct. In July 1994, for example, amidst the reciprocal expulsions of diplomats from India and Pakistan, the Pakistani media printed a large-size photograph of two personnel expelled from the High Commission in India. One of them was shown in a wheel chair with a sprain collar around his neck. In 1993, an Indian biweekly magazine also featured the diplomatic row. It alleged that the Pakistan High Commission staff had falsely accused India of maltreating one of their employees. The title of the news item, "spy snafu," and the description of the whole saga presented Pakistani diplomats as conniving, muddled liars.[29]

The Indian and Pakistani media do not always present these negative images on their own. Occasionally, the two governments prompt their media to undermine the credibility of the other side. The process goes well beyond the normal use of routine press releases by governments the world over. For example, according to some sources, in 1991–92, a systematic attempt was made by New Delhi to use the Indian media for exposing Pakistan and highlighting that Islam has not unified the country.[30] In some cases, however, the media takes independent actions that perpetuate the image of a hostile enemy. In early 1992, for instance, soon after India and Pakistan had exchanged lists of their nuclear installations, a news account in Pakistan accused India of not disclosing the complete list of its nuclear sites.[31] Although some senior officials in Pakistan questioned the validity of such claims,[32] the reports contributed to a sense of crisis just a week after a CBM was implemented. Irrespective of the origins and motivations, however, the media in India and Pakistan supplement "scholarly" images with what could be termed as "folk images."[33]

Together, written and electronic media images and the national educational systems create a shared consciousness–the myth of an enemy whose hostility is unconditional–among the masses in India and Pakistan.[34] This is not to suggest that no dissenting voices can be heard in either India or Pakistan about the persona of the neighboring state. The works of celebrated Pakistani poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz, and the

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[28] Maleeha Lodhi, "New Low in Indo-Pakistan Relations," *News*, December 18, 1992.

[29] *India Today*, August 31, 1993, 10.

[30] Information provided by an Indian journalist, August 1994.

[31] *News*, January 9, 1992.

[32] Personal interview with a Pakistani diplomat, January 1992.

[33] David Newman, "Overcoming the Psychological Barrier: The Role of Images in War and Peace," in Nurit Kliot and Stanley Waterman, eds., *The Political Geography of Conflict and Peace* (London: Belhaven Press, 1991), 201-202; see also, Kenneth Boulding, "The Nature and Causes of National and Military Self-Images in Relation to War and Peace," Ibid., 142-152.

[34] These ideas are similar to those held by some Soviet leaders about the United States during the Cold War era. See Jack Snyder, "The Gorbachev Revolution: A Waning of Soviet Expansionism?" *International Security*, vol. 12, no. 3 (Winter 1987/88), 99.

classic works of Indian writer Krishan Chander are evidence of an alternative imagery. However, those presenting alternative imagery are often silenced by their respective governments. They are also consciously or unconsciously marginalized by the media. When they are too popular to be marginalized, as was the case with Faiz Ahmed Faiz, their works are given a de-politicized and romantic flavor. The problem is complicated by what could be termed as subliminal perception. Having been trained to look at the other side in a negative light, people often use the alternative imagery to reinforce their belief in the dominant image. The discourse of animosity and the myth of the enemy remain dominant. Interestingly, this myth depends on ignorance about the country across the border.[35] The strength of this ignorance and the enemy myth create a condition where almost every action from across the border is viewed negatively. Sometimes, these interpretations verge on absurdity, but they nevertheless continue.[36]

It is important to point out that the process of developing a shared consciousness and creating a myth of the enemy across the border is not linear. Nor does it always move in one direction from the elite to the masses. Often those propagating the myth of the enemy themselves become the willing recipients of the information they are disseminating. They internalize the information which, in turn, reinforces the negative images they already hold until they become convinced of the unconditional hostility of the other side. Such views act against their willingness to listen to each other or negotiate with each other in a cooperative spirit. Instead, the emphasis remains on a zero-sum game, with a preference for one-upmanship.

As was the case in the U.S.-Soviet rivalry, the reinforced negative images of the enemy across the border and views on "appropriate" ways of dealing with the other side result in both India and Pakistan taking actions that are inherently negative in character and not conducive to building peace. Both sides focus on weapon acquisition programs that are justified in terms of the military capabilities of "the enemy." They also willingly exploit most of the opportunities available to weaken the other side. These actions include, for example, Pakistan's support for the independence movement in Kashmir and India's involvement in the Sindh situation. This, in turn, perpetuates the hostility between India and Pakistan at two levels: On the one hand, these actions convince the elite on the receiving end of the other side's unending hostility and provide them with additional information that can be fed to their masses through education and the media. On the other hand, even the relatively short-term success of these acts of interference convince the interfering state of the viability and utility of such a policy.

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[35] This ignorance exists across all levels in both India and Pakistan and has been documented by some writers and politicians who have visited the other state. Maulana Kauser Niazi, for instance, wrote a series of articles on his visit to India to which some Pakistani readers responded by saying, "This information is completely new to us." Similarly, he found out that most of the knowledgeable people in India were really ignorant about Pakistan. Kauser Niazi, Naqshe-Rahguzar (Urdu) (Lahore: Jang Publishers, 1991), 9, 63.

[36] An example of myth bordering absurdity is the view expressed during the 1992 floods in Pakistan that placed the blame for the floods on India.

The situation is made more complicated by the fact that the masses, educated in the "folk" and "scholarly" myth of the enemy, also limit the ability of the elite to maneuver. They do not remain silent recipients of the information provided by educational institutions and the media. Instead, they become "actors" or "agents" in their own right with an ability to reinforce the shared consciousness transmitted to them by the ruling elite. Operating in states with inherently weak political systems, the masses also develop an ability to define the parameters and context within which the ruling elite must relate to the "other" side. Any attempt by a member of the ruling elite in either India or Pakistan to digress from or transcend the limits defined by the masses as "agents" entails the possibility of a negative reaction from them. It also carries the possibility of political violence and/or political change. Hence, even if elite circles entertain ideas of a non-zero-sum game, they are prevented from doing so due to the fear of a reaction from the masses. They also fear that political opponents would exploit this reaction and undermine the government. Effectively, therefore, elites propagating the enemy myth also become hostage to their own propaganda. They are forced to take actions and adopt positions that run counter to building confidence.

Examples of such cyclical and multilayered interaction between the elite and the masses in India and Pakistan abound. The most common example in the 1990s is that of the revived Kashmir dispute. When the situation deteriorated in the valley at the turn of the 1990s, Benazir Bhutto's government initially showed little sign of "making use" of the Kashmir problem. Soon, however, fearful that the opposition led by Nawaz Shariff would exploit the relative absence of criticism, the Pakistani government launched a move to once again internationalize the issue. Since then, Islamabad has consistently raised and referred to the issue at international forums. This policy has continued despite the diplomatic failures at Geneva in late 1993 and early 1994, not just because some groups in Pakistani decision-making circles genuinely believe in supporting Kashmiri Muslims but also due to the fear that a different approach would be exploited by the opposition to mobilize the masses. Across the border, the Indian government has exhibited similar tendencies. Following Pakistan's decision in late 1993 to withdraw the resolution raising the issue of human rights violations in Kashmir, New Delhi did discuss the Kashmir issue during the Foreign Secretary level talks in January 1994. The discussion, however, was restricted to repeating the traditional Indian stand that Kashmir remains an integral part of the Union of India. It was apparent that, as before, both Indian and Pakistani governments were proposing ideas and taking positions that they thought would be rejected by the other side.

The problems with the CBMs concluded during the last decade also lie within this context. Although decision makers in the two states can conclude agreements to build confidence, the shared consciousness and mythology convinces them that the other side is not really sincere in its search for peace. It also convinces them that while negotiating some military CBMs, they must continue to acquire arms and be prepared to face the enemy. To put it differently, the myth operates against the spirit of confidence building and keeps the two states entrenched in a state of mutual hostility.

Changing the Myths: A Route to Confidence Building

Given the mythology surrounding the enemy across the border, it can be argued that the real route to confidence building lies in changing the shared consciousness and the myth of the enemy across the border which exists both in India and Pakistan. Theoretically, it is possible to achieve such a change and alter the elite and mass images. Recent scientific studies on mind and consciousness provide clues on how this change could be achieved. In his book, *Bright Air, Brilliant Fire: On the Matter of Mind*, for instance, Gerald M. Edelman argues that "every perception is an act of creation." He maintains that as humans go through life, they "take samplings of world," creating maps in the brain. Then a sort of neurological "survival of the fittest" occurs, a selective strengthening of those mappings which correspond to "successful" perceptions -- successful in that they prove the most useful and powerful for the building of "reality."[37] The process is dynamic in nature; the mind engages in a constant recategorization of information collected and continual remapping of reality.[38] Such an understanding of the brain suggests that if the "samplings" were changed, the creation of "reality" could also change, leading to a shift in perception and shared consciousness.[39]

What relevance is this to India-Pakistan relations? It can be argued that if the information, or sampling, made available to the minds of the public and elites is changed and if suggestions are made about looking at the situation differently, scholarly and folk images in both India and Pakistan would change as well. Such a change would weaken the myth of the enemy and help remove the perceptual blockage which, in turn, would help open new perceptions on which confidence could be built. In practical terms, such a suggestion would require a more balanced account of history and the present reality at all levels of education. This would necessitate a more radical change in curricula than has been affected so far.[40] It would also require a conscious decision by the media to ensure fair news coverage of Indian and Pakistani issues.

Given the nature of hostility between India and Pakistan, and the interplay between domestic and foreign policy, it is easy to predict the reaction to such suggestions. Those among the elite circles in both countries who see the other side as an enemy would object strongly to any action that questions their image of the other side. They would also resist any policy that could be equated with capitulation or appeasement. Masses in the two states would also react negatively to suggestions that present a sudden and radical alternative to their image of the enemy across the border. Political groups would exploit the situation and only exceptionally strong governments on both sides could survive policy changes resulting from these suggestions.

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[37] Gerald M. Edelman, *Bright Air, Brilliant Fire: On the Matter of the Mind* (Basic Books), Reviewed by Oliver Sacks, "Making up the Mind," *The New York Review of Books*, April 8, 1993, 42-49.

[38] Ibid., 45; See also, Nicholas Humphrey, *A History of the Mind* (London: Vintage Books, 1993).

[39] The same idea is suggested in terms of "loops" by Edward de Bono, *Water Logic* (London: Viking, 1993).

[40] India and Pakistan had agreed to remove anti-other side propaganda in their curricula. To some extent the process has been started but it is still far from complete.

Changing shared consciousness and images does not necessarily require immediate and drastic steps. The objective can be achieved slowly and gradually in a manner that does not threaten elite and popular views but prepares them to look at the other side differently. This, in turn, requires a different approach to confidence building in South Asia. As previously discussed, most of the CBMs agreed upon by India and Pakistan during the last decade are essentially military in nature. These military measures are necessary to prevent the possibility of an accidental war between India and Pakistan. A narrow approach that emphasizes the military dimensions of Indo-Pakistani hostility, however, is likely to remain hostage to the imagery and perceptual blockages among elites in the two states. It is, therefore, essential that a distinction be made between core and peripheral issues. The two sides need to acknowledge that the core issues, such as the situation in Kashmir and nuclear policies, will require time to resolve. They also need to accept that short-term or quick solutions, such as a unilateral or bilateral declarations to cease interference in the other state's affairs, would be difficult to make or sustain. To put it differently, Pakistan's interference in Kashmir and India's exploitation of the Sindh problem would not stop unless the context within which these actions take place is changed. Hence, instead of totally focusing on the core issues and devising solutions that are acceptable to one side but unacceptable to other, India and Pakistan need to move towards nonmilitary CBMs.

New Delhi and Islamabad have toyed with the idea of nonmilitary CBMs in the past. However, the limited success of the Cultural Cooperation Agreement concluded in 1988 suggests that non-governmental rather than governmental actors need to play a more dominant role in the nonmilitary CBM process. Apart from the specific example of the Cultural Agreement, this preference stems from the view that state structures have played a major role in perpetuating hostility between India and Pakistan. Even if they move into the realm of nonmilitary CBMs, officials from both states will take rigid positions on various issues. Their decision-making processes will remain either "consequential" or "matching" in nature, with a preference for adopting or rejecting single options by matching them against a given criteria -- hostility towards the other side.[41] Non-governmental actors, on the other hand, could be less prone to these tendencies than decision makers. Most of these organizations have acquired greater prominence in South Asia in the 1990s. Their agenda is essentially set by the failure of state structures to alleviate poverty and end the marginalization of the poor in the economic development process. While some NGOs have a poor performance record, most of these organizations have demonstrated a commitment to social development and justice issues. They are more likely to explore nonmilitary areas in which cooperation between India and Pakistan is possible. Given their emphasis on equity and social justice issues, these groups are also likely to undertake the exercise in a cooperative rather than competitive spirit.

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41 Raanan Lipshitz, "Decision Making in Three Models," *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, vol. 24, no. 1 (March 1994), 61.

To some extent, moves in this direction have already been made. The Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi, for example, has initiated a regional dialogue between intellectuals of the two states. An Indian businessman, O.P. Shah, has also held meetings of influential Indians and Pakistanis. Most importantly, selected academics, journalists, businessmen, and retired military officers and civilian officials from India and Pakistan have been holding meetings under what is referred to as the Neemrana Process. The process is essentially a private dialogue on various steps that can build confidence between India and Pakistan. It was originally started by the United States Information Service (USIS) offices in New Delhi and Islamabad. Later, Indian and Pakistani participants took over the process and currently hold meetings alternately in India and Pakistan with the help of funding from the Ford Foundation.

These non-governmental initiatives have suffered from a major problem -- they remain as forums where the elites of the two states discuss the idea of CBMs. As a result, their discussions gravitate towards the core issues separating India and Pakistan. Since most of the participants involved have served in official capacities for their respective governments, as soon as these core issues are raised they find themselves taking positions very similar to those of their governments.[42] This is not to deny some very positive contributions made by participants of these non-governmental forums. But the fact remains that most of these participants do tend to engage in "anticipatory compliance" with the assumptions and perspectives of their respective governments. Essentially, therefore, these non-governmental interactions among the elite result in meetings where nation-based "groupthink" becomes the norm rather than an exception.[43] Hence, if these non-governmental interactions are to succeed, they also must move away from the core issues separating the two states and begin to discuss ways of improving relations in the non-politico/military domain.

For real confidence to be built between India and Pakistan, however, the non-governmental interaction must also extend to the masses who are the repository of the folk images of the enemy. Making it easier for people from the two states to visit the other country is an essential prerequisite for such an interaction. Unfortunately the record in this respect has been hardly promising. At present, it is an ordeal for Pakistanis to visit India as is the case for Indians wishing to visit Pakistan. The whole process of applying for a visa takes a lot longer than for other countries. Normally, one must wait for days just to enter the High Commission of the other state to apply for a visa. One has to specify the cities or towns to be visited. The total number of cities one is allowed to visit is limited, as is the ability to visit a third country from India or Pakistan. Waiting for

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42 This trend has been obvious since the early stages of the Neemrana process. Khaled Ahmed, "Breaking the Ice," *Frontier Post*, January 17, 1992. See also a discussion of the India-Pakistan Dialogue II held in Islamabad, Inayat Ullah, "The India-Pakistan Dialogue II," *The Nation*, (Lahore) April 27, 1992, 5.

43 For a detailed discussion of the concept of "Groupthink," see Paul T. Hart, *Groupthink in Government: A Study of Small Groups and Policy Failure* (Amsterdam: Swetz & Zeitlinger, 1990). For a discussion of the relevance of "Groupthink" in foreign policy issues, see Eric Stern and Bengt Sundelius, "The Essence of Groupthink," *Mershon International Studies Review*, vol. 38 (1994), 101-107.

the visa is another saga. Often applicants wait for weeks before one is issued. But that is not the end of the story either. Those who manage to obtain a visa also receive another document verified by the issuing High Commission. All visitors need to carry this document with them. Failure to do so results in deportation on arrival at their own expense.

Upon arrival, all visitors from the "enemy state" are also required to report to a local police station at each approved city. They have to repeat this on leaving the city, and if they are visiting more than one state, the ritual has to be repeated at each of the destinations. The experience of visiting the "other side" becomes even more traumatic if one decides to visit cities different than those identified in the visa application. Permission has to be obtained from the Home/Interior Ministry, but a visit to the relevant offices can be humiliating. Applicants are often treated disrespectfully by officials. Experiences like this leave the visitor exhausted and disillusioned. Upon returning to the home country, they can be forgiven for being more critical of the "other side" than they were before crossing the frontier.

For fruitful interaction to occur at the non-governmental level, therefore, India and Pakistan need to liberalize and simplify travel formalities for visitors from across the border. This does not mean removing visa requirements or eliminating all restrictions. Instead, it means easing formalities and thereby encouraging non-governmental interaction in certain agreed areas. A measure of confidence is required to enable formalities to be eased. By retaining visa requirements and restricting access to visitors in specified categories, both sides can build confidence while ensuring that a step-by-step relaxation of visitor formalities will not lead to a sudden influx of intelligence agents from across the border. It would enable interactions to take place that would help to displace the enemy myth with more positive perceptions.

One area in which such an interaction should be encouraged is that of student exchange programs at the school and university level. Children's International Summer Villages (CISV) could be used as a possible model for this purpose. Started by Dr Doris T. Allen in 1951, the program is run by an international body of voluntary organizations in over seventy states. This program brings eleven year-old children from several countries to live together at a summer camp in a selected country for approximately one month. The children engage in a number of activities that bring them closer to each other; they learn that their differences are less important than the likenesses that bind them together. By the time they return to their respective countries, they have established close and lasting friendships with children from other countries. The CISV also has programs for older children and young adults. Similar programs could be started for Indian and Pakistani children on a bilateral basis or within the context of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).[44] The participants could be chosen from selected schools to meet in India or Pakistan for a period of two to four weeks. During

[44] It is interesting to note that some Pakistani and Indian children have met each other and become good friends in villages outside South Asia. (Interview with an Indian student at CISV, Perth, January 1995.)

this period, they could make firm friendships and provide a fertile foundation for a positive outlook which would prevent the enemy myth from taking control of perceptions.

Cooperative ventures and interaction between women's organizations can provide another venue for confidence building. The problems faced by Pakistani and Indian women are quite similar in nature. The level of female illiteracy is staggering in these two states; while only 35 percent of women are literate in India, the figures are as low as 22 percent in Pakistan. Most of these women get married before they turn twenty but are provided inadequate health facilities. Consequently, for 100,000 live births, approximately 550-600 women die in India and Pakistan. Problems exist with respect to female workforce participation. Despite their active contribution in expenditure restricting activities, women are identified as comprising 14 percent and 29 percent of the total labor force in Pakistan and India, respectively.[45] These and other problems, including access to health facilities for women of all ages, can provide the starting point for interaction among women's organizations in India and Pakistan. Most of the women's organizations in India and Pakistan are dominated by women from the elite class. Any suggestion of cooperation between such organizations across the border, therefore, could result in only women from the upper class meeting regularly. In order to avoid such a class-specific interaction, it would be beneficial to also start joint programs for rural development in selected villages. Given the similarity of problems faced by rural populations in both countries, such programs could not only help NGOs to find avenues for rural development but also bring people closer by demonstrating the value of cooperation. Working examples of similar programs abound. For instance, in the late 1970s, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) initiated an experimental pilot project in Pakistan aimed at integrating education with rural development. It relied on expertise from countries with large rural populations and/or rural development programs. Most of these experts did not know Pakistani culture or traditions. By spending a year visiting villages near Islamabad, they became familiar with the people and traditions and made friends. By the time they left, they appreciated Pakistani culture and the villagers lost their fear of "strangers." If similar projects were started by NGOs in India and Pakistan, they would not only be cheaper to run but also assist in displacing perceptual barriers to confidence building. The positive influences would be durable if the program emphasized self-help and self-development.[46]

Other areas in which cooperation among NGOs could take place include environmental issues, reversing land degradation, dissemination of information about AIDS, and population control. An attempt in this direction is already being made by organizations like the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), which sponsored the Third Annual South Asian NGO Summit in Kathmandu in February 1995.[47]

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[45] United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report 1994*, 139, 145, 151, 163.

[46] The Community Aid Abroad (CAA) in Australia has already tried this approach in several developing countries, including India.

[47] Abbas Rashid, "Development Without Tears?" *Weekend Post, The Frontier Post*, March 10, 1995, 8.

Originally the summit was to be held in Islamabad but the venue was changed due to the Pakistani government's reluctance to issue visas to participants. Still, the summit was attended by NGOs from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal and focused on issues of development. Although a number of those present could still be classified as belonging to elite circles of their respective countries, the summit also included representatives of NGOs working in slums, such as Jaya Shrivastava.[48] If such cooperation continues on a relatively smaller scale, with specific focus on individual issues with the help of those involved at the grassroots level, it would gradually increase the level of interaction between the rural population in India and Pakistan. Ultimately, it would contribute to displacing the enemy myth among these people. It would also weaken domestic obstacles that prevent India and Pakistan from approaching core issues in a cooperative manner.

The process we have suggested would be long, slow, and difficult. It will also be occasionally marred by bureaucratic interventions. But if continued, it would ultimately change the context within which India and Pakistan relate to each other and pave the way for their move from a hostile to cooperative relationship. Without taking this route, without promoting people-to-people contacts in non-contentious areas, any confidence-building exercise in South Asia will have little chance of success.

Conclusion

Indo-Pakistani hostility has outlived the U.S.-Soviet rivalry of the Cold War era. Ending this hostility and diverting resources for human development in these states requires introducing CBMs that are suited to the South Asian environment. The success of any CBMs, however, depends upon removing the perceptual blockage and the enemy myth which prevents the two states from negotiating on a non-zero-sum basis. This, in turn, suggests that the real route to confidence building lies in encouraging people-to-people interaction. Such interaction, if selected carefully, could pave the way for serious and fruitful negotiations on core issues and help India and Pakistan move from a condition of mutual hostility to one of reduced hostility, or even accommodation.

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[48] Ibid.