U.S. Security Policy Toward South Asia After September 11th and Its Implications for China: A Chinese Perspective

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American security policy toward South Asia can basically be divided into three stages: establishment of a balance of power in the Cold War era, movement beyond a balance of power after the end of the Cold War, and consolidation of a new balance of power after September 11th. The Cold War saw an allied U.S. and Pakistan rival the close relations between the Soviet Union and India on the Subcontinent. Yet South Asia became a low priority in U.S. Asia policy in the early years of the post-Cold War era compared to other regions, especially East Asia and the Middle East.

Three events, however, drew U.S. attention to the region in the late 1990s. First, India and Pakistan exploded a total of eleven nuclear devices in May 1998. Then the two powers came to conflict in Kargil from May to July 1999, which resulted in a bloodless military coup in Pakistan in October 1999. Third, President Clinton’s visit to South Asia in March 2000 topped off a changing U.S. South Asia strategy with a warm Washington-New Delhi rapprochement. The George W. Bush Administration continued to transform the U.S.-Indian relationship, although this, as with all aspects of American policy in South Asia, was greatly complicated by the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, D.C. on September 11, 2001.

This paper begins with a brief analysis of the significant changes in U.S. policy toward India and Pakistan during the second term of the Clinton Administration by way of case studies of these three events. The second part will address U.S. security policy toward India and Pakistan after September 11th. And after some observations about U.S. policy options in post-9/11 South Asia, the changing U.S. strategy in the region and its implications for China will be discussed from the perspective of regional “triangles” (which include a U.S.-China-India triangle, a U.S.-India-Pakistan triangle and an India-China-Pakistan triangle).

THE DRAMATIC CHANGES IN U.S. SOUTH ASIA POLICY DURING THE LATE 1990s

The end of the Cold War changed U.S. South Asia policy in two ways. First, the Soviet Union was no longer the decisive factor in the U.S. formulation of its policy toward South Asia; instead, Washington began to view the Subcontinent from a regional perspective and started to deal with India and Pakistan in a different manner. Second, U.S. interests and threats to those interests came from within—rather than from outside—the region. Economic liberalization, non-proliferation and democracy promotion became the main U.S. policy goals in South Asia.
Tilting Toward India, Alienating Pakistan

In the late 1990s, the United States began to tilt toward India as Washington and New Delhi turned from “estranged democracies” of the Cold War to “engaged democracies” in the post-Cold War era. The tilt can be seen in the following. First, the U.S. developed a comprehensive and institutionalized relationship with India, covering broad fields such as economic ties, political dialogue and military exchanges. Second, the U.S. adopted a policy on the Kashmir issue—namely, calling for respect of the Line of Control (LOC), advocating direct dialogue between India and Pakistan, and opposing the use of force to resolve the dispute—that was more favorable to India. Third, the U.S. recognized India’s leading position in South Asia and its important role more broadly, and began to collaborate with New Delhi more in international affairs. Fourth, India became the largest recipient in South Asia of U.S. development and food aid: U.S. assistance to India in FY 2000 reached a total of $170 million—the second largest amount in all of Asia (second only to Indonesia) and more than 45 times that of Pakistan’s (only $3.78 million).

Pakistan, previously one of the largest recipients of American aid as a U.S. ally ($600 million annually in the 1980s), received very little development aid during the 1990s. In fact, prior to September 2001, Pakistan received only counter-narcotics and food assistance (totaling $5.4 million in FY 2001) due to the three layers of sanctions imposed on Islamabad by Washington: the first layer was imposed in 1990 when the Pressler Amendment went into effect; the second followed Pakistan’s nuclear tests in 1998; and the third was imposed in 1999 to protest against Musharraf’s military coup.

The U.S. tilt toward India does mean “India first,” but it must not be translated as “India only.” Clinton’s decision to have a brief five-hour stop in Pakistan during his visit to South Asia showed that Pakistan was still occupying attention in Washington. The U.S. had to try to help Pakistan remain strong enough to prevent the nation’s collapse on the one hand, and on the other hand, to put enough pressure on it to stop its active support of the Kashmir insurgency and the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, to change its nuclear policies and to return to democratic government.

Explaining a Changing U.S. Strategy

The U.S.-Indian rapprochement and cooling U.S-Pakistan relations in the late 1990s were driven principally by seven factors. First, with the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union, the principal obstacle of a U.S.-Indian relationship was removed and the value of Pakistan in containing the Soviets suddenly disappeared.

Second, India’s economic growth made it an important trade and investment partner for the United States. Its strong information technology industry strengthened India’s position on the world economic scene. In contrast, the Pakistani economy survived only through foreign assistance, mostly supplied by the U.S., China and various international economic organizations.

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Third, the growing Indian-American community, one of the wealthiest immigrant communities in the United States (many Indian Americans are doctors, engineers and business owners, and their numbers have doubled in the past decade to 1.7 million), plays an increasingly important role in day-to-day American politics. By way of contrast, Pakistani-Americans are far weaker as a political force in American society.

Fourth is the increasing strategic importance of the Indian Ocean, which connects the oil-rich Persian Gulf with growing energy markets in East Asia. From a geopolitical perspective, the Subcontinent and Indian Ocean connect Washington’s European-Atlantic strategy with its Asia-Pacific strategy. The two were disjointed in the Cold War and in the early years after the end of the Cold War, but as the United States began to contemplate the need for a new European-Asian strategy to deal with potential threats stemming from the uncertain futures of both Russia and China, it was India—not Pakistan—that could play a key role in this new strategy.

Fifth, India and Pakistan had different images in Washington’s eyes. India was seen as an emerging power with economic potential and a bustling democracy while Pakistan was regarded as an almost failed state with economic problems and a military regime.

Sixth, the U.S. viewed India as a potential counterweight to balance a rising China along the PRC’s southern frontier. Important in this regard, border disputes and historical bitterness complicated relations between India and China, who were competitors in economic, political and geostrategic respects.

Lastly, U.S. strategists regarded China, Russia and India as three transition states with uncertain futures. Different from China and Russia (which have many strategic points of divergence with the U.S.), improving relations with India, however, was the best way for the U.S. to break through a possible Sino-Russian-Indian strategic triangle, first proposed by then-Russian Premier Primakov in 1999. Pakistan clearly had no position in this kind of power game.

Case Studies

With the end of the Cold War, the United States has increasingly focused on the dangers of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and regional conflicts in Third World countries. Non-proliferation and regional stability became the priorities of U.S. security strategy. South Asia has long been one of the regions in which both priorities converge, and the theoretical concern became a dangerous reality with the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan in 1998 and the Kargil conflict between these two newest nuclear states in 1999. These events greatly changed Washington’s views of South Asia. America’s interests and goals in South Asia and its policy with respect to the issues of non-proliferation and Kashmir changed, and these changes eventually brought President Clinton to the Subcontinent before he left the White House.

The Nuclear Tests (1998)

On May 11, 1998, India conducted an underground test of three nuclear explosive devices, and followed it two days later with claims of two more. On May 28th, Pakistan announced that it had set off five nuclear devices, followed by a further test on May 30th. Although some Western analysts have cast doubt on whether the two countries actually carried out the number and size of tests they claimed, it is nevertheless clear that India and Pakistan did conduct some nuclear testing.
According to a report by the Council on Foreign Relations, for the U.S., both Indian and Pakistani tests were “as much a long-term policy failure as a near-term intelligence failure.” Nevertheless, what was important was what Washington learned from the tests and how its policy adjusted accordingly. Since India and Pakistan had become de facto nuclear states, the U.S. had to change the focus of its non-proliferation policy from one of “one-size-fits-all” to one of nuclear risk reduction and non-deployment. In addition, Washington began to turn its focus from functional non-proliferation goals to broad regional interests, which included: preventing possible all-out or nuclear war; promoting democracy and internal stability; expanding economic growth, trade and investment; and developing political and—where applicable—military cooperation on a host of regional and global challenges, including but not limited to those posed by terrorism, drug trafficking and environmental degradation.

Second, because of “policy under law,” the Clinton Administration had to impose sanctions on India and Pakistan. But the U.S. soon found that two chief elements of its policy—commerce and sanctions—were contradictory. As Senator Joseph Biden pointed out, “We use sanctions to punish proliferation at the same time we are promoting commercial ties to take advantage of long overdue market openings in both countries.”

Third, after the tests, the U.S. recognized India’s security demands and regarded it as the leading state in South Asia. The twelve rounds of strategic/security dialogue between U.S Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh helped the two countries not only to clear the air but provided “a framework to reconcile the conflicting imperatives of India’s nuclear security interests and the U.S.-led global non-proliferation regime.”

Fourth, Clinton was deeply disappointed by Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif’s decision to go forward with his six tests in response to India’s five, even after the U.S. promised to offer him “everything from a State dinner to billions in new U.S. assistance.”

Kargil and the Musharraf Coup (1999)

The Kashmir issue is the centerpiece of the conflict between India and Pakistan, and it caused war between the two in 1947, 1965 and 1971. Unfortunately, the end of the Cold War failed to automatically stop the hot regional confrontation in South Asia, and after the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests of 1998, both countries faced significant pressures from the United States to reduce tensions through direct dialogue.

In the well-known “bus diplomacy” of February 1999, Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif held a summit in Lahore and signed the Lahore Declaration, which stipulated that their respective governments “shall take immediate steps for reducing the risk of

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5 Interview with a former senior Congressional staff member responsible for South Asian affairs, November 19, 2002.
accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons and discuss concepts and doctrines with a view to elaborating measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields, aimed at prevention of conflict.” The so-called “Lahore Spirit” was widely perceived as a workable regime to break through the deadlock of the half-century confrontation between them.

However, between April and June 1999, India and Pakistan almost plunged into another full-scale war along the Line of Control in Kashmir. During the serious military conflict along the 150-kilometer front in the mountains above Kargil, “the Indian Air Force flew as many as 550 sorties.” “Indeed, not since the 1971 war had air power been used in support of military operation in Kashmir.” On the other side, Pakistani military forces were reportedly deploying nuclear missiles near the border with India. Aware of the danger of escalation, the U.S. strongly urged Pakistan to withdraw behind the LOC immediately, completely and unconditionally. Under great pressure, including a critical talk with President Clinton at Blair House in Washington, D.C. on July 4, 1999, Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif agreed to “take concrete and immediate steps for the restoration of the LOC.”

Still, according to a senior South Asia scholar in the United States, the Clinton Administration was unwilling to mediate an end to this conflict (as Pakistan wanted) because of two factors. First, South Asia remained a fairly low priority for Clinton as it had been for most American administrations; second, the United States did not believe that it had any vital interests in the region. This explanation is correct but incomplete; in fact, reasons for the U.S. policy of tilting toward India during the Kargil conflict were quite different.

First, the U.S. believed that it was the Pakistani army and its militant allies that crossed the LOC first and “were on the wrong side of the LOC”; as result, it had to withdraw first. Second, there was evidence that showed that the Pakistani military was preparing to deploy nuclear missiles, so the U.S. had to put pressure on Sharif to avoid the dangerous consequences resulting from any resort to a nuclear option. Third, the situation in Kargil developed in a direction favorable to the Indian side because of its conventional advantage. The U.S. merely asked India to restrain itself, as it was difficult to force New Delhi to withdraw first. Fourth, the U.S. wanted to do India a favor. According to a senior U.S. official, “[o]nce the withdrawal from Kargil was done, the U.S. would have more credibility with India.”

The Kargil conflict finally made the U.S. publicly declare its new policy toward Kashmir, which involved: recognizing the Simla Agreement; urging respect of the LOC; advocating resolution of the

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9 The Declaration was signed on February 21, 1999.
12 Riedel, 13.
13 Ganguly, 119
14 Riedel, American Diplomacy and the 1999 Kargil Summit at Blair House, 10.
15 Ibid., 14.
16 The Simla Agreement was signed after the 1971 India-Pakistan War by Pakistani Prime Minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Both sides stipulated that: “in Jammu and Kashmir, the Line of Control resulting from the cease-fire of December 17, 1971 shall be respected by both sides without prejudice to the recognized position of either side”; “neither side shall seek to alter it unilaterally irrespective of mutual differences and legal interpretations”; and “both sides further undertake to refrain from threat or the use of force in violation of this Line.”
Kashmir issue through direct dialogue between India and Pakistan; and encouraging both sides to return to the Lahore process.

Meanwhile, Sharif’s decision to withdraw aroused strong dissatisfaction in the Pakistani military and gave momentum to a bloodless military coup in which General Pervez Musharraf took office as President. As a result of that coup, the U.S. imposed sanctions on Pakistan, as it violated U.S. democratic goals in South Asia. That aside, the U.S. reaction following the coup in Pakistan, however, was generally muted. While calling for an early return of democracy, the U.S. went on to do business with Musharraf and assured a policy of constructive engagement, partly because Pakistan was important and could not be ignored, but also because the U.S. viewed Musharraf as a man who, despite deposing the elected government, generally held moderate political views. Pakistan was a problematic state, but it could not be overlooked. It was not in the interest of the U.S. to see Pakistan collapse.17

The Clinton Visit (2002)

In May 2000, Bill Clinton paid an historic visit to the Subcontinent, marking the first U.S. presidential visit to India in 22 years. He was also the first American president to visit Pakistan in over 30 years, not to mention the very first to address the people of Pakistan on television. In New Delhi, Clinton’s arrival caused an outbreak of “Clintonmania,” which led national newspapers to publish even the most trivial details of his visit on front pages and generated bloated expectations among Indians.18

In a communiqué issued by both sides entitled Indo-US relations: A Vision for the 21st Century, the Indo-U.S. relationship was deemed to have entered a new stage—continuous, constructive in the political area and beneficial in the economic arena. It was to form the basis for mutual strategic, economic, political and social benefit.19 Moreover, both sides agreed to institutionalize bilateral dialogue through a range of high-level meetings and working groups on various areas of cooperation.

In his address to India’s parliament, Clinton comprehensively expounded U.S. policy toward South Asia. First, on the non-proliferation issue, he asked both India and Pakistan to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT); to stop production of fissile material and join the Fissile Material Control Treaty negotiations; and to institute tight export controls on goods and equipment related to their nuclear programs. On regional stability, Clinton told both countries that, while the United States would not mediate the Kashmir dispute, it would lend support wherever possible to help India and Pakistan return to the Lahore peace process. He urged both India and Pakistan to create the proper climate for peace and to adopt a policy of the four “R’s” in their bilateral relations: restraint by both sides; respect for the Line of Control; renewal of dialogue; and rejection of violence. And third, Clinton expressed strong U.S. opposition to terrorism throughout the region and pressed Pakistan to use its influence with the Taliban in Afghanistan to close down terrorist training camps and to put an end to their continued hosting of Osama bin Laden.

Throughout his five-day stay in India, Clinton repeatedly called India a great nation and welcomed its leadership in the region.\(^{20}\) On the other hand, in his remarks during his *five-hour* stopover in Pakistan, Clinton reportedly urged General Musharraf to develop a timetable and a roadmap for restoring democracy at the top, as well as at the local level.\(^{21}\) Moreover, a senior U.S. official pointed out what Pakistan needed: "It needs better governance. It needs to end its dangerous associations with extremist groups in the region. It needs to demonstrate restraint, practically on the ground in Kashmir. It needs to find ways to renew, broaden, and deepen dialogue with India. It needs to stay away from adventures like Kargil. It needs to use its influence with the Taliban in Afghanistan to end that war, to shut down terrorism camps and to bring terrorists to justice. It needs to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and demonstrate restraint in developing weapons of mass destruction and the missiles to deliver them."\(^{22}\)

**NEW U.S. INTERESTS AND CHALLENGES IN SOUTH ASIA AFTER SEPTEMBER 11TH**

When George W. Bush became the newest resident of the White House in January 2001, his Republican Administration continued the Clinton policy of engagement in South Asia, with a special emphasis on U.S.-Indian relations. Following the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, however, new U.S. policy positions toward South Asia have signaled a fundamental change in both the intensity and the quality of U.S. involvement in the region.\(^{23}\) Soon after September 11th, the United States for the first time found itself in the unaccustomed position of having good relations with both India and Pakistan: India offered its “full support” for U.S. counter-terrorism efforts and Pakistan decided to align itself with the United States. Washington has tried to build a partnership with Islamabad and a strategic relationship with New Delhi on different bases. But both of these relationships face great uncertainty.

**The Bush Approach Prior to September 11th**

According to U.S. Ambassador to India Robert D. Blackwill, when President Bush was the Governor of Texas in early 1999, he had “one big idea,” part of which was the “transformation” of U.S.-Indian relations because of India’s emergence as a rising world power, as an ever more influential leader of the community of democratic nations and because of its potential as a global market.\(^{24}\) When Mr. Bush was “selected” to be the forty-third President in late 2000, he began to turn his “big idea” into reality. The predominant emphasis of the new Republican Administration’s approach toward South Asia was thus improving and “transforming” its ties with India. President Bush’s April 2001 decision to “drop by” visiting Indian External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh’s meeting with National Security Adviser

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\(^{21}\) "Remarks By the President in Greeting the People of Pakistan," U.S. Department of State, Washington File, March 25, 2000.


Condoleezza Rice (which led to a cordial forty-minute talk in the Oval Office) was the beginning of a series of steps changing the nature of US-Indian relations.

The security field was the first beneficiary of transforming U.S.-Indian relations. The Bush Administration de-emphasized non-proliferation as the sole determinant of U.S. policy toward India and moved away from its demands for India’s signing the CTBT to discussion of President Bush’s proposed “new strategic framework.” With progress in the security field moving apace, India’s reactions to President Bush’s May 1, 2001 speech on his controversial missile defense proposals was far more positive than those of most U.S. allies.

The second element of the transformation was the rebirth of defense cooperation with India. There have been numerous exchanges of high-level defense officials, as well as meetings on peacekeeping operations, search and rescue, disaster relief, environmental security and even joint exercises. An important milestone was the late July 2001 visit of General Henry Shelton, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), who became the highest ranking U.S. military official to visit India since 1998, and the first chairman of the JCS to ever visit the nation. Of particular significance was the announcement reviving the meetings of the Defense Policy Group (DPG), the key institution providing overall direction to defense cooperation between the two countries.

The third action aimed at transforming the relationship was the U.S. decision to relax the sanctions imposed on India after its nuclear tests in 1998. In fact, “[t]he week of September 10, 2001, U.S. officials were readying a briefing for congressional staff [indicating] that the Bush Administration was preparing to suspend all nuclear-related sanctions on India, while leaving in place many sanctions that limited U.S. assistance to Pakistan.” At the time, in remarks made to the U.S.-India Business Council on June 19, 2001, Richard Boucher, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, described the transformation in U.S.-Indian relations as one of an evolution from “estranged democracies” to “engaged democracies.”

With India increasingly perceived as an opportunity, Pakistan came to be viewed as a real difficulty. Pakistan was economically vulnerable, politically unstable and internationally isolated—and it was widely viewed as a decaying and increasingly Islamic state. Following the Kargil conflict and the resulting military coup in 1999, the United States gradually regarded Pakistan as a problematic and troublesome country, if not a failed state.

While sharing many common interests with India, the United States encountered many frictions in its relations with Pakistan. On the non-proliferation front, Pakistan refused to suspend its missile program or sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the CTBT unless India did so first. (Even worse, it was later discovered that Pakistan had a nuclear and missile exchange with North Korea before September 11th.) Moreover, Islamabad had close links with Islamic extremist groups and provided active support for the Kashmir insurgency, which was based and trained in Pakistan. Pakistan also backed the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, and was one of only three countries that formally recognized that regime.

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27 Ashley J. Tellis, C.Christine Fair and Jamison Jo Medby, Limited Conflict Under the Nuclear Umbrella (Santa Monica: RAND, 2001), ix-xii.
And lastly, Musharraf’s military rule posed further problems; the U.S. asked Islamabad to restore civil government and return to democracy, but there was little progress. As a result, before September 11th, a marginalized Pakistan was a low priority on Bush’s agenda.

**Bush Policy After September 11th**

On September 11, 2001, the United States became the victim of a series of well-organized and highly coordinated terrorist attacks. Several thousand innocent citizens were killed suddenly after two hijacked civilian airliners slammed into the Twin Towers—the symbols of American economical and financial power—of the World Trade Center in New York and the west sections of the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

It is difficult to evaluate the impact of the attacks on the U.S. and their implications for the rest of the world, and to predict what the differences before and after September 11th will be. Some people have said that the new century began on September 11th rather than on January 1, 2001. Others argued that the end of the Cold War has ended and the world has entered the post-post-Cold War era. The most terse but profound formulation is that of President Bush: “9/11 changed America.”

They also have transformed the dynamics of regional security in South Asia. “The attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon turned U.S. South Asia policy temporarily upside down, bringing Pakistan to center stage and putting parts of the U.S.-India agenda on hold.” 28 As the noted South Asia scholar Stephen P. Cohen has said, no part of the world was more affected by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 than South Asia. 29

In the wake of September 11th, it appears that the U.S. has three main goals in South Asia:

- For the short term, it is trying to prevent an all-out war between India and Pakistan while concurrently maintaining Indian and Pakistani cooperation in the anti-terror campaign and keeping Washington’s bilateral relations with the two nations on a positive course.

- For the medium term, the U.S. is interested in preventing the Indo-Pakistani conflict from erupting into a nuclear exchange and ensuring that nuclear weapon-related material in South Asia is not obtained by terrorists or other organizations that would confound nonproliferation efforts.

- For the long term, the United States seeks a permanent solution to the Kashmir problem while at the same time attempting to avoid creating a sanctuary for extremist Islamic militants in the area.

In response to India’s “full support” and Pakistan’s “indispensable help” in the global war on terrorism, President Bush rapidly waived sanctions and provided assistance to them; on September 22, 2001, Bush issued a final determination removing all remaining nuclear test-related economic sanctions against Pakistan and India. On October 27, 2001, the President signed S.146 (P.L. 107-57) into law, officially waiving sanctions on Pakistan related to democracy and debt arrearage through 2003. In

addition, the removal of sanctions allowed the United States to extend to 600 million dollars in Economic Support Funds (ESF) to Islamabad. In 2002, Pakistan received an estimated $624.5 million in development assistance and ESF, while India received $164.3 million in development aid, ESF and food aid grants.  

In its *National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, issued in September 2002, the White House indicated that it would “invest time and resources [into] building strong bilateral relations with India and Pakistan,” adding that U.S.-Pakistani relations had been “bolstered by Pakistan’s choice to join the war against terror and move toward building a more open and tolerant society.” At the same time, the U.S. took note of “India’s potential to become one of the great democratic powers of the twenty-first century,” and added that it has “worked hard to transform our relationship accordingly.” The United States thus planned to build more balanced relationships in South Asia: a partnership with Islamabad and a strategic relationship with New Delhi.

Both relationships, however, face uncertainty. First, the so-called “balanceable” relations are in fact asymmetrical. The U.S.-Pakistani “partnership” was driven in the short term by a single dimension, which glossed over many of the divergences between the two nations. Even in the counter-terrorism campaign, Washington and Islamabad have different and sometimes conflicting goals. The U.S.-Indian “strategic relationship”, however, was a goal the two nations set a few years ago and was based on broad common interests, even if the process was slower than expected.

Second, combating terrorism was the primary, if not sole basis of the U.S.-Pakistani “partnership.” The U.S. and Pakistan had workable collaborations in the operation of removing the Taliban regime in Afghanistan. When they moved the field to the west part of Pakistan to hunt the remnants of the Taliban and Al Qaeda, however, the situation became complicated, and the partners began to disagree when a series of major terrorist incidents took place in Kashmir and it became apparent that the two nations had opposing viewpoints.

Third, in New Delhi, despite its longer-term rationale, “pessimism began to cloud public thinking on the future of U.S.-India relations based on the feeling that post-September 11th developments had swept away more than a decade of political efforts to restructure the relationship with the United States.” The Bush Administration now has to “balance a new emphasis on terrorism with standing priorities such as the global economy and democracy.” This will be challenging, to say the least.

**The U.S. and Pakistan: Reengaging the Frontline State**

The immediate consequences of the attacks of September 11th, particularly for Pakistan, were clear and profound. The campaign, in the name of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, made Pakistan a frontline state in the U.S.-led counter-terror campaign. Two factors contributed to Pakistan’s renewed significance in U.S. eyes: first, Pakistan shared a border with Afghanistan and was among the few countries which had a formal diplomatic relationship with the Taliban regime. Second, Pakistan

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32 Mohan, 146.
“combine[d] the two major security threats to the United States: weapons of mass destruction and perceived links with terrorism.”

On the Pakistani side, General Pervez Musharraf correctly calculated that if Pakistan did not cooperate with the United States, his nation, at the very least, would be marginalized and isolated by the U.S. and the international community; at worst, Pakistan itself could be targeted because of its support of and close relationship with the Taliban. In a speech to the nation on September 19, 2001, Musharraf explained that his decision to support the U.S. was based on four key Pakistani interests: the country’s security; its economic revival; the need to safeguard its “strategic nuclear and missile assets”; and the Kashmir cause. In another address to his people on January 12, 2002 he stated, “We decided to join the international coalition against terrorism. . .We took this decision on principles and in our national interest.” He added, “Pakistan will not allow its territory to be used for any terrorist activity anywhere in the world.” He also identified economic and social reform as critical priorities for his government.

The United States recognized Pakistan’s role as a frontline state in the global campaign against terrorism and expressed gratitude for Pakistan’s vital support in the international campaign. On the occasion of Musharraf’s visit to the United States in February 2002, President Bush announced new bilateral programs, which included: debt relief; democracy assistance; strengthening education; expanded defense cooperation; and cooperation in law enforcement, science and technology.

This is the third time that the United States has allied itself with Pakistan—“the most allied ally in Asia” during the Cold War. History shows us many parallels. In 1954, President Dwight Eisenhower signed a mutual defense assistance agreement and sent $1.7 billion to Pakistan in a bid to induce General Ayub Khan to confront the so-called “communist threat.” In 1981, President Ronald Regan persuaded Congress to restore economic and military aid to Pakistan in exchange for General Zia ul-Haq’s agreement to help strengthen the anti-Soviet resistance in Afghanistan. And then twenty years later, President George W. Bush asked Congress to lift sanctions in order to obtain President Musharraf’s help in the counter-terrorism efforts aimed at its troublesome neighbor.

As an eminent American South Asia expert has pointed out, “U.S.-Pakistani relations have been like a roller-coaster ride, marked by alliance ties and close partnership during the Eisenhower, Nixon and Reagan Administrations and cool or tense relations when Kennedy, Johnson, Carter and Clinton occupied the White House.” Since September 11th, however, Pakistan has once again clearly become important to the U.S. as a critical frontline state in the war against terrorism. The United States and Pakistan launched a Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism and Law Enforcement. Moreover, a defense

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consultation group was reestablished to revive military ties. U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said America considered ties with Pakistan “long,” “strategic” and “mutually beneficial,” adding that he looked forward to “strengthening [them] in a variety of different ways.”

But will the U.S.-Pakistani partnership actually be “long” and “strategic” this time (and not just “temporary” and “tactical” as before)? All depends on whether Washington and Islamabad are willing and able to enlarge the basis of the partnership and harmonize their conflicting goals. Recently, the U.S. and Pakistan had a workable cooperation in Afghanistan. The United States supported Musharraf’s goal of rebuilding the nation and restoring Pakistan’s external ties and, in return, Pakistan supported the U.S. goal of removing the Taliban from Afghanistan. When the counter-terror front moved westward in Pakistan, domestic unrest in Pakistan increased. Furthermore, the attack on the Indian parliament in December 2001 brought the Kashmir issue back to the front pages, putting the two partners on a collision course. The U.S. saw the strike as terrorism and as a major threat to U.S. interests.

As Teresita C. Schaffer, former U.S. Ambassador to Sri Lanka, has noted, “To avoid repeating history, U.S. policymakers must depersonalize U.S. policy toward Pakistan and establish two fundamental bases for engagement: a long-term democracy agenda designed to strengthen and legitimize Pakistan’s institutions; and a sustained and realistic approach to working with both Pakistan and India to deal with and ideally resolve their enduring, dangerous dispute.” The Pakistani side, I think, should also formulate a strategy of national construction. Two points are clear: Islamabad should make use of the support of the U.S. and the international community to rebuild its international reputation and restart its internal democratization process; and it should also seriously consider direct dialogue with India. This will be both a challenge and an opportunity for Pakistan, and for President Musharraf, who is already called “Busharraf” by Pakistanis who feel he has worked too closely with U.S. leaders.

The U.S. and India: Short-Term Divergence, Long-Term Convergence

The events of September 11th, anti-terrorism in Afghanistan and the U.S. reengagement with Pakistan have complicated U.S.-Indian relations in the short term and “have introduced a wild card into the U.S. vision of India’s future and of future U.S. and Indian priorities in Asia.” Donald Rumsfeld, the U.S. Secretary of Defense, assured New Delhi that U.S. policy toward South Asia, in renewing the relationship with Pakistan, would not overlook India’s interests. India, however, has complained that the U.S. has turned a blind eye to cross-border militants based in or supported by Pakistan. Moreover, India sees Pakistan as a central part of the terrorism problem, rather than part of the solution. India noted that the U.S., in ensuring that Musharraf was on its side, had developed double standards on terrorism, “pursuing those terrorists threatening its own security and not those tormenting India.” Washington’s positive step

43 Mohan, 146.
of naming Lashkar-i-Taiba (LIT) and Jaish-e-Mohammed (JEM) as Foreign Terrorists Organizations still could not satisfy New Delhi, as the U.S. referred to the two as “stateless” terrorist organizations aiming at both India and Pakistan. In addition, as the victim of a series of major terrorist attacks in India after September 11th (October 11, 2001 in Srinagar; December 13, 2001 at the Parliament House in New Delhi; and May 14, 2002 on an Indian army camp at Kaluchak in Jammu and Kashmir), India threatened to go to war against Pakistan in the summer of 2002. The U.S., however, called for restraint, fearing that it would weaken and shift its global anti-terrorism strategy.

With respect to the Kashmir issue, which noted scholar George Perkovich thought “more important than Al Qaeda,” the Indian government was cool to the idea of the U.S. sending a special envoy to the region and has continued to resist U.S. entreaties to hold talks with Pakistan. New Delhi has also increasingly feared that the U.S. has focused more on terrorism issues worldwide and crisis management on the Subcontinent since September 11th, and less on the strategic partnership with India and “transforming” bilateral relations. Bilateral defense cooperation was considerably enhanced because of the need to deal with terrorism, including Washington’s consideration of transferring weapons systems to India for the first time in decades. Stronger economic ties, (e.g., more foreign direct investment) and high-technology transfers, however, have unfortunately not been realized.

Nevertheless, the short-term divergence between the U.S. and India over Pakistan, terrorism and Kashmir will not taint a long-term convergence stemming from common commercial interests, security cooperation and democratic values espoused by both Washington and New Delhi. In the words of Ambassador Blackwill: “It is difficult to think easily of countries other than India and the United States that currently face to the same striking degree all three of these intense challenges simultaneously: advancing Asian stability based on democratic values; confronting daily the threat of international terror; and slowing the further proliferation of WMD.”

Though it may be overestimated, the U.S. today does have more influence and leverage on the Subcontinent than perhaps at any time previously because of the events of September 11th. Washington’s support and assistance to Islamabad is giving new momentum to Pakistani reconstruction. And Washington’s cooperation is vital to India in fulfilling its economic, political, security and diplomatic goals.

The U.S. is now reviewing its South Asia policy given the changed security environment on the Subcontinent, especially as it pertains to two key issues:

- On Kashmir, the U.S. successfully used a new and more proactive approach of crisis management to prevent escalation of the conflict during May and June 2002 between India and Pakistan. “At the heart of the U.S. crisis-management strategy was the acquisition of a commitment from Pakistan to end cross-border infiltration permanently and a promise from India that it would engage in substantive dialogue on all bilateral issues, particularly the Kashmir dispute, when violence ceased.”

46 Mohan, 150.
India now seems to accept a behind-the-scenes, low-key U.S. role in nudging the peace process along, and Pakistan also appears to agree with restraining its support for the militants.

- On non-proliferation, post-September 11th U.S. non-proliferation policy has addressed three fundamental concerns: “preventing weapons of mass destruction from falling into the wrong hands; preventing a nuclear confrontation in South Asia; and mitigating negative side effects on countries outside South Asia that have flirted with developing ballistic missiles and nuclear weapons.”

In this context, Washington must begin to combine the goal of non-proliferation with its goal of regional stability. As a former U.S. diplomat has noted, “It took 10 years for India to get used to the end of the Cold War, but that has finally happened.” Perhaps more important, Washington and Islamabad—and not just New Delhi—also need to adjust to the post-September 11th world, which many consider to be the “end of the end” of the Cold War era.

THE U.S.-INDIA-PAKISTAN TRIANGLE: WHAT CONCERNS CHINA

From a Chinese perspective, September 11th and the subsequent global campaign on terror constitute a double-edged sword, presenting both opportunities and challenges. Most officials from the State Council and scholars from civilian think tanks hold an optimistic view and see the U.S. war on terrorism as an opportunity, noting that the U.S. has shifted its attention away from East Asia to Central, South and Southeast Asia, reducing pressure on China in many ways; counter-terrorism provides a functional field in which China and the U.S. can cooperate, thereby improving relations; and China has gained more latitude in dealing with Xinjiang, Tibet and Taiwan. However, a number of officials from the defense and security fields hold more pessimistic views and see the U.S. war in Afghanistan as a challenge rather than an opportunity. The most serious challenge, according to this view, is that the U.S. military presence in Central, South and Southeast Asia may undermine Chinese influence in these regions and make it more difficult for China to achieve its security, economic and energy objectives in the future.

Amid the great changes in relations between the U.S., India and Pakistan after September 11th, two points are highlighted in China. First, the United States for the first time has good relations with India and Pakistan at the same time. The unending rivalry between India and Pakistan, however, has turned out to be more complicated than expected for the U.S. because of the mixture of territorial disputes and the issue of terrorism in Kashmir.

With respect to U.S. South Asia policy, several policy options have been advanced by many U.S. scholars and recognized by policymakers in Washington:

- The United States should seek ways to continue to strengthen bilateral ties with India and Pakistan, based on shared political and economic values and interests, not merely on the basis of cooperation in

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47 Feinstein, 8.
48 Interview with a former senior U.S. diplomat on December 4, 2002.
dealing with an individual event such as opposing the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan or pursuing the counter-terrorism campaign in the same place.

- The United States should establish relationships with India and Pakistan based on their own merits in order to minimize zero-sum mentalities.

- The United States could play a more important role in crisis management by staying behind the scenes instead of mediating in a very public manner.

What are the implications of this changing U.S. strategy toward South Asia for China? How does the transforming U.S.-India-Pakistan triangle concern China? And what about the U.S.-India-China, U.S.-Pakistan-China and China-India-Pakistan triangles that also merit China’s attention? Managing these triangles will certainly be a challenge for China’s new leaders.

A U.S.-India Alliance?

There are four major powers—two of them developed countries (the U.S. and Japan), the other two rising and developing countries (China and India)—and two strategic triangles in the Asia-Pacific region: the traditional Sino-U.S.-Japan strategic triangle and the emerging U.S.-China-India strategic triangle. While the former focuses on East Asian security, the latter concerns South Asian security. Both triangles are asymmetrical. Given the formal U.S.-Japan alliance relationship and the so-called “natural” U.S.-Indian alliance, the United States has no fundamental conflict with either Japan or India. Considering the border disputes and historical distrust with both Japan and India—not to mention the conflict with U.S. over the Taiwan issue (as well as over political ideals)—China clearly occupies a weak position in both triangles.

Some scholars have argued that U.S.-China-India relations would influence the course of events within Asia in the 21st century. Compared to the U.S.-China-Japan triangle, which leaders in the three countries are familiar dealing with, the emerging U.S.-China-India strategic triangle is a new one which no leader has much experience in managing. Unlike the U.S., which worries about the rise of China and not the rise of India, what concerns China most is how to prevent U.S.-Indian relations from becoming a formal alliance in South Asia similar to the U.S.-Japan alliance in East Asia.

U.S.-Indian defense engagement has scaled new heights with the announcement of a series of measures usually reserved for close U.S. allies and friends, ranging from joint exercises in Alaska to sales of military hardware. According to Ambassador Teresita C. Schaffer, a growing convergence of Indian and U.S. interests in Asian security is likely to be the most dynamic element in the bilateral relationship in the next decade. Despite the two countries’ differences over nuclear policy, their common interest in Indian Ocean security and in not having Asia dominated by a single power can be the basis for a significant expansion of their security cooperation.

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50 So-dubbed by Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee in 2000.
As mentioned earlier, short-term points of Indo-U.S. divergence over Pakistan, terrorism and Kashmir following 9/11 will not prevent long-term convergence based on common commercial interests, security cooperation and democratic values. Furthermore, both India and the U.S. share the common view of China as a potential and major future threat and have common interests in circumscribing the rise of China. In the long term, there is thus the possibility of establishing strategic relations with each other to contain China by using the other as a core element for balancing Beijing, especially at a time when each has trouble with China.

That said, several factors will make it impossible for India and the U.S. to establish an anti-China alliance in the short and medium term:

- “U.S. and Chinese interests in their mutual relationship far outweigh the interests of each vis-à-vis India.”53 That is to say, neither China nor the United States will be willing to oppose each other for India. At best, aiming at China is but a by-product of U.S.-Indian security cooperation.

- The U.S. and China share many common interests in South Asia after September 11th, such as maintaining regional stability and helping in Pakistani national construction. This also includes trying to jointly keep the status quo, to persuade India and Pakistan to resume direct dialogue and to cooperate on counter-terrorism and social transformation in Pakistan.

- China and India have common interests in combating U.S. unilateralism. China’s perspective on great power politics in Asia is shared by India to some extent (as is its distrust of a too-prominent American role in the region).

- It is not rational for India to confront China before its rivalry with Pakistan is resolved. In addition, as Zhang Wenmu of the Chinese Institute of Contemporary International Relations points out, “If India does not participate in the containment of China, China’s development will lighten U.S. strategic pressure on India.” And “if India joins forces with the United States to contain China, the future years of the 21st century will not belong to India.”54

But, in the long term, the establishment of a solid Indo-U.S. alliance may be possible if:

- Sino-U.S. relations move to rivalry (over the Taiwan issue, for example). The United States might then conceivably align with India so as to encircle China (Japan would serve this purpose on the eastern front).

- India and China are involved in conflict because of the border issue or Pakistan-related affairs. India would then seek to align itself with the United States to balance China.

• Indo-Pakistani tensions escalate to all-out or limited nuclear war, at which time Pakistan seeks help from China politically and materially; India would then undoubtedly demand support from the U.S. and Russia.

The worst-case scenario would involve the preceding three “ifs” coinciding simultaneously, leading to chain reactions from South Asia (i.e., Pakistan-India and India-China) to the Asia-Pacific region (i.e., U.S.-China).

A U.S.-Pakistan-China Axis?

It is interesting that both China and the U.S., adversaries in the 1950s and 1960s, had close relations with Pakistan, even though their interests and goals in the country were admittedly quite dissimilar. Starting in the early 1970s, however, the U.S.-China-Pakistan triangle became a reality in the face of the threat posed by their common enemy, the Soviet Union. Unlike the United States, which has alienated Pakistan in the post-Cold War era, China has maintained friendly relations with its “all-weather friend” who has met some troubles after the end of Cold War.

Islamabad may welcome warming security relations with both Washington and Beijing, but there are different views among pro-U.S. and pro-China factions over which is more important. China and the U.S., however, face a security dilemma in Pakistan because of two sensitive issues: the U.S. military presence in Pakistan and Beijing’s military relations with Islamabad. On the first issue, at present, there are four U.S. military bases in Pakistan in Jacobabad, Pasni, Dalbandhin and Shamsi. The U.S. military in Pakistan needs a withdrawal timetable and should limit itself to supporting the counter-terrorism campaign, in accordance with its promise to the Pakistani government. Any prolonged presence and extended activity of U.S. military forces in Pakistan will only add new unstable factors in South Asia and complicate U.S. relations with China.

On the second issue, it must be noted that, based on mutual understanding and support, China and Pakistan have kept close relations, regardless of the ever-changing international environment. In recent years, China has taken concrete steps to improve its nonproliferation policy through actively participating in the establishment of multilateral nonproliferation regimes at the international level and through promulgating a series of domestic regulations governing export controls. In fact, “China benefits from this regime and is firmly committed to this international nonproliferation.”\(^\text{55}\) In the coming years, China will continue to develop and enhance its traditional friendly relations with Pakistan, including with military cooperation, while acting in accordance with China’s grand strategy and nonproliferation policy.

The best way to change the security dilemma between the U.S. and China in Pakistan is to jointly concentrate on Pakistani national construction instead of focusing on or limiting it to military aid and defense cooperation. As one of the poorest and weakest counties in the world, Pakistan needs not only hard currency but also good governance, including legal order, a market economy, democratic politics and a moderate civil society. The United States and China, two partners of Pakistan now, could offer

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their capitalist-style experience of microeconomic management (and technological development) and the socialist-style success in macropolitical mobilization and social stability, respectively.

In short, counter-terrorism and national construction in Pakistan are two common interests for Washington, Beijing and Islamabad in their triangular relationship. The decisive factor of a benign triangle depends on whether the United States and China can have a better understanding of each other’s intentions and relations with Pakistan and can reinforce each other’s actions there.

**India vs. Pakistan: Is A Balance of Power Best for China?**

In the late 1990s, there was a gradual shift in the regional balance of power in South Asia with the steady emergence of India and the gradual descent of Pakistan after a series of important events unfolded on the Subcontinent, as made clear in the case studies introduced earlier in this paper. Kashmir, nuclear/missile proliferation and terrorism are the three major issues now confronting India and Pakistan today; they emerged separately, but are closely connected now. The international community should pay equal attention to these three issues, though they have to be resolved one-by-one and in different ways. But as Chinese Foreign Minister Tang Jiaxuan has said, “the international community should encourage direct dialogue between India and Pakistan in a more balanced and fair manner, which is the most effective way to lead South Asia toward peace and stability.”

History shows that the Indo-Pakistani conflict cannot be resolved without the help of the United Nations and big powers such as the United States, Russia and China. Considering the dangers and possibility of conflict in Kashmir escalating to a nuclear war in South Asia, both India and Pakistan should take active and concrete steps to ease the tensions and seek ways to solve the long-standing conflict. But before a final resolution is reached, India and Pakistan should be asked to respect the Line of Control and not to change the *status quo* unilaterally.

Compared to East Asia, South Asia has often been a secondary priority in China’s traditional foreign policy. However, the emergence of India—coupled with the decline of Pakistan since the late 1990s and the sea changes after 9/11—launched South Asia into an important position on the Chinese leadership’s agenda. Regional balance and stability in South Asia and Pakistan’s healthy development are two major interests for China. Regional stability, whether in Northeast or Southeast Asia, the Middle East or South Asia, is increasingly in China’s national interest—not just because such stability is necessary for domestic economic modernization, but because China is becoming a more constructive and responsible player in international society.

The late 1990s saw increasing conflict in South Asia which turned a balance of power into an imbalance of power. It is in the U.S.—as well as in China’s—interest to ensure that “the status of the Line of Control [is] not changed unilaterally” and that “the LOC [is] . . .not changed by violence.”56 These interests will not be served if one nation dominates the Subcontinent. China is willing to see a healthy Pakistan that will be a constructive and stable factor in South Asia. As Mohan Malik, a security analyst at the Honolulu-based Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies has pointed out, neither an all-out

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India-Pakistan war nor Pakistan’s collapse would serve China’s grand strategic objectives.\footnote{Mohan Malik, “The China Factor in the India-Pakistan Conflict,” Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies Occasional Paper, November 2002, 1.} It is the same for the U.S. and the international community.

CONCLUSIONS

Post-September 11th South Asia has witnessed changing U.S.-Pakistani and U.S.–Indian relations, but unchanged Indo-Pakistani tensions, which will undoubtedly influence China’s interests and goals in South Asia.

The following are my key findings:

- The U.S. has developed good relations with India and Pakistan simultaneously after 9/11. It has rebuilt a partnership with Pakistan as a frontline country in the global war on terror while continuing to develop strategic relations with India, which it has viewed as an emerging power for nearly a decade. The bases of these relations, however, are quite different. Whether the U.S.-Pakistani partnership will be strategic and longstanding is still doubtful, especially if the two countries cannot enlarge its basis to political, economic and cultural fields. The future of the U.S.-Indian strategic relationship, however, is bright in the long term, even if it has been slowed down since 9/11 because of differences over how to view relations with Pakistan, and how to deal with cross-border terrorism and the Kashmir issue.

- Counter-terrorism, Kashmir and non-proliferation are three major security issues facing India and Pakistan, as well as the U.S. The Kashmir issue is the core of the longstanding rivalry between New Delhi and Islamabad. Given the fact that India and Pakistan refuse to admit the legitimacy of each other’s stake in Kashmir, the prospect of eventual peace between New Delhi and Islamabad is dim, especially if the former keeps its rigid position on the Kashmir issue and the latter fails to restrain its support for militant attacks in India-controlled Kashmir in the coming years.

- U.S. policy toward South Asia aims at balancing (i.e., maintaining cooperative ties with Pakistan in countering terrorism while transforming strategic relations with India) and linking (i.e., connecting non-proliferation with regional stability). The success of this policy in large part will depend on whether Washington and Islamabad can find more common interests beyond counter-terrorism, and whether New Delhi develops more open-minded and responsible policies in relation to Pakistan.

- Warming U.S.-India defense cooperation and the profound U.S. military presence in South and Central Asia, in conjunction with increasing U.S. military influence in Southeast Asia and long-held military bases in East Asia, make China more concerned about U.S. intentions in these areas. Improving U.S.-Pakistani relations, however, present a good chance for China to cooperate with the U.S. in South Asia, where Beijing shares many of the same goals as Washington: preventing
terrorism; promoting Indo-Pakistani dialogue and escalation control measures; and curbing proliferation throughout the region.

In light of the foregoing, the Chinese government must formulate a comprehensive South Asian strategy to meet the increasing security challenges in Southwest China. China’s principal interests and key goals in South Asia are regional stability and a balance of power. It is necessary—and possible—to carry out a “constructive, balanced and independent” strategy toward South Asia. Chinese policy options include the following:

- Developing constructive relations with India while improving traditional friendly relations with Pakistan. Considering India’s increasing influence in regional affairs, China should pay more attention to New Delhi by taking more active steps to establish individual relations with Indian leaders and to promote negotiation of the border dispute. That said, it is also reasonable to invest more in Pakistan’s economic reconstruction and social transformation, as a healthy Pakistan is in China’s interests.

- On the Kashmir issue, China should ask both India and Pakistan to resume direct dialogue and develop more flexible positions, with an eye toward resolving the issue. Before reaching the final resolution, however, both sides must respect the Line of Control.

- On the non-proliferation issue, it is in China’s interest to ask India and Pakistan to sign the NPT and CTBT. In the meantime, China should help Pakistan to improve the safe management of its nuclear arsenal, and work with the U.S. and the international community to prevent any possibility of nuclear conflict in South Asia.

- China should invite both India and Pakistan to join the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which will provide an institutional framework in which to engender cooperation. It would also be helpful from the perspective of counteracting U.S. military influence in South and Central Asia.

- It is also in China’s interests to enhance cooperation with the U.S. in dealing with South Asian affairs. Here, China should:
  - Welcome the U.S. campaign to seek and destroy Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as it is helpful to eliminate the “three forces” (terrorism, extremism and separatism) in Xinjiang. China should support the U.S. endeavor of crisis management in South Asia, as it is beneficial to the security environment in southern China. And China should also stand with the U.S. to prevent an arms race on the Subcontinent and to safeguard nuclear weapons.
  - Make use of improving U.S.-Pakistani relations to work with the U.S. in aiding Pakistani national construction and to coordinate with the U.S. on each other’s interests in Pakistan, so as to promote a better understanding of their respective military relations with Islamabad. A constructive U.S.-China-
Pakistan triangle could be a decisive factor in regional stability and the balance of power in South Asia.

- Neutralize warming U.S.-India defense cooperation by enhancing cooperation with the U.S. in global and regional affairs and initiating a constructive dialogue with India. The United States could be a positive factor in Sino-Indian relations—if it tries to promote regional stability in South Asia and to help China and India’s economic modernization. But it could also play a negative role, should it play the India “card” in dealing with China (or play the China “card” in developing its relations with India).

Lastly, in order to more effectively confront the challenges it will face in South Asia in the coming years, the Chinese government should consider establishing a new department in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China to deal with the longstanding conflict in the Middle East and an increasingly important South Asia. The Ministry, at present, has seven departments to deal with different regions.\textsuperscript{58} It is necessary to adjust the organization of these institutions, which were constructed in response to the realities of the Cold War. I suggest that a more effective organization would include departments of: East Asian and Pacific Affairs; Middle East and South Asian Affairs; African Affairs; Russian and Eastern European Affairs; West European Affairs; North American Affairs; and Latin American Affairs. There are two advantages to this reorganization. First, China’s main security concerns in Asia lie in the east (e.g., the Korea Peninsula, the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea) and the west (e.g., the Middle East, Central Asia and South Asia), and this reorganization would permit the Ministry to deal with these regions in a more effective and integrated manner. Equally as important, this reorganization would make it easier for the Ministry to deal with its U.S. counterparts.

\textsuperscript{58} Namely, the departments of: Asian Affairs; West Asian and North African Affairs; African Affairs; Eastern European and Central Asian Affairs; West European Affairs; North American and Oceanian Affairs; and Latin American Affairs.