

CRISIS MANAGEMENT IN NUCLEAR SOUTH ASIA

A Pakistani Perspective

Zafar Khan

Crisis management is the process by which potential escalation toward major military confrontation is controlled, but this management does not necessarily resolve initial provocations or their underlying sources of tension. Generally, India-Pakistan crisis management has historically followed this pattern by failing to facilitate complete cooperation between the two states or resolve crisis-triggering problems. The thorniness of underlying sources of tension on the subcontinent, such as the dispute over Kashmir and (for India) militancy, are enduring problems entrenched in India and Pakistan's shared histories and domestic political contexts. In recent years, however, nuclear weapons have stymied escalation of crises to major wars. Both countries fear that potential escalation could lead to nuclear weapons use, and the growing sophistication and diversity of nuclear delivery vehicles have made this point increasingly true. Furthermore, the fear of nuclear war has ensured intervention by international community members — particularly by the United States — to politically and diplomatically pressure both sides to show mutual restraint and manage crises before escalation to broader conflict.

One can observe several events — the Kargil crisis (1999), the Twin Peaks crisis (2001-2), the Mumbai crisis (2008), and the Pathankot, Uri, and Nagrota attacks (2016) — where both India and Pakistan showed strategic restraint to avoid major conflict. These cases provide numerous insights that could potentially help both states to develop strategies that better manage and prevent future crises in South Asia. Enduring grievances like the Kashmir dispute are unlikely to be resolved in the short term, so it is therefore especially urgent that both India and Pakistan delve into their past crises to find mistakes, successes, and missed opportunities and apply lessons from those events to possible future crises before these underlying issues are resolved.

This essay examines these crises to glean lessons from a Pakistani perspective. For Pakistan, this introspection highlights lessons learned to guide future

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crisis management strategies. From an Indian perspective, this essay provides a Pakistani viewpoint that could help lessen strategic ambiguity during a future crisis or even dispel unfair stereotypes of Pakistan's motivations. Finally, from an international perspective, this essay offers local nuances and contexts of crises in South Asia to bolster understanding of these issues within the international community (particularly the United States) when acting as a trusted arbiter of crisis management. A study of the Pakistani perspective of crisis management, therefore, has diverse utility.

India-Pakistan crises generate tremendous danger for the subcontinent but also present some opportunities.¹ From a U.S. perspective, South Asian crises are always negative, as they risk escalation between states with nuclear weapons. However, from the perspective of South Asian states, crises do not represent absolute danger. Similar to nuclear brinkmanship theories that emerged during the Cold War, the successful management of threats and risks during South Asian crises, below the threshold of outright interstate conflict, can present certain opportunities. States may anticipate opportunities for (1) achieving military objectives without escalation,² (2) achieving political objectives (both domestic and international), and/or (3) forging more stable bilateral relations. In addition to principles of crisis management, this essay considers whether positive results might be gleaned from crisis management. A fourth and ex post facto opportunity is that productive crisis management can foster a learning environment. States can extrapolate lessons about how to prevent or better manage future crises.

Alastair Johnston's assessment of eight codified Chinese principles of crisis management serve as a useful means of framing the range of available crisis management techniques and strategies:³

1. For a discussion of whether and how Chinese thinking on crises incorporates ideas of opportunity, see Alastair Iain Johnston, "The Evolution of Interstate Security Crisis-Management Theory and Practice in China," *Naval War College Review* 69, no. 1 (2016): 28-71, 30.

2. These objectives could be deemed tactical or strategic depending in part upon the state suffering the military action.

3. Johnston, "The Evolution of Interstate Security Crisis-Management," 33-34.

- Communicate with the adversary clearly and constantly, and be specific about what is being demanded
- Articulate limited goals; be prepared to drop unlimited ones
- Maintain military flexibility, respond symmetrically in your options; don't excessively pressure the other side, and don't take the use of force lightly
- Avoid excessively ideological positions; don't threaten the other side's basic values, and don't moralize conflicts of interest
- Exercise self-restraint, including in response to provocative actions by the other side
- Do not issue ultimatums; ensure that the adversary can back down in a face-saving manner
- Divide large issues into smaller, manageable parts
- Anticipate unintended consequences of particular moves

How a state understands crises — in the India-Pakistan context, as danger with some potential for opportunity — impacts its crisis management approaches. Reflecting on these principles, this essay considers crisis management lessons to be drawn from past experiences on the subcontinent. Then, considering the abovementioned fourth potential opportunity inherent in successful crisis management — learning and extrapolating lessons from previous events — the final section of this essay reviews the possibility of future crises in South Asia and strategies to manage and prevent them. Topics discussed include improving confidence-building measures (CBM) based upon previous successes and failures, discouraging warlike strategies and doctrines, working toward an arms control regime, and addressing systemic tensions between India and Pakistan such as the Kashmir dispute.

I conclude that although nuclear weapons have helped deter major military confrontations in South Asia and ensured the continued engagement of the international community, they have not prevented the initiation of crises in the first place. This fact highlights the importance of improving bilateral crisis management strategies in the immediate future to enable the governments of India and Pakistan to better manage future crises that will likely continue to arise until both countries can resolve systemic tensions. It further underlines the limitations of existing CBMs and the need for fresh approaches to long-term arms control. Strengthening CBMs will help resolve prevailing crises, prevent future crises, and address outstanding issues like the Kashmir dispute. Another key finding is that the international community, specifically the United States, has played and will continue to play an important role in crisis management in South Asia. This essay concludes with a discussion of ways in which India and Pakistan, as well as the international community, can facilitate concrete crisis

management mechanisms between New Delhi and Islamabad to both help resolve prevailing crises and prevent future crises in South Asia.

The 1999 Kargil Crisis: Early Lessons in Crisis Management

As the first major crisis between India and Pakistan after their 1998 nuclear tests, Kargil is important for understanding how nuclear weapons affected Pakistan's strategic calculus and its crisis management decision-making. When Pakistani forces crossed the Line of Control (LoC) to take up positions in the Kargil heights of Kashmir and Indian troops launched operations to recapture the lost positions, India and Pakistan were working through being newly declared nuclear powers. Both states were institutionalizing their deterrent forces and policies, with India releasing a draft nuclear policy in 1999 and Pakistan adhering to a policy of ambiguity.⁴

There are several major interpretations of why Pakistan provoked the Kargil crisis with an infiltration of troops across the LoC. First, historic strategic compulsions played a role, as Pakistan may have wanted to provide an equalizer to India's capture of the contested Siachen Glacier in the 1980s.⁵ Jalil Abbas Jilani, former director general for South Asia in Pakistan's Foreign Ministry and former ambassador to the United States, argued that "without Siachen, Kargil would not have taken place."⁶ Second, Pakistan could have desired to bring major regional and international attention — particularly that of the United States — to the broader Kashmir issue by highlighting how the contested territory creates opportunities for nuclear escalation. This aim would align with the broader perspective of India viewing Kashmir as a bilateral issue and Pakistan viewing it as one requiring the international community's participation.⁷ Third, the Pakistani offensive in the Kargil district of Kashmir reflected a strategy of "preemptive defense," with Pakistan responding in anticipation of presumed Indian offensives.⁸ Fourth, Pakistan could have desired to use low-intensity conflict to test India's appetite for risk considering the newly declared nuclear

4. Pakistan to date has not officially announced its comprehensive nuclear policy. Islamabad favors using ambiguity to bolster the deterrent effect of Pakistan's nuclear weapons. For India's nuclear policy and its doctrinal posture, see Ashley Tellis, *India's Emerging Nuclear Posture: Between Recessed Deterrent and Ready Arsenal* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2001); George Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb: The Impact on Global Proliferation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Rajesh Basrur, *Minimum Deterrence and India's Nuclear Security* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006); Bharat Karnad, *India's Nuclear Policy* (Westport: Praeger, 2008); and K. Sundarji, *Blind Men of Hindustan: India-Pak Nuclear War* (New Delhi: UBS Publishers, 1993). On Pakistan's nuclear policy, see Bhumitra Chakma, *Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons* (London & New York: Routledge, 2009); and Zafar Khan, *Pakistan's Nuclear Policy: A Minimum Credible Deterrence* (London & New York: Routledge 2015).

5. For interesting analysis on this, see Timothy Hoyt, "Politics, Proximity and Paranoia: The Evolution of Kashmir as a Nuclear Flashpoint," *India Review* 2, no. 3 (2003): 117-44.

6. Jalil Jilani's statement quoted in S. Paul Kapur, "Ten Years of Instability in a Nuclear South Asia," *International Security* 33, no. 2 (2008): 76.

7. For interesting Pakistani analysis on this perspective, see Sardar F.S. Lodi, "India's Kargil Operations: An Analysis," *Defense Journal* 3, no. 10 (1999); Ihtashamul Haque, "Peace Linked to Kashmir Solution," *Dawn*, June 26, 1999; Shireen M. Mazari, "Re-examining Kargil," *Defense Journal* 3, no. 11 (2000); Javed Nasir, "Calling the Indian Army Chief's Bluff," *Defense Journal* 3, no. 2 (1999); Ayaz Ahmed Khan, "Indian Offensive in the Kargil Sector," *Defense Journal* 3, no. 5 (1999).

8. This is Pakistan's official account. For analysis of this strategy, see Zafar Iqbal Cheema, "The Strategic Context of the Kargil Conflict: A Pakistani Perspective," in *Asymmetric Warfare in South Asia: The Causes and Consequences of the Kargil Conflict*, ed. Peter Lavoy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 41-63.

status of the two countries.⁹ Although the international border was not crossed, India responded effectively with its military forces because it considered the crossing of the LoC as a violation of Indian sovereignty and territorial integrity. Regardless of Pakistan's primary goal, most scholars agree that nuclear weapons encouraged Pakistan to undertake its foray into Kargil with the belief that escalation risks would ensure a hesitant Indian response or even international intervention in Pakistan's favor.¹⁰ Nuclear weapons were in a way both the cause or enabling condition of the crisis (Pakistan would not have moved on Kargil without a nuclear umbrella) and the incentive for crisis management (India's options for punitive action were more limited than before the 1998 tests).¹¹

The crisis component of Kargil emerged as India began its military response in earnest against infiltrated Pakistani forces in May 1999. As India mobilized not only its land forces but also its airpower, incentives for both countries to expand the scope of the conflict increased.¹² Pakistan faced pressure to reinforce and defend its isolated positions in Indian-administered territory, while India had strong incentives to expand the nature of its campaign across the LoC, whether from a military perspective to counter forward positions or even for domestic political reasons.¹³ Nuclear weapons were likely the primary factor that enabled both countries to retain a policy of restraint even though strong pressures existed to expand the conflict's scope. Nonetheless, both India and Pakistan desperately needed political cover to back down so that the crisis would not expand further.

The international community, and the United States in particular, played an important role in creating opportunities to withdraw from the conflict.¹⁴ U.S. President Bill Clinton met with both the Indian and Pakistani prime ministers to prevent the escalation of the Kargil conflict in July. U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott and U.S. Central Command General Anthony Zinni also visited both countries in order to de-escalate the crisis.¹⁵ President Clinton encouraged Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee not to cross the LoC and assured him that the United States would convince Pakistan to make the quickest possible withdrawal from Kargil. In turn, President Clinton offered

9. Nicholas J. Wheeler, "'I Had Gone to Lahore with a Message of Goodwill but in Return We Got Kargil': The Promise and Perils of 'Leaps of Trust' in India-Pakistan Relations," *India Review* 9, no. 3 (2010): 319-44; Rajesh M. Basrur, "Kargil, Terrorism, and India's Strategic Shift," *India Review* 1, no. 4 (2002): 39-56; and Amitabh Mattoo, "India's 'Potential' Endgame in Kashmir," *India Review* 2, no. 3 (2003): 14-33.

10. See, for example, Kapur, "Ten Years of Instability in a Nuclear South Asia," 77.

11. Sumit Ganguly and Devin Hagerty, *Fearful Symmetry: India-Pakistan Crises in the Shadow of Nuclear Weapons* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2005), 191; and Basrur, *Minimum Deterrence and India's Nuclear Security*, 73-74.

12. See Raj Chengappa, "Face-Saving Retreat," *India Today International*, July 19, 1999; and Harinder Baweja and Ramesh Vinayak, "Peak by Peak," *India Today International*, June 14, 1999.

13. Myra MacDonald, *Defeat Is an Orphan: How Pakistan Lost the Great South Asian War* (London: Hurst & Company, 2017), 63-64.

14. For useful studies, see Paul Kapur, "India and Pakistan's Unstable Peace: Why Nuclear South Asia Is Not Like Cold War Europe," *International Security* 30, no. 2 (2005): 127-52; and Paul Kapur, "Ten Years of Instability in a Nuclear South Asia," 71-94. For a detailed account, see Paul Kapur, *Dangerous Deterrent: Nuclear Weapons Proliferation and Conflict in South Asia* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

15. See Chengappa, "Face-Saving Retreat"; and John Lancaster, "US Defused Kashmir Crisis on Brink of War," *The Washington Post*, July 26, 1999.

to personally mediate talks between New Delhi and Islamabad if Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif ensured a withdrawal from Kargil.¹⁶ These talks helped give both countries enough political cover to slowly withdraw their forces and wind down the conflict. From a Pakistani perspective, management of the Kargil crisis constituted a significant political opportunity that Islamabad successfully capitalized on. Pakistan not only ensured international, especially U.S., attention in a bilateral dispute but also elicited promises from the United States to help resolve the core issue of Kashmir.

Beyond international intervention, it is also prudent to consider Pakistan's own crisis management decision-making during this crisis, which highlighted the importance of communicating with the adversary and maintaining military flexibility. When the opportunity for achieving a military victory without escalation passed, Pakistan withdrew its troops. Hotline discussions between Pakistani and Indian political leaders were a critical mechanism for de-escalation.¹⁷ Prime Minister Sharif sent Pakistani Foreign Minister Sartaj Aziz to meet his counterpart Jaswant Singh to resolve the escalating crisis. Later, Sharif also secretly sent Pakistan's former Foreign Secretary Niaz Naik to negotiate with Indian leaders as part of backchannel diplomatic processes.¹⁸ The general fear associated with nuclear weapons activated political and diplomatic efforts in South Asia to prevent escalation to major military confrontation.

More broadly, the Kargil crisis serves as an important case study for conflict between states with nuclear weapons. During the crisis, nuclear weapons allowed low-level conflict to occur while increasing incentives for preventing further escalation. Although some analysts contend nuclear weapons emboldened Pakistan to infiltrate a small number of troops across the LoC, Pakistan was also constrained from further reinforcing its position in Kargil because of the risk of nuclear escalation.¹⁹ Other analysts have argued that Kargil could never have escalated to a full-fledged war because neither state crossed the international border.²⁰ India's conventional superiority, from the perspective that "nuclear weapon states do not fight with each other,"²¹ was limited by Pakistan's strategic forces, as suggested in the Indian *Kargil Review Committee Report*.²² Opposing analysis suggests that Kargil disproved prevailing theories on nuclear peace and that India's decision not to escalate further had more to do

16. MacDonald, *Defeat Is an Orphan*, 66.

17. Raj Chengappa, "Will the War Spread?" *India Today International*, July 5, 1999.

18. Zaffar Abbas, "When Pakistan and India Went to War Over Kashmir in 1999," *Herald*, October 1, 2016. The article was first published under the title "War?" in June 1999.

19. Kapur, *Dangerous Deterrent*. For a response to the emboldenment argument, see Sameer P. Lalwani "Re-evaluating the Emboldenment Argument: Evidence from South Asia" (paper presented at International Studies Association Annual Conference, Atlanta, Georgia, March 16-19, 2016).

20. For more on this, see Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: A Debate Renewed* (New York & London: W.W. Northern & Company, 2003), 119.

21. Agha Shahi, Zulfiqar Ali Khan, and Abdul Sattar, "Securing Nuclear Peace," *News International*, October 5, 1999; and Davin T. Hagerty, *The Consequences of Nuclear Proliferation* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998), 184.

22. See Kargil Review Committee, *From Surprise to Reckoning: The Kargil Review Committee Report* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1999), 197-99.

with political signaling to the international community.²³ Regardless, Kargil reaffirms the stability-instability paradox, suggesting that two states possessing nuclear weapons may avoid large wars but wage war at limited levels.²⁴

The 2001-2 "Twin Peaks" Crisis: Further Escalation

After the Kargil crisis brought nuclear India and Pakistan to the brink of war, both states were *expected* to have learned a great deal about crisis management. Yet, in 2001-2, hundreds of thousands of Indian and Pakistani forces were mobilized at their shared border for months, undermining the credibility of CBMs and enhancing the risk of war.

The first peak occurred when militants launched an attack against the Indian Parliament building in December 2001. Although no Indian ministers were killed in the incident, there were 12 casualties and the event stirred the world's largest democracy to join the war on terror. India linked the attackers to the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) militant organizations and alleged that Pakistan either directly supported or failed to control the activities of these groups. The burden of responsibility for these attacks was put on the shoulders of the Pakistani security establishment. This led to regional and international pressure on Islamabad to take strict actions against these violent nonstate actor groups to de-escalate the rising tension between India and Pakistan.²⁵

The initial pressure, however, came from India, which perceived it had the strategic legitimacy to carry out direct actions against these organizations, even on Pakistani soil, akin to U.S. justifications for taking action against al Qaeda forces in Afghanistan after 9/11. Indian Home Minister L.K. Advani identified the 2001 attacks as "the most audacious and most alarming act of terrorism" and signaled India's willingness to act against groups based in Pakistan without waiting for U.S. intervention.²⁶ India's major objective in managing this unfolding crisis was not only to urge the international community to pressure Pakistan but also to compel Islamabad to curb terrorist infiltration into Indian territory and to hand over 20 militants that it considered responsible for the attacks. New Delhi sought to successfully manage the crisis in a way that incentivized Islamabad to prevent future attacks on India linked back to Pakistan. To make its compellence strategy during the crisis more credible, India mobilized

23. For examples, see Kapur, *Dangerous Deterrent*; Kapur, "Ten Years of Instability in a Nuclear South Asia," 78-79; and Scott D. Sagan, "The Perils of Proliferation in South Asia," *Asian Survey* 41, no. 6 (2001): 1064-86.

24. Glenn H. Snyder, *Deterrence and Defense: Toward a Theory of National Security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961).

25. Zafar Jaspal, "Understanding the Political-Military Context of the 2002 Military Standoff: A Pakistani Perspective," in *The India-Pakistan Military Standoff: Crisis and Escalation in South Asia*, ed. Zachary S. Davis (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); and Polly Nayak and Michael Krepon, *US Crisis Management in South Asia's Twin Peaks Crisis*, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: Stimson Center, 2014).

26. Rama Lakshmi, "India Wages a War of Words; Pakistan Again Assailed for Attack, U.S. for Its Response," *The Washington Post*, December 19, 2001.

significant military forces (Operation Parakram) at the Pakistan-India border.²⁷ This posture made it very difficult for Pakistan to back down and forced it to mobilize its military in response to contain Indian forces' further movements across both the LoC and the international border. Although formal conflict did not ultimately occur, military casualties were incurred amid troop mobilizations, cross-border shelling, and mine laying.²⁸

India's compellence strategy appeared to achieve some desirable outcomes even without waging limited strikes against Pakistan after the first peak's incident. Pakistan's President General Pervez Musharraf pledged that its territory would not be used by militants to launch attacks against India across the border and signaled he was ready to implement a ban on LeT and JeM.²⁹ The "second peak" emerged in May 2002 when terrorists attacked an Indian Army base near Kaluchak, killing many family members of Indian troops mobilized at the India-Pakistan border. However, despite this escalation many Indian officials felt there was no need to strike Pakistan after the Kaluchak attack because of perceived successes in pressuring the international community and compelling Pakistan to curb cross border infiltration. Those of this persuasion argued that the second peak was not severe enough to provide India the incentive to strike Pakistani territory.³⁰ Ultimately, however, the fact that the Twin Peaks crisis resulted in both Indian and Pakistani military forces mobilizing undermined the credibility of New Delhi's compellence strategy, as India failed to prevent additional terrorist attacks.

Third-party pressure was again critical in de-escalation. The U.S. war in Afghanistan played an important role restraining India from striking Pakistan, a key U.S. ally in Afghanistan and the broader war on terrorism. This motivation was especially important because the United States did not want Pakistani troops redirected from counterterrorism operations to the Indian border. As with the Kargil crisis, fear of nuclear use, even in a limited war, created further impetus for Indian restraint and ensured substantial U.S. involvement in crisis management. U.S. officials at the highest levels, including Secretary of State Colin Powell and Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage, intervened to help manage and de-escalate the crisis.³¹ Pakistan was asked to contain cross-border infiltration and implement a ban on the organizations suspected of orchestrating the 2001 and 2002 incidents. In turn, the U.S. crisis management team implored India to show restraint if the Pakistani security establishment acted against these groups.³²

27. See Kapur, "India and Pakistan's Unstable Peace," 149-50; and Kapur, "Ten Years of Instability in a Nuclear South Asia," 71-94.

28. See "Operation Parakram Claimed 798 Soldiers," *The Times of India*, July 31, 2003; and Rajat Pandit, "India Suffered 1,874 Casualties without Fighting a War," *The Times of India*, May 1, 2003.

29. Kapur, "India and Pakistan's Unstable Peace," 149.

30. Kapur, "Ten Years of Instability in a Nuclear South Asia," 82.

31. Nayak and Krepon, *US Crisis Management in South Asia's Twin Peaks Crisis*, 18-21.

32. Nayak and Krepon, *US Crisis Management in South Asia's Twin Peaks Crisis*, 22-32.

During critical early segments of the crisis, the key crisis management tool for both India and Pakistan was dialogue. However, equally important was the bilateral communication that continued after the immediate danger of war had passed. Both India and Pakistan agreed to take several CBMs in 2004 to help resolve the crisis and reduce the possibility of war in the future.³³ Indian and Pakistani leadership agreed on a ceasefire mechanism in 2003,³⁴ and in 2004 both sides agreed to revive and improve the secure hotline mechanism both at the foreign secretary and director general of military operations levels.³⁵ They also held talks on the implementation of the 1999 Lahore Declaration.³⁶ A new hotline to communicate about nuclear risks was established, and both sides agreed to extend their declared moratorium on nuclear tests and prenotification of ballistic missile trials.³⁷ The bilateral crisis management team between India and Pakistan also held talks on fencing the LoC, installing surveillance equipment on different points along it, and preventing drug trafficking,³⁸ smuggling, and illegal immigration.³⁹ The dialogue process yielded a lift on visa restrictions, restoration of train lines, and initiation of cricket diplomacy between the two sides.⁴⁰ This host of diplomatic engagements highlights a key lesson learned by both sides in the Twin Peaks crisis: if handled successfully, crisis management can actually forge more stable relations between the involved states than existed before the crisis began.

The 2008 Mumbai Crisis: Escalation Control

After the Kargil crisis and Twin Peaks incidents, both India and Pakistan — with direct assistance from the international community — emerged with a stronger template for facilitating communication and resolving conflicts. However, these efforts ultimately failed to prevent the Nov. 26, 2008, Mumbai attacks in which 10 gunmen killed more than 170 people in some of the busiest sections of Mumbai. In the wake of the Mumbai attack, India blamed Pakistan for allowing the gunmen to operate from within its borders. It was reported that Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari received a threatening call in response to the attack from someone claiming to be India's External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee, although Mukherjee later denied this.⁴¹ Pakistan denied its involvement in the attacks, and its foreign secretary urged India to allow a joint investigation of the events, calling terrorism a “major challenge”

33. John Lancaster, “India, Pakistan to Set Up Hotline,” *The Washington Post*, June 21, 2004.

34. Amit Baruah and Sandeep Dikshit, “India, Pak. Ceasefire Comes Into Being,” *The Hindu*, November 26, 2003.

35. Lancaster, “India, Pakistan to Set Up Hotline.”

36. A copy of the Lahore Declaration is available through the Nuclear Threat Initiative at <https://www.nti.org/media/pdfs/aptlahore.pdf>.

37. “India and Pakistan Set Up Hotline,” *BBC News*, June 20, 2004.

38. Shamsa Nawaz, “Comprehensive Bilateral Dialogue: Risks and Opportunities for Pakistan and India,” *Strategic Studies* 36, no. 4 (2016): 77-99.

39. “Full Text of Indo-Pak. Joint Statement,” *The Hindu*, February 19, 2004.

40. “Officials Expect India, Pakistan Will Ease Visa Restrictions - 2004-08-03,” *Voice of America News*, October 30, 2009; and Kamran Rehmat, “Cricket Diplomacy: Where Peace Is a Jigsaw Piece,” *News International* (Pakistan), November 1, 2015.

41. Press Trust of India, “I Made No Phone Call to Zardari: Mukherjee,” *Hindustan Times*, December 12, 2008.

and terrorists a “common enemy.”⁴² However, despite this statement of cooperation, Islamabad refused to turn over those it arrested in connection with the Mumbai attacks to India.

Unlike the Kargil crisis and Twin Peaks incidents where both India and Pakistan mobilized their forces and risked major military confrontation, the Mumbai crisis did not escalate to military mobilization. This could be a result of several factors. First, both India and Pakistan learned from past crises when escalation risks, including to a nuclear exchange, were relatively high. In the end, both sides largely preferred talks over the mobilization and escalation tactics that risked so much in the previous crises.⁴³ These stances reflected both countries’ commitment to showing restraint and strategic patience through the proposed joint investigation process. India did not mobilize and therefore Pakistan had no cause to mobilize in response.

Second, the U.S. crisis management team quickly reached out to both India and Pakistan’s leadership before either state implemented risky response strategies. The United States balanced its approach by talking to each state and making it clear to the two sides that resolving the Mumbai crisis would be in the security interest of South Asia as a whole. Washington also encouraged both sides to peacefully resolve their outstanding issues, including the core issue of Kashmir. These tactics reflect significant gains and a deeper maturity in the U.S. crisis management team’s understanding of the various dynamics that emerge during crises between India and Pakistan and how to help manage them quickly before escalation to military force.⁴⁴

Furthermore, as the United States continued to fight its war on terrorism in Afghanistan, Pakistan remained a critical front-line state for cooperation. Washington needed Islamabad to not only play an effective role in the Afghanistan peace process but also to support the withdrawal of its forces and war equipment from the region through Pakistan. This ensured U.S. commitment to successful crisis management between India and Pakistan.

If India had not shown restraint and the U.S. crisis management team had not responded so promptly, the Mumbai attacks could have escalated toward a major mobilization of military forces at the common border. In the wake of the attacks, India considered certain issues including the failure of Indian intelligence capabilities, poor policy planning, inadequate counterterrorism training, and insufficient execution of response protocols, to improve its response to future acts of terrorism. A key gain for Pakistan was a worthwhile attempt to

42. Candace Rondeaux, “Pakistan Offers to Join with India in Investigating Mumbai Massacre,” *The Washington Post*, December 3, 2008.

43. See Vipin Narang, “Pakistan’s Nuclear Posture: Implications for South Asian Stability,” Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Policy Brief, January 2010, <https://www.belfercenter.org/publication/pakistans-nuclear-posture-implications-south-asian-stability>. For detailed analysis on this see, Vipin Narang, “Posturing for Peace? Pakistan Nuclear Posture and South Asian Stability,” *International Security* 34, no. 3 (2009): 38-78.

44. Polly Nayak and Michael Krepon, *The Unfinished Crisis: US Crises Management after the 2008 Mumbai Attacks* (Washington, D.C.: Stimson Center, 2012).

limit activities by Jamaat-ud-Dawa and LeT, the groups India held responsible for carrying out the attacks.⁴⁵

The Mumbai crisis did not ultimately escalate to conflict and the opportunities for both India and Pakistan to learn lessons were abundant, but little was gained in terms of crisis prevention strategy. Failure to resolve the core issues that often spark crises such as the Kashmir dispute ensured the emergence of future crises and highlighted the continued absence of a more comprehensive strategy for both India and Pakistan to minimize nuclear risk in South Asia. A series of fresh crises have evolved in recent years, including the 2016 Pathankot, Uri, and Nagrota incidents, that have further derailed bilateral dialogue.

The 2016 Pathankot, Uri, and Nagrota Crises: Normative Instability?

The Pathankot, Uri, and Nagrota incidents indicate that crisis dynamics between the two rival states in South Asia have changed. India again blamed Pakistan for failing to uproot either JeM or LeT after these three attacks occurred and during the ensuing crises that followed. Pakistan denied responsibility, accused India of “false flag” operations, and urged Indian leadership to jointly investigate the incidents with Pakistan and promote broader dialogue between the two states to resolve core disputes, including terrorism. However, these crises demonstrated two key shifts in dynamics between New Delhi and Islamabad: they (1) elicited consideration of more measured military responses than troop mobilization and (2) happened when bilateral dialogue had stalled. A diplomatic breakthrough in bilateral relations occurred in December 2015 when India and Pakistan announced a new comprehensive dialogue — replacing previous “composite” and “resumed” dialogues and indicating all issues of dissent as up for discussion.⁴⁶ This progress was further bolstered by an unannounced Christmas Day visit to Pakistani Prime Minister Sharif in Lahore by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.⁴⁷ Before the talks had a chance to take off, however, the attack at Pathankot renewed instability.

During the January 2016 Pathankot incident, six militants killed seven Indian soldiers during an attack on the Indian Air Force base in Pathankot. In response to the attack, Indian Minister of Home Affairs Rajnath Singh stated, “Pakistan is our neighboring country. We also want peace, but if there is any terror attack on India, we will give a befitting reply.”⁴⁸ Indian Defense Minister Manohar Parrikar also attributed blame to Pakistan for the attack.⁴⁹ Though Islamabad denied responsibility, it arrested some JeM members and proposed a joint investigation with India. Five Pakistani members of the joint investigation team

45. For a detailed discussion, see Angel Rabasa et al., *The Lesson of Mumbai* (Santa Monica: RAND Corporation, 2009), 9-17.

46. Irfan Haider, “Pakistan, India Agree to Restart ‘Comprehensive’ Dialogue Process,” *Dawn*, December 9, 2015.

47. Suhasini Haider and Kallol Bhattacharjee, “PM Goes to Lahore, Makes a Christmas Date with History,” *The Hindu*, December 25, 2015.

48. Vijaita Singh, “Will Give Befitting Reply to Terror Attack: Rajnath,” *The Hindu*, January 2, 2016.

49. See “Indian Defence Minister Blames Pakistan for Attack in India-held Kashmir,” *Dawn*, June 26, 2016.

(an additional inspector general of police, a deputy inspector general of policy, two lieutenant colonels, and one inspector) were sent to conduct interviews and collect data on the Pathankot incident.⁵⁰ The joint investigation, together with Modi and Sharif's personal diplomacy mere weeks before, held the potential to improve ties between the two beleaguered neighbors. However, in their official report, Pakistan's investigators concluded that the "attack has been staged by the Indian government to malign Pakistan."⁵¹ The Pathankot crisis derailed the proposed comprehensive dialogue between the two, and both sides cancelled further talks, with Indian Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj claiming "[t]error and talks cannot go hand-in-hand."⁵²

In the September 2016 Uri attack, militants attacked another Indian military base in Kashmir. The timing of the Uri attack was significant in that unrest in Kashmir in the wake of the killing of a popular young Kashmiri militant commander, Burhan Wani, had generated the largest anti-India protests in recent years.⁵³ Eleven days after the Uri attack, the Indian Army claimed to have conducted surgical strikes against "terrorist teams" preparing to "carryout infiltration and conduct terrorist strikes inside Jammu and Kashmir and in various metros in other states."⁵⁴ Although it is still not clear how India could have carried out these so-called surgical strikes across the LoC to attack terrorist camps, some in the Indian media claim that the Indian Army penetrated about two to three kilometers into Pakistani territory.⁵⁵ Islamabad rejected New Delhi's claim of launching outright surgical strikes, with Lt. Gen. Asim Bajwa, spokesperson for Pakistan's military services, stating that "[t]he notion of surgical strike linked to alleged terrorists bases is an illusion being deliberately generated by India to create false effects."⁵⁶

The November Nagrota attack on an Indian military base was the third major crisis incident in 2016 and resulted in the death of seven soldiers.⁵⁷ Although a definitive reaction has yet to emerge from either India or Pakistan, militants penetrated the base in police uniforms, thus exposing major intelligence and security failures within the Indian armed forces. Rather than clamoring for surgical strikes against Pakistan, Indian security leadership should revisit security mechanisms within Indian military bases to study how and why these attacks

50. Irfan Haider, "Pakistan Arrests Jaish Members in Connection with India Air Base Attack," *Dawn*, January 14, 2016.

51. See "Pathankot Attack: Security Agencies Ill-prepared, Govt Response Inadequate, Says Scathing Report of Standing Committee," *Daily News and Analysis*, May 3, 2016.

52. See "Sushma Swaraj Rules Out Talks with Pakistan, John Kerry Says No Good or Bad Terrorist," *The Indian Express*, August 31, 2016.

53. See Mateen Haider, "Pakistan Condemns India's Killing of Hizbul Mujahideen Militant Commander," *Dawn*, July 10, 2016; and "Indian Troops Suffer Deadly Kashmir Ambush," *DW News*, September 18, 2016.

54. "Press Statement by DGMO," Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Defense (India), September 29, 2016, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/PrintRelease.aspx?relid=151242>; and "Kashmir Attack: India 'Launches Strikes against Militants,'" *BBC News*, September 30, 2016.

55. Syed Sammer Abbas, "Army Rubbishes Indian 'Surgical Strikes' Claim as Two Pakistani Soldiers Killed at LoC," *Dawn*, September 29, 2016.

56. *Ibid.*

57. Geeta Anand and Hari Kumar, "Militant Attack Indian Army Base in Nagrota, Influencing Tension with Pakistan," *The New York Times*, November 29, 2016.

occurred as well as how to prevent them in the future without risking conflict with Pakistan.⁵⁸

These incidents showcase the same fundamental tensions between India and Pakistan and their competing interpretations of crisis origins. India blames Pakistan for directly or indirectly supporting the spread of terrorism across the LoC, while Pakistan denies responsibility for the attacks and claims that India utilizes them to divert the international community's attention from the core issue of Kashmir — the root cause of all issues between India and Pakistan.⁵⁹ These attacks have brought the comprehensive dialogue process between India and Pakistan to a standstill. India and Pakistan's bilateral crisis management strategies are clearly yielding few useful gains while fostering dangerous instability. The continuous unrest in Indian-held Kashmir, recurring crises, and the on-and-off exchange of fire between Indian and Pakistani troops at the LoC appear to have eclipsed the proposed dialogue process for all unresolved issues. Instability has become the norm with a series of 2016 crises distinguished in part by shorter Indian response times.

These concerning trends beg the question of what lessons might be learned from past crises on the subcontinent. What management strategies worked well for India and Pakistan? When and how might the United States help foster stability between South Asia's nuclear neighbors? And what actions can be taken to prevent crises?

Crisis Lessons in Nuclear South Asia

Nuclear weapons — specifically India and Pakistan's decisions to test in 1998 — changed the nature of crises in South Asia in three key ways. First, they created space for low-intensity covert (para)military adventurism (e.g., the Kargil incursion and surgical strikes). They also ensured international attention and vested third-party interest in averting escalation to an India-Pakistan nuclear war. Finally, South Asia's rapidly expanding and maturing nuclear programs and escalation risks associated with nuclear-armed states increased the urgency of improving crisis management and prevention mechanisms.

Past efforts by India and Pakistan, together with those of the international community, have failed to make substantive progress toward resolving the core but complex issue that sparks bilateral crises: the Kashmir dispute. Until both states find a political resolution to Kashmir, crises will continue to occur. India and Pakistan must learn from the past crises, create better bilateral crisis

58. For analysis on poor Indian security mechanism and intelligence failures, see "Nagrota Terror Attack: Clamour Grows for Post Uri-like Surgical Strikes," *The Financial Express*, November 30, 2016; Manoj C.G., "Uri Attack: Congress Questions 'Intelligence Failure,'" *The Indian Express*, September 20, 2016; and Ravi Krishnan Khajuria, "Attack on Nagrota Army Base Exposes Major Security, Intelligence Failure," *Hindustan Times*, November 30, 2016.

59. See Adil Aziz Khanzada, "Uri Attack an Inside Job, Says Khawaja Asif," *Dawn*, September 27, 2016.

Nuclear weapons may not prevent India and Pakistan from smaller border skirmishes and future crises unless both countries craft alternative crisis management and confidence-building strategies.

management mechanisms, and enhance CBMs to prevent future crises and foster durable peace in South Asia.

The international community, particularly the United States as a seasoned third-party crisis manager, should continue to increase its understanding of the underlying grievances behind crises in South Asia and encouraging methods to facilitate long-term resolution. Given U.S. geoeconomic and geostrategic interest in South Asia, it is likely that the United States will continue to play a key crisis management role. The actions of Pakistani leadership continue to indicate that the role of the international community will remain essential in bilateral tension over Kashmir.⁶⁰ China could also play a significant role in the future as a balancer to avert major conflict escalation from prevailing India-Pakistan crises. This development is more likely as China strives to economically integrate both India (through a proposed Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar economic corridor) and Pakistan (through the rapidly developing China-Pakistan Economic Corridor). Chinese economic integration in South Asia increases incentives for Beijing to support the successful management of India-Pakistan crises to avoid major conflicts in South Asia.

Nuclear weapons continue to strengthen strategic stability in South Asia by ensuring deterrence from large-scale attacks and that the international community will intervene when a crisis appears on the verge of severe escalation. But nuclear weapons may not prevent India and Pakistan from smaller border skirmishes and future crises unless both countries craft alternative crisis management and confidence-building strategies. This risk is especially apparent after the 2016 crises and India's declared willingness to conduct cross-border surgical strikes. In the past, despite senior Indian security leaders' beliefs that limited war could be possible despite the presence of nuclear weapons, there appeared to exist a general feeling in New Delhi that India should continue to show strategic restraint and avoid even limited strikes against Pakistan.⁶¹ However, in the wake

60. See Syed Sammer Abbas, "Nawaz Urges Permanent UN Members to Ask India to Stop Bloodshed in Held Kashmir," *Dawn*, September 19, 2016.

61. See for example, Rajesh M. Basrur, "Kargil, Terrorism, and India's Strategic Shift," *India Review* 1, no. 4 (2002): 43-46.

of the Uri crisis, the Indian public heavily pressured its leadership to respond with punitive military action against Pakistan. This indicates that India may have changed the nature of bilateral crises by communicating willingness to execute *publicized* surgical strikes, penetrating Pakistani territory and carrying out quick limited attacks on suspected terrorist camps.⁶²

Reliance on nuclear weapons amid growing conventional asymmetry continues to define the South Asian strategic environment. Pakistan has also made strategic shifts, determining that the arrival of tactical nuclear weapons in South Asia deters the possibility of limited war. Pakistan's shift to full-spectrum deterrence, a concept that evolved from within its strategy of credible minimum deterrence, deters both conventional (e.g., India's Cold Start doctrine) and nuclear forms of aggression.⁶³

These gradual strategic developments are accompanied by advances in nuclear submarines, intermediate-range ballistic missiles, ballistic missile defense systems, and multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles.⁶⁴ Taken together, these increased capabilities sharpen escalation risks and the challenges to successful future crisis management.

Moving Forward: Recommendations for Future Crisis Prevention and Management

A review of South Asia's nuclear-era crises reveals a long history of successful crisis management. However, crisis prevention and conflict resolution strategies are dormant. Crisis management studies consistently predict additional future crises of both low and high intensity with the potential to undermine the credibility of various CBMs in South Asia. Thus, there is a need for crafting strategies in South Asia to prevent crises in the first place. Major powers such as the United States and China may encourage both India and Pakistan to help resolve their issues, but South Asia must ultimately craft its own strategies to resolve emerging crises and prevent future ones. To that end, there are four critical areas where renewed efforts have the potential to yield the most progress: (1) existing CBMs, (2) deterrent strategies, (3) arms control, and (4) Kashmir.

62. For analysis on this shift in Indian strategy, see Saikat Datta, "Behind the Scenes: How India Went About Planning 'Surgical Strikes' after the Uri Attack," *Scroll.in*, September 29, 2016.

63. "Press Release," Inter-Services Public Relations (Pakistan), April 19, 2011, https://www.ispr.gov.pk/front/main.asp?o=t-press_release&id=1721&search=1; Khalid Kidwai, "A Conversation with Gen. Khalid Kidwai" (remarks at the Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference 2015, Washington, D.C., March 23, 2015), <http://carnegieendowment.org/files/03-230315carnegieKIDWAI.pdf>; Ghazala Yasmin Jalil, "Tactical Nuclear Weapons and Deterrence Stability in South Asia: Pakistan's Stabilization-Destabilization Dilemma," *Strategic Studies* 34, no. 1 (Spring 2014); Mansoor Ahmed, "Proactive Operations and Massive Retaliation: Whither Deterrence Stability?" *South Asian Voices*, September 11, 2013; Manpreet Sethi, "Counter Pak Nuke Tactics," *The New Indian Express*, July 24, 2014; and Khan, *Pakistan's Nuclear Policy*.

64. Michael Krepon, Joshua T. White, Julia Thompson, Shane Mason, eds., *Deterrence Instability and Nuclear Weapons in South Asia* (Washington, D.C.: Stimson Center, 2015); and Michael Krepon, Travis Wheeler, and Shane Mason, *The Lure & Pitfalls of MIRVs: From the First to the Second Nuclear Age* (Washington, D.C.: Stimson Center, 2016).

Enhancing the Credibility of Confidence-Building Measures

Despite past attempts to introduce various combinations of CBMs, including nuclear, into South Asia, most efforts have failed during crises.⁶⁵ The existing agreements are there, but getting New Delhi and Islamabad to actually buy into and improve these CBMs is crucial to ensuring deterrence stability in South Asia.

CBMs are revisited after every crisis to ease tensions between India and Pakistan, and reinforcing their utility is urgent. Both countries should first ensure that CBMs remain viable during crises to buy more time for de-escalation. For example, pursuing joint investigations into incidents takes time and can slow escalation by maintaining sustained dialogue. India and Pakistan could also work to foster domestic political and diplomatic communication that enhances stability and avoids the negative perceptions that quickly arise during a crisis. A clearer flow of information within and across borders will help Indian and Pakistani crisis managers to better understand the mode, time, direction, and intensity of a crisis.

Discouraging Warlike Strategies

Before the introduction of nuclear weapons in South Asia, India and Pakistan fought several wars. Since their introduction to the subcontinent — and as their delivery systems become increasingly credible — the likelihood of intentional major war has decreased, but nuclear weapons have neither averted crises altogether nor eliminated the risks for miscalculation and accidental war. India and Pakistan have confronted several crises since acquiring nuclear weapons and will continue to face additional ones in the future. This pattern weakens deterrence stability in South Asia.

After the Kargil and Twin Peaks crises, both India and Pakistan continue to bolster their nuclear deterrents. Despite CBMs that include nuclear measures between the two countries, both India and Pakistan tested nuclear-capable missiles of different ranges. India struck a nuclear deal with the United States in 2005, opening the door for India to engage in open nuclear trade with the United States — purportedly for peaceful, civilian purposes.⁶⁶ However, Pakistan has always remained suspicious of this deal and later of the Nuclear Suppliers Group's special waiver that lifted the U.S.-led world embargo on civilian nuclear trade with India, worrying that these agreements have far-reaching strategic consequences for South Asian strategic stability. Pakistan believes

65. See Kent L. Biringir, "Security Agreement and Confidence Building for India: Past, Present and Future," *India Review* 1, no. 4 (2002): 57-90; Dipankar Banerjee, "Addressing Nuclear Dangers: Confidence Building Between India-China-Pakistan," *India Review* 9, no. 3 (2010): 345-63; and Umbreen Javaid, "Confidence Building Measures in Nuclear South Asia: Limitations and Prospects," *South Asian Studies* 25, no. 2 (2010): 341-59.

66. For India-US civil nuclear agreement, see U.S. Department of State, "Agreement for Cooperation Between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of India Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy," October 10, 2008, <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/122068.pdf>.

these developments further India's pursuit of a larger nuclear weapons arsenal and more broadly strengthen its stockpile of fissile material.⁶⁷

Further key strategic developments also followed the Kargil and Twin Peaks crises, namely the development of India's quick-mobilization Cold Start doctrine,⁶⁸ Pakistan's responsorial tactical ballistic missile, Nasr,⁶⁹ and the corresponding adoption of full-spectrum deterrence of both conventional and nuclear threats.⁷⁰ These strategies, though designed for deterrence purposes, have escalation implications for managing future crises effectively and thus merit closer study by crisis management teams in India, Pakistan, China, and the United States. Future crisis management strategies should create a strategic restraint regime (such as an arms control regime) to strengthen the credibility of crisis management and minimize the danger of war in South Asia.

Creating an Arms Control Regime

Institutionalizing an arms control regime (ACR) could help secure long-term prospects for peace and stability in South Asia. Working toward this broader goal will in turn create opportunities for preventing and limiting future crises. The regime would enforce additional dialogue on the most sensitive defense issues and in the long term foster a more transparent and thus less crisis-prone strategic environment. Past unilateral and bilateral attempts to initiate the pursuit of an ACR have been unsuccessful. However, a trilateral or quadrilateral approach might yield real progress, including limiting the India-Pakistan arms race and enabling China and the United States to assure one another of their nuclear deterrent and deployed conventional intentions in Asia.⁷¹

Although there is no credible evidence that the United States or China have succeeded in encouraging strategic restraint in South Asia, both have played roles in managing various crises between India and Pakistan and have certainly helped avert major wars in South Asia. Given this crucial contribution, both the United States and China could play an essential role in a South Asian ACR. Their direct participation in early discussions and planning could help bring both India and Pakistan to the table.⁷² An ACR could slow the production of warheads and delivery systems, ultimately helping strengthen deterrence

67. Zafar Khan and Rizwana Abbasi, *Pakistan and the International Nuclear Order*, Islamabad Papers, Nuclear Paper Series, no. 1 (Islamabad: Institute of Strategic Studies, 2016), 1-80, 34.

68. For interesting analysis on this, see Walter C. Ladwig III, "Indian Military Modernization and Conventional Deterrence in South Asia," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 38, no. 5 (2015): 729-72; Walter C. Ladwig III, "A Cold Start for Hot Wars? The Indian Army's New Limited War Doctrine," *International Security* 32, no. 3 (2007/08): 158-90; Shashank Joshi, "India's Military Instrument: A Doctrine Stillborn," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 36, no. 4 (2013): 512-40; and Zafar Khan, "Cold Start Doctrine: The Conventional Challenge to South Asian Stability," *Contemporary Security Policy* 33, no. 3 (2012): 577-94.

69. The missile fits an array of categories such as tactical nuclear weapons, nonstrategic nuclear weapons, forward-deployed nuclear weapons, and/or low-yield nuclear weapons. Its terminology remains confusing for South Asians with no concrete definition.

70. Khan and Abbasi, *Pakistan and the International Nuclear Order*, 14-18; Zafar Khan, "The Changing Contours of Minimum Deterrence in South Asia," *Policy Perspective* 13, no. 1 (2016): 77-96.

71. Robert Einhorn and W.P.S. Sidhu, *The Strategic Chain: Linking Pakistan, India, China, and the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2017).

72. For deeper discussion of what this arms control regime might look like, see Khan, "Prospects for an Arms Control Regime in South Asia."

stability in South Asia, but it may not prevent border skirmishes and minor crises between India and Pakistan until the two states resolve other outstanding core issues like Kashmir.

Resolving the Kashmir Issue

India and Pakistan have fought several wars and confronted numerous crises over Kashmir-linked issues. Mistrust over and lack of enthusiasm for resolving the Kashmir issue has undermined the credibility of CBMs between India and Pakistan. The oft-cited nuclear flashpoint of Kashmir⁷³ and the broader bilateral issue of confronting terrorism⁷⁴ create escalation risks that could cross the nuclear threshold. Although the United States and other major powers have helped manage crises between India and Pakistan, efforts have failed to produce effective preventive measures or resolution of the long-standing issue of Kashmir.

Bilateral dialogue in recent years has been stalled due in part to India's stringent conditions for talks on terrorism and Kashmir. From Pakistan's perspective, the issue of terrorism cannot be discussed without the core issue of Kashmir. No progress on Kashmir can be made without granting a directly participatory role to the key stakeholder of local Kashmiri leadership, the Hurriyat — a practice India had agreed to for 20 years and only recently changed its stance on.⁷⁵ India and Pakistan must find common ground to overcome this sticking point and resume dialogue.

Ultimate resolution of the Kashmir issue may assist both India and Pakistan in resolving other outstanding problems. To do so would require that both New Delhi and Islamabad (1) maintain consistency in their dialogue process despite crisis situations, (2) agree on the inclusion of Kashmiri leadership as an essential part of the dialogue agenda, (3) address the gaps within existing CBMs and past causes of failure, and (4) allow the international community a role in resolving the Kashmir issue in accordance with the wishes of the people of Kashmir.

Conclusion

Tensions and bilateral crises have endured between India and Pakistan despite the introduction of nuclear weapons. Although neither India nor Pakistan are fighting large-scale conflicts, nuclear weapons have failed to prevent crises in South Asia, and the region's peoples live between war and peace amid these enduring conflicts. It is up to Indian and Pakistani leadership to decide whether

73. Timothy Hoyt, "Politics, Proximity and Paranoia: The Evolution of Kashmir as a Nuclear Flashpoint," *India Review* 2, no. 3 (2003): 117-44; Devin Hagerty, "US Policy and the Kashmir Dispute: Prospects for Resolution," *India Review* 2, no. 3 (2003): 89-116.

74. Andrew Phillips, "Horsemen of the Apocalypse? Jihadist Strategy and Nuclear Instability in South Asia," *International Politics* 49, no. 3 (2012): 279-317.

75. Zafar Khan, "Prospects for an Arms Control Regime in South Asia," *The Washington Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (2016): 171-89. For a discussion of how disagreement over the involvement of Kashmiri leadership derailed talks in 2015, see: Mateen Haider, "Pakistan Says Talks Cannot be Held after India's Preconditions," *Dawn*, August 22, 2015; and Mateen Haider, "No Talks with India without Kashmir Issue on Agenda," *Dawn*, September 10, 2015.

After the Kargil conflict both India and Pakistan developed various new delivery systems for their deterrent forces. The implementation of these systems has not prevented crises in South Asia, and these conflicts continue to create mistrust, widen the communication gap, and undermine dialogue processes.

to opt for better means to resolve not only future crises but also outstanding core issues like Kashmir.

South Asian crises have accelerated the vicious arms race between India and Pakistan. After the Kargil conflict both India and Pakistan developed various new delivery systems for their deterrent forces. The implementation of these systems has not prevented crises in South Asia, and these conflicts continue to create mistrust, widen the communication gap, and undermine dialogue processes. What is most needed in South Asia is a strategy of crisis management principles for India and Pakistan that avoid misunderstanding and undermining of escalatory pressures. Bearing Johnston's eight basic principles of crisis management in mind, both India and Pakistan can show flexibility and create space for constant lines of communication. Pakistani and Indian leaders should exercise greater self-restraint on both sides of the border to avoid escalatory pressures that create incentives to unravel lines of communication.

In addition to these principles, another key takeaway from these crises is that both India and Pakistan will need to accept serious responsibility for creating a bilateral crisis management institution and rely less on third-party involvement, though roles by the United States and possibly China should not be ignored. Once crisis management is institutionalized in South Asia, India and Pakistan could further improve the sustainability of both credible regular and nuclear CBMs, which would encourage both sides to avoid using warfare strategies against each other. Besides the creation of a bilateral crisis management regime, it is possible that both India and Pakistan could work on a regional arms control regime and/or strategic restraint regime that could greatly contribute to crisis management in South Asia and improve strategic stability.

Both New Delhi and Islamabad need to come up with innovative strategies under the broader contours of regular and nuclear CBMs to prevent crises.⁷⁶

76. Toby Dalton, "What Is the Future of CBMs in South Asia?" *South Asian Voices*, May 26, 2016; and Stimson Center, Off Ramps Initiative, September 5, 2017, <https://www.stimson.org/content/off-ramps>.

India and Pakistan, with help from the international community, should focus on crisis prevention strategies to demonstrate restraint and perhaps even the ultimate resolution of fundamental tensions like the Kashmir dispute. Each state should improve intelligence capabilities, strengthen force infrastructure, and invest in counterterrorism strategies to further undermine sparking a crisis in the first place (e.g., preventing cross-border terrorist attacks that could escalate tensions). We have learned from Mumbai and the recent Pathankot, Uri, and Nagrota crises that India's admitted inability to stem cross-border terrorist attacks has played a role in crises emerging between New Delhi and Islamabad. Pakistan can also take such measures as part of CBMs to prevent possible failures from its side. These crisis prevention strategies, including joint and trusted investigation of crises, are proactive steps toward developing restraint, discouraging the waging an immediate war from one or the other side, and crafting policies to prevent these types of crises in the future.

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