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Changing Nuclear Norms in South Asia a Threat to Regional Peace

Muhammad Rizwan[1], *Wajih Ullah* [2*] *and Sara Batool*[1]

[1] MS in International Relations from COMSATS University- Pakistan
[2]MS Scholar, Department of International Relations, Bahria University Islamabad - Pakistan

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Abstract: This article is about changing the normative behavior about the usages of nuclear weapons and the emerging threat of nuclear war in South Asia. It is a general belief that deterrence has provided strategic stability against the usage of a nuclear weapon. Little attention has been paid over the years to normative behavior that gradually emerged and refrained states from preemptive nuclear strikes. Leaders of both India and Pakistan repeatedly claimed that these weapons are only for defensive purposes. But with changing geopolitical situation this normative behavior has changed. India adopted Cold Start Doctrine (Though it is a conventional military strategy) but due to a huge disparity in the conventional military weapon, Pakistan developed tactical nuclear weapons and adopted the idea of full-spectrum deterrence. When India did not manage to punish Pakistan with conventional means it started looking for other options. The idea of a preemptive counterforce strike and changing of Indian nuclear doctrine got attention. With these debates about nuclear strikes underway, Intrusion by Indian jets inside Pakistan in February 2019, put both countries on brink of war which could escalate into nuclear. Although war averted that time, recently India had repealed the special constitutional status of Occupied Kashmir, which again aggravated the situation. With this changing normative behavior and deepening crisis between both states chances of war that can turn nuclear is now maximum than ever.

Keywords: Prolifiration, Detterence, Nuclear norms, Nuclear Tabbose.

1 Introduction

The proliferation of nuclear weapons in South Asia was a long and slow process. India brought nuclear weapons in South Asia by testing a nuclear device in 1974 (May 1998) but the historical record shows that Indian leaders were not in favor of nuclearization. Nevertheless, when China tested its first nuclear device, it created fear in the minds of Indian leaders because of Sino- Indian conflict of 1962 and the subsequent Chinese nuclear test in 1964Therefore on May 18, 1994, India tested its first atomic bomb but it was termed as smiling Buddha. It means that it is a peaceful nuclear explosion and India does not have aggressive intentions against any other state. India took almost 24 years to overtly establish itself as a nuclear power after it tested its nuclear weapons in May 1998.[1]

When India tested its first nuclear device in 1974, it was necessary for Pakistan to establish its own nuclear facility to keep the balance of power in the region. Pakistan and India are arch-rival and were involved in different conflicts. Only three years earlier of the first Indian nuclear test, Pakistan lost its eastern part in December 1971 (now Bangladesh) after a brief war with India. Initially, Efforts were done to develop capabilities of uranium enrichment. Finally by 1987 Pakistan was capable to detonate its own nuclear device though it remained quiet for eleven long years. Pakistan conducted the first test of its nuclear weapons on 28th May 1998. This was done after Indians tested their nuclear device for the second time.[2]

1 Kennedy, A. B., India's Nuclear Odyssey Implicit Umbrellas, Diplomatic Disappointments, and the Bomb. International Security, Pp120-127, 2011

2 Z. B. Iram Khalid, "Pakistan's Nuclear Development (1974-1998): External Pressures," *South Asian Studies*, Pp. 221-229, 2015.

* Corresponding author E-mail: wajihullah96@gmail.com

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After the inception of nuclear weapons in the South Asian Theater, deterrence is provided as justification for strategic stability in the region. According to Mearsheimer, we can define stability as the "absence of war and major crisis". It is widely believed now that the threat of mutual destruction is obstructing both states from taking any action against each other. Deterrence is a pure realist concept.[3]

But we cannot say that only deterrence is the sole factor behind this stability in the region. Because over the years a normative approach is adopted by both states that barred them from using o nuclear weapons.
This paper analyzes how normative behavior regarding nuclear weapons evolved in the last few decades in both India and Pakistan. But with changing policies under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi, could threaten the stability in South Asia

2 Development of international norms against the use of nuclear weapons

After the Second World War (WWII) different states established their programs of developing nuclear weapons. The United States was the only state that had developed nuclear weapons during WWII and used them against Japan. Two nuclear bombs were dropped on the Japanese cities of Nagasaki and Hiroshima in August 1945. These nuclear strikes by the United States marked the end of WW11 in East Asia. After this horrifying incident, it was widely believed that nuclear-weapon states may use them to protect their own interests. But despite having capabilities, not even a single state used it afterWW11. Two important reasons are provided for this. First is the mutually assured destruction refrained states from any misadventure against their adversaries. Second, it is argued that international norms have emerged over the period of time that prohibit states from using a nuclear weapon against their opponents. Therefore we have not seen even a single incident about using nuclear weapons by any state.[4]

Initially, Thomas Schelling used the word "Tradition" for not using nuclear weapons. According to him once nuclear weapons are used on the battlefield it might become impossible for even belligerent parties to halt further escalation. Because of this reason an understanding has developed in the international community not to use them on the battlefield. This understanding can be named as tradition.[5]

While Tradition is just an understanding between states for not using a nuclear weapon. Nina Tannenwald uses the word nuclear Taboo about this behavior of nuclear weapon states. Word Taboo refers to already established practice in different societies and if anything is done against this, it will produce severe consequences. In the same way, states are also barred by nuclear taboo from accomplishing nuclear attacks. Although it is not de jure form, it is a practice that is followed now for many decades and its violation will not be advantageous.[6]

Whether we call it a tradition or nuclear taboo but the fact is that a strong customary mindset evolved over these years that prevent states from using nuclear weapons. I will use the word International norms for this understanding of not using nuclear weapons. In the Oxford dictionary definition of the norm is "standards of behavior that are typical of or accepted within a particular group or society". In the same way, standards established by the International community prohibits conflict that could involve atomic weapons. These standards can be named international norms. International Institutions and International regimes played an important role in creating these norms. United Nations Generally Assembly (UNGA) adopted different resolutions barring states from nuclear attacks.UNGA passed its maiden resolution in 1946, which established a commission to ensure that nuclear energy will only be used for peaceful purposes. The commission will work towards the complete elimination of atomic bombs.[7]

3 D. M. S. u. R. Muhammad Shafiq ur Rehman, "The Evolving Dynamics of Deterence Stability in South Asia," *NDU Journal*, Pp 117-122, 2017

4 N. Tannenwald, "How Strong Is the Nuclear Taboo Today?," *The Washington Quarterly*, pp. 89-90, 2018.

5 T. V. Paul, The Tradition of Non-Use of Nuclear Weapons, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009

6 N. Tannenwald, The Nuclear Taboo The United States and the Non-Use of Nuclear Weapons Since 1945, CAMBRIDGE: CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2007.

7 "Nuclear Weapons," [Online]. Available: https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/nuclear/.

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In the 1950s Different countries embarked on a plan of developing thermonuclear weapons. These nuclear devices are more powerful than regular atomic bombs. In 1961 UNGA again adopted the resolution, no. 1653 in which it was prohibited to employ atomic weapons and thermonuclear weapons.[8]

But Legal status of nuclear weapons still remained undefined. Hence in 1994 UNGA asked the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to interpret international Law about nuclear weapons. If a state uses nuclear weapons or promises to attack with a nuclear weapon then what will be the position of international law about it. In 1996 ICJ gave its opinion that interpreted the international law. According to this advisory opinion "the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular to the principles and rules of International Humanitarian Law.[9] It means that although it is not written in International Law that these weapons are prohibited but they are contradictory to some of the already established rules of International Humanitarian Law (IHL). For example (IHL) explicitly prohibits indiscriminate killing during the course conflict. The same way nuclear attack does not discriminate against combatant and noncombatants so they are contrary to this principle. The last resolution of UNGA came in December 2018 in which it was clearly demonstrated that all countries will work together towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.[10]

International regimes were developed to halt the further proliferation of atomic weapons and to completely eliminate already present stock. The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is of the utmost importance in this regard. NPT was contracted in 1968 and it took two years for its implementation that was done in 1970.NPT gave a nuclear program of five major powers i.e. USA, RUSSIA, Britain France, and China the de jure status. Though banned other states from acquiring nuclear capabilities. NPT is binding on signatory states. NPT asks NWS not to help other states to develop nuclear capabilities. Moreover, it asked them not to pursue an arms race and work towards the permanent elimination of these weapons. Overall NPT is a success story because only four states developed nuclear capabilities after it came into force. India, Israel, and Pakistan are not signatory to NPT whereas North Korea although it was the signatory of the NPT later withdrew from it.[11]
The international community is also very much active against the usage of nuclear weapons as individually and on a collective basis. For example, different regions are declared as "nuclear-weapons-free zone". In those regions, no country will embark on a plan to develop nuclear capabilities. Currently, five such types of zones exist.

- Treaty of Tlatelolco was signed in 1967 to make Latin America Nuclear-free zone.
- Treaty of Rarotonga in 1985 to make the South Pacific nuclear-weapons-free zone.
- Treaty of Semipalatinsk was signed in 2006 to make Central Asia a nuclear-weapons-free zone.
- Treaty of Bangkok was signed in 1995 to make Southeast Asia nuclear-weapon-free zone

The Treaty of Pelindaba was signed in 1996 to make the Africa Nuclear weapons-free zone.[12]
With effective measures of NPT. These regions are not nuclearized so far although many countries are using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Great powers on an individual basis also have a firm stance against nuclear use. Since China detonated its first nuclear device, on 16 October 1964, it explicitly maintained the policy of No First Use. By No First Use Policy means that China will not commence a nuclear attack preemptively. Chinese nuclear program is only for the defensive purpose to deter any type of nuclear attack and it does not see these weapons as a war-fighting tool.[13]

In 2015, the president of France, François Hollande, reiterated his responsibility regarding nuclear weapons. According to him, France will work towards the ultimate goal of the complete abolition of nuclear arms.[14]

This Normative behavior reached its climax when former US President Barack Obama declared that the United State will work towards eliminating all nuclear weapons from this world. According to President Obama, "we will make this world a

8 "UN Declaration on the Prohibition of the Use of Thermonuclear Weapons," [Online]. Available: http://www.facing-finance.org/en/database/norms-and-standards/un-declaration-on-the-prohibition-of-the-use-of-thermonuclear-weapons/.

9M. J. Matheson, "The Opinions of the International Court of Justice on the Threat or Use of Nuclear weapons," *The American Journal of International Law*, pp. 416-420, 1997.

10 General Assembly Adopts 67 Disarmament Drafts, Calling for Greater Collective Action to Reduce Arsenals, Improve Trust amid Rising Global Tensions," 05 December 2018. [Online]. Available: https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/ga12099.doc.htm

11 The Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) at a Glance," August 2019. [Online]. Available: https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/nptfact.

12K. Davenport, "Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones (NWFZ) At a Glance," [Online]. Available: https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/nwfz.

13 Z. Pan, "A Study of China's No-First-Use Policy on Nuclear Weapons," *Journal for Peace and Nuclear Disarmament*, pp. 115-120, 2018.

14President Hollande's Message on Nuclear Deterrence," [Online]. Available: https://www.csis.org/analysis/president-hollande%E2%80%99s-message-nuclear-deterrence.

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peaceful place without the help of nuclear weapons." This was a huge statement keeping in view that only one state has used nuclear weapons so far and is the United States of America.[15]

Even though complete nuclear disarmament is still a dream because of the interest of nuclear weapon states but these efforts reflect a mindset that is continuously evolving in any state. Due to these efforts from the International community and different institutions, slowly and gradually a normative behavior against the usage of nuclear weapons emerged at the international level. Now it is widely accepted that nuclear weapons are not the same as other weapons which are used in conventional warfare. They produce horrifying effects and once a nuclear war started it will be almost impossible to halt this escalation. It will not be the same as a conventional war but it has the capability to destroy the almost whole world.

3 The proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in South Asia

The proliferation of nuclear weapons in South Asia was a long and slow process. India brought nuclear weapons in South Asia by testing a nuclear device in 1974 (May 1998) but the historical record shows that Indian leaders were not in favor of nuclearization. Nevertheless, when China tested its first nuclear device, it created fear in the minds of Indian leaders because of Sino- Indian conflict of 1962 and the subsequent Chinese nuclear test in 1964Therefore on May 18, 1994, India tested its first atomic bomb but it was termed as smiling Buddha. It means that it is a peaceful nuclear explosion and India does not have aggressive intentions against any other state. India took almost 24 years to overtly establish itself as a nuclear power after it tested its nuclear weapons in May 1998.[16]

When India tested its first nuclear device in 1974, it was necessary for Pakistan to establish its own nuclear facility to keep the balance of power in the region. Pakistan and India are arch-rival and were involved in different conflicts. Only three years earlier of the first Indian nuclear test, Pakistan lost its eastern part in December 1971 (now Bangladesh) after a brief war with India. Initially, Efforts were done to develop capabilities of uranium enrichment. Finally by 1987 Pakistan was capable to detonate its own nuclear device though it remained quiet for eleven long years. Pakistan conducted the first test of its nuclear weapons on 28th May 1998. This was done after Indians tested their nuclear device for the second time.[17] After the inception of nuclear weapons in the South Asian Theater, deterrence is provided as justification for strategic stability in the region. According to Mearsheimer, we can define stability as the "absence of war and major crisis". It is widely believed now that the threat of mutual destruction is obstructing both states from taking any action against each other. Deterrence is a purely realist concept.[18]

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4 Indian normative thinking about the use of nuclear weapons

Since the partition of the subcontinent, Indian leaders had a normative approach towards the usage of nuclear weapons. Jawaharlal Nehru, the first prime minister of independent India, was among the initial proponents of the Test Ban Treaty. He considered it their ethical responsibility to work against the proliferation of nuclear weapons. This is why, initially India embarked on a civilian nuclear program that was for peaceful purposes.[19] There was a brief Indo-China border conflict in 1962, this conflict increased military cooperation of Britain and the United States with India. China who already had fears that western power can try to undermine its security detonated its first nuclear device in 1964. But this nuclear test from the Chinese side put Indian security under threat and provided China with a strategic advantage over India. However, even then Indian leadership was willing to solve the matter without acquiring nuclear capability. Nonetheless, due to these regional developments, India conducted a nuclear test in 1974 but maintained that this nuclear test was for peaceful purposes. They reasserted that they are willing to sign NPT but it is a discriminatory regime. Because it has legalized the nuclear program of some major states while preventing others from acquiring nuclear capability. Therefore it will jeopardize Indian security in the region.[20] India was not in a hurry to demonstrate nuclear superiority in South Asia. Thus it took almost 24 years to overtly establish itself a nuclear weapon state when it tested five nuclear devices from 11-13 May 1998. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee stated at that time, "If our previous proposal against the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons gets a positive response from the International community then maybe we would not reach the point of conducting a nuclear test. Even now we are a responsible nuclear weapon state, without having aggressive intent against any state. Our Nuclear program is totally

15 I. Traynor, "Barack Obama Launches doctrine for nuclear free world," 05 April 2009. [Online]. Available: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2009/apr/05/nuclear-weapons-barack-obama.

16 Kennedy, A. B., op cit, 2011

17 Z. B. Iram Khalid, op cit, 2015

18 D. M. S. u. R. Muhammad Shafiq ur Rehman, op cit, 2017

19Kennedy, A. B., op cit, 2011

20 Ibid

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for the purpose of self-defense".[21]

The spokesperson of the government also made similar kinds of remarks in which he stated that India is subjected to different threats in the region. We have developed these nuclear weapons not to threaten any other state and it will not have any appalling effect on regional security[22]

This normative thinking also existed among Indian strategic experts. Different military strategists presented their views against the nuclear attack. Sunderji a retired army general and an important military strategist, he was an architect of Indian military policies from the early 1980s until 2002 and it is called Sunderji doctrine. Khalid said India will not consider using nuclear weapons preemptively. According to him, the policy of no first use should be adopted even in the case of nuclear superiority, it will show that Indian is a responsible, mature nuclear-weapon state. Sunderji was interested to build a less ambiguous situation in the subcontinent.[23]
In which both India and Pakistan will not worry about each other's intentions about having a first nuclear strike.[24] When both states will not face the threat of preemptive strike overall peace will prevail in the region. The utility of nuclear weapons will only be for deterrence purposes.

Hence generally there was consensus in Indian civil and military leadership that nuclear weapons will only be used for defensive purposes as a deterrent force. This normative thinking also replicates the Indian Initial draft nuclear doctrine. When the Initial draft of the Indian nuclear doctrine was presented it has three basic principles. These principles are no first use, minimum credible nuclear deterrence, and Massive retaliation but this retaliation will only happen if it is attacked by weapons of mass destruction.[25]
While minimum credible deterrence means that India will maintain a limited stockpile of nuclear weapons which will be sufficient for its national security. Finally in 2003 India officially establish its nuclear posture by declaring its nuclear doctrine. The policy of not using nuclear weapons preemptively and credible minimum deterrence was reaffirmed[26]
It clearly validates the peaceful intent in its nuclear policy which does not show any kind of explicit or tacit aggression. Even though in December 2001 a group of terrorists attacked the Indian Parliament. India accused Pakistan of supporting these terrorists and mobilized a huge number of troops along the Pakistani border. There was a military standoff between two states and forces of both countries were eyeballed to eyeball along LOC in the disputed Kashmir region and on the International border[27] but this does not affect Indian Nuclear use behavior. They were not in favor of using nuclear weapons as a coercive force.

5 Evolution of normative behavior in Pakistan's strategic culture

Pakistan, only the second nuclear-weapon state in South Asia, also have very solid reasons for developing its nuclear weapon program. Since independence Pakistan allied itself with the United States because of the existential threat it faced from India. But in the 1965 war, Pakistan was accused that it was not supported enough by the United States while the Soviet Union was in full support of India. In 1971during the Indo-Pak war, India played an important role in its disintegration by supporting rebels in the eastern part and there were again no concrete steps by its allies like the United States to stop the disintegration of Pakistan. Hence at that point, Pakistan was facing two problems. First, it was facing a major threat to its sovereignty by India because of the Indian nuclear test of 1974, and on its western border Soviet Union was not very far because it had full control of central Asian states. Therefore, to protect its sovereignty Pakistan had no other option but to go nuclear. Pakistan established its nuclear program during the 1970s but gradually it made progress on it but even in this developing period Pakistan was ready to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and Non-Proliferation Treaty provided that India will also do the same[28]

On 28 May 1998, Pakistan also detonated its first nuclear device. This test was conducted in reaction to the Indian nuclear

21 Ibid

22 Statement to Parliament on Nuclear Tests in Pokhran," August 2018. [Online]. Available: https://www.vifindia.org/sites/default/files/national-security-vol-1-issue-1-document-statement-to-parliament.pdf.

23 H. U. K. a. I. Khalid, "Indian Cold Start Doctrine: Pakistan's Policy Response," *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan,* pp. 320-324, 2018

24 M. V. R. Kumar Sundaram, "India and the Policy of No First Use of Nuclear Weapons," *Journal for peace and nuclear disarmament,* pp. 153-155, 2018

25 T. D. a. G. Perkovich, "INDIA'S NUCLEAR OPTIONS AND ESCALATION DOIMNANCE," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace,* pp. 6-9, 2016

26M. S. &. T. Paul, "Nuclear doctrines and stable strategic relationships: The case of south Asia," *International Affairs,* pp. 6-9, 2016

27 S. Ahmed, "Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Program: Turning Points and Nuclear Choices," *International Security*, pp. 179-192, 1998.

28 J. F. BURNS, "NUCLEAR ANXIETY: THE OVERVIEW; PAKISTAN, ANSWERING INDIA, CARRIES OUT NUCLEAR TESTS; CLINTON'S APPEAL REJECTED," 29 May 1998. [Online]. Available: https://www.nytimes.com/1998/05/29/world/nuclear-anxiety-overview-pakistan-answering-india-carries-nuclear-tests-clinton.html.

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tests earlier in that month[29]. Pakistan's nuclear policy or nuclear thinking can be divided into three broad categories. First, it was before the 1998 policy in which it has a covert nuclear program but at some points, it used it against potential adversary India as a deterrence tool. The second was the period of credible minimum deterrence after the nuclear test of 1998 and the third was when it transformed credible minimum deterrence to Full-spectrum deterrence and the age of tactical nuclear weapons.

The resolution to go for nuclear weapons was based on the fact that there was a huge conventional military disparity between India and Pakistan. Still, Pakistan thought about signing the Non-Proliferation Treaty but refrained because it will give a huge strategic advantage to the Indian side because it already tested its nuclear device. Thus Pakistan opted to go for a nuclear weapon program and used it as a deterrence tool. It used it as deterrence even when it did not overtly establish itself as nuclear power.[30]

For Example, India conducted Brass Tacks military exercise in 1986-87 along the Pakistani border. This was the largest military exercise by Indian forces throughout history. Pakistan feared that India might attack Pakistan. At that time Dr. Abdul Qadir Khan, a famous Pakistani nuclear scientist, had given an interview in which he stated that we have nuclear capabilities and we can use them against any kind of aggression. The message was loud and clear from the Pakistani side that now nuclear weapons will covertly play the role of deterrence in South Asian Theater.[31] this was the overall nuclear use strategy of Pakistan before 1998 though they did not officially reveal it that we will threaten a nuclear deterrence when there will be a threat to its survival.

Even after conducting its nuclear test Pakistan constraints to show any kind of aggression. After the test, in his speech, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif said, "Indian nuclear test has put regional security under threat and there were no concrete steps from the international community against India. These tests were necessary for regional stability and balance of power"[32]. The same kind of stance was again maintained by PM Nawaz Sharif at United Nations General Assembly in September 1998[33]. After 1998 Pakistan adopted the policy of credible minimum deterrence. It has promised to maintain a minimum nuclear stockpile to deter any kind of aggression from Indian. Keeping in view the huge military conventional disparity between India and Pakistan and the threat to Pakistan's national security from the Indian side it was a very wise decision. Because these weapons will provide deterrence when the sovereignty of Pakistan will be at stake.[34] The core idea of nuclear use thinking revolved around Credible Minimum deterrence.it is basically a defensive policy for deterring an adversary from taking any aggressive action. The minimum nuclear force will be maintained that will be enough to show Pakistan's strength to strike back[35]. it clearly demonstrates the mindset of Pakistan's policymakers that their immediate goal is survival for which they have developed nuclear weapons and they are very satisfied to use it only as a weapon of deterrence.

6 Recent Changes in nuclear use strategies of India and Pakistan

It was overall assumed that the inception of nuclear weapons in South Asian Theater will create stability in the region. Peace will prevail and both countries will proceed towards improving their economic condition. As former Indian Army chief and most important military strategist K. Sunderji said that nuclear deterrence will provide peace and stability between India and Pakistan and both states will have no other option but to cooperate with each other regarding different issues[36]. While nuclear deterrence provided a sort of stability in the region but no concrete efforts were made to solve major issues between two hostile neighbors. The disputed region of Kashmir is a bone of contention, but cross-border terrorism, violation of ceasefire on the line of control and along the international border are also adding to the already present problems.

The first conflict between nuclear-armed neighbors occurred less than one year after both countries conducted their nuclear

29 Z. Khan, "PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTING MAY 1998:EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL PRESSURES," *Islamabad Policy Research Institute*, pp. 37-40, 2012.

30M. Tkacik, "Pakistan's Nuclear weapon program and implication for US national Security," *SFA Scholar Works*, pp. 2-5, 2010.

31 Pakistani government statement on nuclear tests," 28 May 1998. [Online]. Available: http://www.atomicarchive.com/Docs/Deterrence/PakistanStatement.shtml.

32 "PAKISTAN, ACTING IN SELF-DEFENCE, ESTABLISHED NUCLEAR DETERRENCE; PRIME MINISTER OF PAKISTAN TELLS ASSEMBLY DURING GENERAL DEBATE," 23 September 1998. [Online]. Available: https://www.un.org/press/en/1998/19980923.ga9450.r1.html.

33 A. C. (. K. Iqbal*, "India and Pakistan's Nuclear Doctrines and Posture: A Comparative Analysis," 09 September 2016. [Online]. Available: http://www.criterion-quarterly.com/india-and-pakistans-nuclear-doctrines-and-posture-a-comparative-analysis/.

34 Avinash asked: What is the difference between 'credible minimum deterrence', 'strategic deterrence' and 'full spectrum deterrence'?," 30 November 2018. [Online]. Available: https://idsa.in/askanexpert/credible-minimum-deterrence-strategic-deterrence-full-spectrum-deterrence.

35 M. Krepon, "The Stability-Instability Paradox, Misperception, and Escalation Control in South Asia," *Asia Dialogue*, pp. 3-5, 2003.

36 P. R. Lavoy, Asymmetric Warfare In South Asia The Causes and Consequences of the Kargil Conflict, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

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explosions of May 1998. In 1999, there was an intrusion from the Pakistani side along the line of control in India occupied Kashmir in the Kargil region. Pakistan establish that intruders are local fighters while India claimed that these are regular troops. Nonetheless, it started a small-scale war between Indian and Pakistan. With the intervention of the international community, a ceasefire was established without loss of land for any side but it clearly found that nuclear deterrence alone cannot provide stability in the region.[37] . Kargil conflict also provided India with an encouragement that it can fight a limited war with Pakistan even under the nuclear shadow. Indian leadership of the view that Pakistan is using nuclear weapons as a deterrence force while exploiting the situation in Indian occupied Kashmir at the sub-conventional level by supporting separatist groups. Therefore they are always interested in punishing Pakistan for what they call support of terrorism in Indian occupied Kashmir.

To fulfill its plans, India adopted the cold start doctrine. According to this doctrine, it will expand its military capabilities and will launch a quick operation to penetrate almost fifty KM inside Pakistani territory in possible minimum time. After this India will use this territory to bring Pakistan to negotiating table on its own terms. In this cold start doctrine, India adopted the idea of stability-Instability paradox which was very much famous during cold war times. According to this idea, a small-scale conflict is possible between two states having nuclear weapons despite the fact that nuclear deterrence is providing strategic stability between them. In the same way, India will fight a limited war against Pakistan to capture some territory in a quick session of time under the cold start doctrine. The threshold of this war will not reach a point where it could invite a nuclear response from Pakistan.[38] But the problem is that Pakistan did not have strategic depth. Its important cities and lines of communication are very near to the Indian border. Any threat to them by the strong conventional military force of India is a direct danger to the existence of Pakistan.[39] Therefore Pakistan decided not to compromise its sovereignty at any cost and developed low-yield tactical nuclear weapons. These tactical nuclear weapons are short in range and low in intensity. Pakistan categorically said that it can use these weapons if India embarks on its plan to operationalize the cold start doctrine. Pakistan transformed its nuclear posture from credible minimum deterrence to what its strategist called full-spectrum deterrence.

These tactical weapons were developed to deter the enemy from any aggressive actions against Pakistan. A Lt Gen (retd), Khalid Ahmed Kidwai who was the former head of strategic plan division called them “weapons for peace”[40] . It means that even after the inception of the cold start doctrine these weapons will provide strategic stability in the region. Under CSD India is preparing to fight the limited war with Pakistan, which in the end can produce drastic consequences.

After the presence of tactical nuclear weapons, if India materializes its cold start doctrine, Pakistan will retaliate with these tactical nuclear weapons and it was clearly written in Indian nuclear doctrine that if their people or forces are attacked anywhere with nuclear weapons, without mentioning the intensity of the attack, they will materialize the concept of massive retaliation. Massive retaliation means that they will attack a civilian target in a hostile country with nuclear weapons.[41]

This massive retaliation can start a full fledge nuclear war between two states which will be destructive for not only these two states but also for the whole region. India was stuck in a kind of dilemma because it had invested money and resources to fight a limited war with Pakistan. Because it claims that Pakistan is deteriorating situation at the sub-conventional level in Kashmir. But if it operationalizes its Cold Start Doctrine Deterrence is provided by tactical nuclear weapons. Because using massive retaliation against Pakistani use of very low yield missile is not a rational option because of its destructive nature.

Bharatiya Junta Party did not want to be deterred by the threat of tactical nuclear weapons. Thus when 2014 came into power it starts considering other options and an explicit debate started to change the No First use Policy. Historically No first Use policy was accepted by all sections of the government. But slowly and gradually this culture transformed and a new idea started to make its way in political debates, as former defense minister Manohar Parrikar stated that we should have ambiguity in our nuclear doctrine. According to him, we can give assurance to the world that as a responsible nuclear weapon state we know when we can use these weapons and when should refrain from such actions.[42] A similar kind of statement was given by Lt. Gen. B.S. Nagal (ret.), a former strategic forces commander, in an article. Gen Nagal also emphasized on ambiguity in nuclear posture. According to him, India should explicitly adopt a first use policy so that its leadership will be

37 D. A. Sultan, "South Asian Stability-Instability Paradox:Another Perspective," *Islamabad Policy Research Institue*, pp. 33-35, 2014.

38 S. F. &. M. A. Asia Karim, "Nuclear Issues, Escalation Control and Stability-Instability Paradox: Case Study of South Asia," *Journal of Security and Strategic Analysis* , pp. 120-121, 2017.

39 "Missile technology: Pakistan tests nuclear-capable Hatf IX," 30 May 2012. [Online]. Available: https://tribune.com.pk/story/386076/missile-technology-pakistan-tests-nuclear-capable-hatf-ix/.

40 R. W. French, "Pakistan's Tactical Nuclear Weapons: Implications for Strategic Stability in South Asia," *A Journal of National Security Studies*, pp. 11-15, 2015.

41 K. S. &. M. V. Ramana, "India and the Policy of No First Use of Nuclear Weapons," *Journal for peace and nuclear disarmament*, pp. 156-160, 2018

42L. G. B. N. (retd), "Checks and Balances," [Online]. Available: http://forceindia.net/guest-column/guest-column-b-s-nagal/checks-and-balances/.

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clear about taking any decisive action. The first use policy will stop an adversary from taking any aggressive actions. Overall it will serve the best national interest.[43] This debate instigate India towards counterforce strikes against Pakistan. These counterforce strikes will be conducted to eliminate all of Pakistan's strategic nuclear weapons. Currently, Pakistan does not possess a very huge stockpile of nuclear weapons. By disarming Pakistan, India will have a clear-cut strategic dominance over Pakistan and its military strategies to coerce Pakistan on its wrong deeds will not be deterred by the nuclear force. As Shivshankar Menon, former Indian national security advisor stated that these counterforce strikes should be preemptive. India should not wait for Pakistan to use tactical nuclear missiles or other strategic weapons.[44]

This is not just a theoretical debate India is working hard to improve its missile defense system. India has a very sophisticated indigenously built missile defense program. It has basically two types one is named Prithvi Air Defense (PAD) and can engage a target at a very high altitude. The second is called Advanced Air Defense (AAD) it was used to engage targets at low altitudes[45]. . With these indigenous-built Ballistic Missile defense systems, India is concluded a deal worth $5 billion to purchase a highly advanced s400 missile defense system from Russia.[46] This missile defense system will provide a negative sense of security and will excite it to have a preemptive strike on Pakistan's nuclear force. If Pakistan can somehow manage to strike back its nuclear force will be neutralized by this missile defense system. Overall it will evaporate nuclear deterrence in South Asia and India may find it more attractive in a counterforce strike against Pakistan[47]. This counterforce option was supported by the Ballistic missile defense system will have very severe effects on regional stability. First of all, it will produce an unending arms race in South Asia because both states will try to keep dominance in their nuclear force. Pakistan might consider other options to come out of this counterforce dilemma. Although so far it does not explicitly announce a clear-cut policy against the Indian counterforce strategy but it has very limited options. Pakistan can put its nuclear devices in assembled form i.e. Joined with delivery vehicles. Pakistan may shift towards declarative command and control system in which it may give authority to local commanders to use the nuclear options if necessary[48]. Last but not least Pakistan can use its nuclear weapons preemptively before it was attacked by India. The rationale behind this is that Pakistan considers it as a matter of survival so it might use its last option preemptively if it is faced with some serious threat of counterforce strike[49].

As Thomas c Schelling in his book "the strategy of conflict "wrote that the deterrence will remain credible until the adversary is sure that refraining from preemptive strikes will give them more benefit. If a country is threatened to disarm by the first strike it will consider its own option of the first strike rather than losing all its strategic weapons[50].

These discussions about counterforce strikes, full-spectrum deterrence, etc. are changing the nuclear attitude in both India and Pakistan. At the start of 2019, a crisis emerged in which both nuclear-armed neighbors were on brink of yet another conflict. It started when on 14 February 2019 a convoy of Indian paramilitary forces met with a suicide attack. At least 40 soldiers died and it was the worst attack in terms of causalities in the last 30 years. India accused Pakistan of supporting these terrorists and it provided India with an incentive to punish Pakistan. They have adopted a different path this time and on 26 February 2019 Indian fighter jets intruded in Pakistan and hit targets in Balakot city. Though India claimed that they have killed many terrorists there and destroyed a terrorist camp but it was later established that victims of this target were only a few palm trees. On the very next day, jets of the Pakistan Air Force crossed the line of control and hit a target inside Indian occupied Kashmir. During the course of a dog fight, India lost one Mig-31 fighter plane and its pilot was captured by Pakistan. It created a very impassioned situation between both countries. Pakistan closed its air space and it seems that now the war is inevitable but the decision by Pakistan. Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan announced to release Indian Pilot unconditionally paved the way towards de-escalation. Later it was confirmed that India was planning to hit the target with a missile inside Pakistan and Pakistan promised to respond with force if such an attack happened[51]. The situation deteriorated again when on 05 August 2019 India changed the special status of occupied Kashmir and imposed a curfew in the valley that is continued for more than two months. Pakistan reacted to this move because it claimed that Kashmir is a disputed region

43C. C. a. V. Narang, "India's Counterforce Temptations Strategic Dilemmas, Doctrine, and Capabilities," *International Security*, pp. 7-12, Winter 2018-19.

44Z. Khan, "India's Ballistic Missile Defense: Implications for South Asian Deterrence Stability," *THE WASHINGTON QUARTERLY*, pp. 188-190, 2017.

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46 M. Khan, "Impact of Ballistic Missile Defence System on Strategic Stability in South Asia," *Journal of Stratgic Affairs*, pp. 93-96, 2018.

47 Ibid

48 C. C. a. V. Narang, op cit,2018

49 T. c. Schelling, The Strategy of conflict, Cambridge: Harvard, 1960.

50 "India-Pakistan tensions: All the latest updates," 10 March 2019. [Online]. Available: https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/02/india-pakistan-tensions-latest-updates-190227063414443.html.

51 Ibid

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between both sides and any further step about Kashmir should be taken with the consent of both parties. But India paid little attention to Pakistan's position instead they have threatened to attack Pakistani administrated Kashmir. As the situation deteriorated violation of ceasefire along the line of control became a common occurrence. Indian lockdown a Kashmir produces a severe humanitarian crisis in the valley. As Pakistan reaffirmed to help Kashmiris in this bad situation.[52] The Chance of conflict which can turn nuclear is maximum. It can produce a horrifying result not only for South Asia but for the whole world. As Pakistan's prime minister during his speech at UN General Assembly stated that

"If a conventional war starts, anything could happen. Supposing a country seven times smaller than its neighbor is faced with a choice: either you surrender or you fight for your freedom till death. We will fight and when a nuclear-armed country fights to the end it will have consequences far beyond the borders, it will have consequences for the world.[53]

7 Conclusions

Since the sub-continent has been divided, Both Indian and Pakistan always remained at loggerheads with Each other. The irony is that the issues on which they were fighting since their independence are still present, In fact, some of them are now more complicated. It created a never-ending arms race in South Asia that has no end in sight. Both countries are developing a huge stockpile of conventional as well as nuclear weapons

Normative behavior about the usage of nuclear weapons is basically a western concept emerged during the cold war. Although it was followed by South Asian's to some extent in recent time's people in the Subcontinent start considering nuclear weapons more as warfighting tools. This changing mindset about the usage of nuclear weapons can be catastrophic for regional peace. Any crisis like the sub-continent had faced in Feb-March 2019, can easily transform into a full-scale war between India and Pakistan. With the evaporation of the nuclear norms against the usage of nuclear weapons, any conflict between both states can easily turn nuclear. So it is the responsibility of both states to solve their basic issues that always remained a bone of contention, with peaceful means. The international community should also play its part to solve problems between India and Pakistan. Because if they continued, any crisis in South Asia could end in disaster.

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