

# Seminar Report

## **Strategic Stability in South Asia: Is India a Responsible Nuclear State?**

*June 13, 2019*



**Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad**



**Seminar**

**Report**

***Strategic Stability in South Asia: Is India a  
Responsible Nuclear State?***

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**Institute of Strategic Studies, Islamabad (ISSI)**

# **The Institute of Strategic Studies**

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In addition to publishing a quarterly journal and a monograph series, the ISSI organises talks, workshops, seminars and conferences on strategic and allied disciplines and issues.

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## DETAILED PROGRAMME OF THE SEMINAR

### INAUGURAL SESSION

0945 hrs	Registration
1000 hrs	Recitation from Holy Quran
1005 hrs	Welcome Remarks - <b>Ambassador Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry</b> , <i>Director General, ISSI</i>
1015 hrs	Keynote Speaker - <b>Lt. Gen. Khalid Ahmad Kidwai</b> , <i>Former DG, SPD</i>
1035 hrs	Break - Tea/Coffee

### WORKING SESSION:

#### RESPONSIBLE NUCLEAR BEHAVIOR: PULWAMA CRISIS

<b>Session Chair:</b>	<b>Ambassador Zamir Akram</b>
1100 hrs	<b>Dr. Rizwana Abbasi</b> , <i>Bahria University</i> Parameters of Responsible Nuclear Behaviour
1115 hrs	<b>Dr. Zafar Khan</b> , <i>NDU</i> General Trends in Responsible Nuclear Behaviour
1130 hrs	<b>Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal</b> , <i>QAU</i> India's Nuclear Behaviour in Pulwama Crisis
1145 hrs	<b>Dr. Mansoor Ahmed</b> , <i>CISS</i> Pakistan's Nuclear Behaviour in Pulwama Crisis
1200 hrs	<b>Q &amp; A</b>
1245 hrs	Remarks by Session Chair
1255 hrs	Vote of Thanks - <b>Ambassador Khalid Mahmood</b> , <i>Chairman BoG, ISSI</i>
1300 hrs	Lunch





## Inaugural Session







## WELCOME REMARKS

**Ambassador Aizaz Ahmed Chaudhry**  
*Director General, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad*

Our esteemed Keynote Speaker, Gen. Khalid Ahmad Kidwai, Excellencies, Distinguished Panellists, Ladies and Gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to the Institute of Strategic Studies.



General Kidwai has had the privilege to serve this nation with great distinction. He remained at the helm of Strategic Plans Division in its formative, and most critical, years. It is a matter of great pride for the entire Pakistani nation that our nuclear capability has proved to be an effective deterrence against aggressions from our east. In making our deterrent robust, General Kidwai has played an important role. We are glad that he has accepted to give a key note address in this seminar.

We are also grateful for the presence of Ambassador Zamir Akram, who has served our country in numerous positions, including as our Ambassador to the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament and as Permanent Representative to the United Nations in Geneva. Thank you Zamir for agreeing to chair this session.

Our speakers in today's seminar are mostly from the academic world. On behalf the Institute, I welcome Dr. Rizwana Abbasi, Dr. Zafar Khan, Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal, and Dr. Mansoor Ahmad.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you are well aware, the world around us is changing rapidly. US now regards China, and Russia, as its competitors, even rivals. US's Indo-Pacific Strategy, which has just been



elaborated by Pentagon, is being perceived largely as a China containment policy. Multilateralism is being marginalized. Unilateralism is on the rise. Anti-globalism, trade wars, xenophobia, and narrow nationalism are challenging the foundations of the world that was erected after the second world war. Walls are going up. Bridges coming down.

In the backdrop of this grim geo-political scene, one serious challenge is the fast deterioration of **international security environment**. The arms control understandings between the US and Russia are collapsing. In just two months, August 2019, INF (Intermediate range Nuclear Forces) would be formally terminated, removing any restrictions on the development of intermediate and short range ballistic missiles with the range of 500 to 5500 km. The New Start agreement, if not renewed in 2021, would remove limits on the US and Russian nuclear stockpiles and their delivery systems. US NPR (Nuclear Posture Review) 2018 has decided to modernize its nuclear infrastructure and capabilities. New arms races are emerging.

Consequently, the overall **concept of strategic stability** has come under deep stress. Last month, I was in China where we interacted with CACDA (China Arms Control and Disarmament Association), and two other think tanks, CIISS and CICIR. I noticed a sense of concern in the experts on the growing disregard by the US for the concept of Strategic Stability. This is alarming. Strategic stability at international and regional levels prevents wars, reduces the risk of nuclear confrontations, and makes our world safer.

Unfortunately, some ambitious states in our world are seriously undermining strategic stability. Take for example **South Asia**. Since 1998, when both India and Pakistan became overtly nuclear, the risk of an all-out war has been averted; however, time and again India has tested the limits of nuclear deterrence. India's ambitious and aggressive nuclear posture is undermining the concept of strategic stability in South Asia. And there are clear pointers to that end:

- i. India is feverishly arming itself, and was declared by Sipri as the 4th largest defense spender in 2018.
- ii. It is adopting aggressive warfighting doctrines like cold start, preemptive counterforce 1st strike, and appears to be shifting from its already vague NFU position.



- iii. Of late, India has embarked upon a dangerous practice of threatening neighboring Pakistan with surgical strikes, like the one it carried out on 26<sup>th</sup> February this year.
- iv. Indo-US nuclear deal has further emboldened India, which now has access to international nuclear market through 2008 NSG waiver, and nuclear agreements with UK France Japan and US.
- v. India and US have signed agreements like LEMOA and COMCASA which further enhance the logistical and communication capabilities of the Indian forces.
- vi. India is also embarking on nuclearization of Indian Ocean by acquiring nuclear powered submarines like INS Chakra from Russia and home built Arihant, with plans to induct six nuclear powered attack submarines (SSN) in the next 15 years which gives it a second-strike capability.
- vii. India is acquiring BMD technologies like missiles to take out incoming missiles at 80 kilometer range, and recently an anti-satellite test that it carried out. India is also acquiring S400 missiles from Russia, with first battery expected by October 2020.
- viii. There are reports that India has kept its nuclear systems inventory in both CF and CV settings.

The above facts clearly indicate that India is pushing ahead with its ambitions, with little or no regard for strategic stability in South Asia. Pakistan, on the other hand, is strictly adhering to credible minimum deterrence and would not like to indulge in any arms race. Pakistan believes that the two contiguous nuclear powers should behave in a responsible manner. For its part, nuclear Pakistan has focused on achieving highest standards of nuclear safety, nuclear security, export controls, and robust command and control. If Pakistan is behaving in a responsible manner pursuing credible minimum deterrence, then why is it that India feels the need to pursue such an ambitious nuclear and conventional program? Is it the desire to become a regional hegemon or a status seeking global power, or simply an irresponsible bravado? Or perhaps all three.



Part of the answer became evident in the **post Pulwama** actions taken by India. While remaining below the nuclear threshold, India is increasingly instigating conventional confrontation with Pakistan. On 26<sup>th</sup> February, Indian aircraft intruded in Pakistani airspace and dropped a payload in an empty plot in Pakistan. On 27<sup>th</sup> February, two Indian planes violated Pakistan airspace, which were downed by Pakistan air force and a pilot captured. What if Pakistan had responded in kind? Did India think of the consequences? In sharp contrast to this false bravado, Pakistan acted maturely, and released the Indian pilot as a peace gesture and to de-escalate the dangerous situation. Further, Indian leadership, particularly Prime Minister Modi flaunted India's nuclear capability against Pakistan.

The larger question is should a nuclear state conduct itself in such an irresponsible manner? In the Nuclear Suppliers Group, India wants the international community to believe that it was a like-minded responsible state. Is what India did post Pulwama the conduct of a responsible nuclear state or an irresponsible nuclear state?

This broader question, Ladies and Gentlemen, is the purpose of this seminar. Today, we want to understand better what is it that motivates Modi's India to behave like an irresponsible nuclear state, with little regard for impact on strategic stability in South Asia. The sad reality, Ladies and Gentlemen, is that strategic stability in South Asia has been held hostage to Indian ambitions of grandeur. This, combined with an unwillingness for any meaningful dialogue with Pakistan to resolve issues between the two countries, especially festering Kashmir dispute, makes South Asia a vulnerable and conflict-prone region for the foreseeable future. With the re-election of Narendra Modi, who pursues an extremist Hindutva ideology, India is likely to continue its irresponsible aggressive posture towards Pakistan. World community should be worried. South Asia is worried. And in fact, India itself should be worried.

Without further ado, I leave this question for the esteemed Keynote speaker, General Kidwai and the learned panellists to debate on.

Thank You.



## KEYNOTE ADDRESS

**General Khalid Ahmed Kidwai (Retd)**  
*Advisor, National Command Authority*

Ambassador Khalid Mahmood Chairman ISSI, Ambassador Aizaz Chaudhry, Director General ISSI, members of the Islamabad Strategic Studies Institute, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to thank you for inviting me to talk on this currently pertinent topic which carries serious implications for not only strategic stability in South Asia, but also has much



wider ramifications for peace and security in the larger Asian region and indeed the world. I shall express my views broadly taking into account two time frames on the Seminar question: Is India a Responsible Nuclear State? First, the immediate time frame of India's irresponsible conduct as a nuclear state during and after the Pulwama stand-off, and second, reflecting back in time over the past decades to trace India's conduct history sheet as it sought to become a nuclear power over the years.

Recklessness, immature and irresponsible conduct of foreign policy by a nuclear power anywhere in the world is a threat to world peace. When combined with aggressive operational deployment of military power, followed by the physical employment of the military instrument against a fully armed nuclear power like Pakistan which has strong and well-balanced conventional forces as well, in order to achieve domestic electoral objectives, the conduct goes way beyond the domain of irresponsibility; I think it falls in the category of insanity. When that happens there are consequences.

Nuclear India's conduct of an air strike in February earlier this year against mainland nuclear Pakistan, driven by delusions of Israeli style air power tactics against Syria, Lebanon, Gaza, but disconnected from the realities of a dominant air supremacy operational and threat environment



in which Israel operates, was poorly planned and executed by the Indian Air Force, almost Quixotic. It was playing with fire at the lower end of the nuclear spectrum and Armageddon at the upper end.

It was critical and timely that Pakistan Air Force's carefully calibrated professional response resulting in the humiliation of the numerically larger IAF brought the Indian politico-military leadership, its turbo-charged media and, more importantly, India's international patrons down to the realities of the earth very quickly. Barring additional chest thumping and seeking refuge in lies and self-deception, quite in line with Chanakya teachings, nuclear India was left with no choice but to climb down and now has to live with the humiliation for an indefinite time; the consequences as I said. Interestingly, one hasn't heard much since then from the usually vocal Indian Army Chief.

It is clear that the strategic and military consequences of an irresponsible political decision for achieving domestic political and electoral advantages supported by poor professional military advice were not thought through or war gamed to their logical conclusion. If they had been, which they ought to have been, not only in the 12 days between Pulwama and Balakot but indeed as a peacetime contingency planning for years earlier, nuclear India, and international actors who gave a blank pass to India, should have concluded that in an active military conflict situation, especially a limited one with nuclear armed Pakistan, while it may be relatively easy to climb the first rung on an escalatory ladder, the second rung would always belong to Pakistan, and that India's choice to further up the ante by moving to the third rung would invariably be dangerously problematic in anticipation of the fourth rung response by Pakistan.

Also, that the escalatory rung climbing could not be so neatly sequenced and choreographed but could very quickly get out of hand and morph into a major war which perhaps nobody wanted but whose outcomes could be disastrous for the region and the globe. This was muddled strategic thinking at its worst. In the process, it challenged the very foundation of strategic stability in South Asia which is premised on the time tested concept of restraint and responsibility ever since the two countries opted to pursue the development of nuclear weapons. The strength of this foundation was put to test by India on 26<sup>th</sup> February but it had to beat a hasty retreat in the face



of a determined Pakistani response on 27<sup>th</sup> February; status quo ante was restored and no new normal was established.

One would like to hope that India would learn appropriate lessons and desist from shaking these foundations again. However, it will be wise for Pakistan not to live by hope given India's irrational, erratic and delusional decision making. Hope is not policy; we need to factor in the reality of an erratic adversary in our national and military plans.

As opposed to India's recklessness and irresponsible behavior, it was Pakistan's restrained and measured response at the politico-military level deliberately avoiding blood and dead bodies and following up with mature statesmanship that saved the day for South Asia and by extension for the world. It is not difficult to imagine the political and military pressures on Pakistan if India, as it intended to, had actually killed 300-400 Pakistanis during its ill-conceived air strike at Balakot, or thereafter, as intelligence reports suggested, continued on a war seeking trajectory and carried out operations which the Indian Prime Minister has most gallantly termed as a possible 'Qatal Ki Raat' on the following night.

I don't think a country possessing nuclear weapons can conduct itself with greater irresponsibility than India did. In an oblique way, one would also like to thank the Indian Spice Missile targeting programmers and the IAF pilots for their timely incompetence that ensured that none of the intended targets at Balakot got hit as indeed the loss of nerves by the Indian leadership and its patrons' to carry on further.

Keeping in view Pakistan's repeatedly declared policy of 'Quid pro Quo Plus' in case of a limited Indian attack, it was surprising that India and its international supporters themselves ended up with surprise on the quality of Pakistan's measured and successful response. As professional planners, the Indians also should have understood that from there on, the rush to a nuclear crisis is but a few steps away and that there would be no choice for India but to step back and look for face saving options involving international players, highlighting yet again the centrality of the core issue of Kashmir, precisely the things that India has sought to avoid for decades.



In my opinion, India, and its backers in this recklessness, grossly misjudged. Retaliating to Pulwama in the manner that it was done was obviously not only an irresponsible and reckless decision in a strategic environment of prevailing strong nuclear capabilities but also poor political and foreign policy, which succeeded in bringing the Kashmir issue as a nuclear flashpoint front and center on the international stage.

However, since the sole objective of the exercise was to use, or perhaps misuse, the armed forces of India to bring about an election victory for the BJP to the exclusion of all other dangerous consequences, then of course it is for India's political system and its other political parties to examine. In that case, serious questions arise as to the real possibility of Pulwama being a false flag operation undertaken by the Indian intelligence agencies at a predictably perfect electoral time and in the process misused the Indian armed forces. This in itself raises questions on the quality, character and professionalism of the Indian military leadership which allowed itself to be misused on the domestic political chessboard and have ended up being heavily politicized and demoralized. If one notes the body language since then of the IAF Chief together with the missing in action act of the Army Chief, it says it all.

Moving further from the immediate operations of February, Prime Minister Modi, while extracting full mileage from the episode during his election campaign, continued to put on public display in his election rallies further irresponsible conduct as the leader of a nuclear power by repeatedly threatening Pakistan with the actual use of nuclear weapons. His use of comical and street terminology like employing the 'mother of all nuclear bombs', 'qatal ki raat', 'fireworks at Diwali', would have been just that - comical – if only his rhetoric didn't confirm that nuclear weapons in India have now indeed landed in the hands of Hindutva extremists, represented in the newly elected Parliament with 40% of the Parliamentarians reportedly having criminal or terrorist cases against them.

The world, and most certainly Pakistan, needs to wake up to the transformed reality that India's nuclear weapons are today controlled by religious fanatics. India's nuclear weapons are no longer safe and have become a real threat to regional and world peace. They have been deployed and used to threaten Pakistan and indirectly world peace in pursuit of winning an election. The conduct unbecoming and crass language coming from the leader of the world's largest



democracy was not only in poor taste, it threw out of the window many elements of India's carefully crafted nuclear strategy.

First, it turned India's pronounced policy of No First Use on its head not that Pakistan has ever viewed with any degree of credibility India's No First Use policy; Mr Modi's pronouncements were certainly not off the cuff. He knew exactly what he was doing and talking in a single-minded focus to stir up an anti-Pakistan, anti-Muslim nationalistic narrative to win elections, which he has duly won. As a consequence, however, India's much trumpeted and choreographed formal Nuclear Strategy lies in tatters upended single handedly within a very short time.

Second, added to the misadventure further is the operational reality that during the crisis, India not only deployed in the Arabian Sea its conventional Naval flotilla including an aircraft carrier, conventional submarine that got detected by the Pakistan Navy, but more importantly, the nuclear submarine Arihant presumably to deter Pakistan from contemplating the use of nuclear weapons.

Arihant, which had earlier claimed running deterrence patrols in a fanfare ceremony presided over by no less than the Prime Minister himself, was certainly carrying ready to go nuclear missiles. Since there were no credible reports of India's First Strike weapons based on land and air being readied, was India considering the use of nuclear weapons from a Second Strike platform even before the First Strike options?

Third, with reference to command and control of nuclear weapons, which institutional forum authorized the deployment of a Second Strike platform carrying nuclear weapons? Was there a secret meeting of India's National Command Authority because none was announced formally as in Pakistan? Or was this too decided in a cavalier fashion between the Prime Minister and his Naval Chief? Or worse still, was the Indian Navy also given the proverbial free hand to do as it pleases, as Prime Minister Modi claimed to have given to his other military commanders. With what sense of political responsibility can a Prime Minister of a nuclear state delegate authority to deploy nuclear platforms and nuclear weapons to military commanders?

Fourth, one wonders further whatever happened to the Cold Start Doctrine which seemed to have taken a back seat somewhere in a cold storage. Looking at the Indian Army's deployment pattern



throughout the crisis, it appears India itself did not place much faith in its much flaunted Cold Start Doctrine as a credible response option.

Obviously, India's strategic thinking cultivated over the years stood considerably confused in a moment of crisis at the altar and primacy of a political party's electoral strategy; it conceded professional space to the whims of a heavy weight Prime Minister. And that ought to be a cause of concern for Pakistan when you are faced with a nuclear adversary whose strategic thinking and actions get muddled up even before the first shot has been fired. This was not only irresponsible conduct but also institutional failure in India.

It is not difficult to conclude from the foregoing Indian strategic and operational conduct, as a case study as it were, that the Indian political leadership under the extremists of the BJP and RSS led in a gung-ho style by the Prime Minister himself falls in the category of very irresponsible and reckless nuclear custodians. And that the Indian military is either too meek, or equally reckless, or equally incompetent, or perhaps a bit of all three, to offer sane professional advice. Mr Modi's infamous claim to order the IAF to take advantage of the clouds to beat Pakistani radars shows the IAF as a professional force in poor light. The scenario is a chilling reflection on the functionality, or more appropriately, dysfunctionality of the Indian Command and Control system and the efficacy of its National Command Authority. It'll be important for Pakistan to take note of the trans-frontier state of affairs in its future politico-military assessments.

Yet another chatter among India's military and strategic community that needs to be addressed is regarding their gravely mistaken conclusion of having called Pakistan's nuclear bluff by undertaking a single air strike on Balakot and that too embarrassingly unsuccessful. The reality is far from this.

Like one swallow does not make a summer, one air strike, conducted most unprofessionally, does not render a robust nuclear deterrence a bluff. Pakistan's nuclear capability operationalized under the well-articulated policy of Full Spectrum Deterrence comprises of a large variety of strategic, operational and tactical nuclear weapons, on land, air and sea, which are designed to comprehensively deter large scale aggression against mainland Pakistan.



As things stand and as amply demonstrated during the February stand-off, Pakistan's nuclear weapons continue to serve the purpose for which they have been developed, on a daily and hourly basis, by putting the fear of God in India's political and military leaders. India's foreign policy and politico-military strategy take into consideration Pakistan's real time nuclear capability when developing contingency plans by making deliberate effort to skirt around the Pakistani nuclear capability and nuclear thresholds. Official India obviously does not take Pakistan's nuclear capability as a bluff. It is precisely the presence of these nuclear weapons that deters, and in this specific case, deterred India from expanding operations beyond a single unsuccessful air strike.

It is the Full Spectrum Deterrence capability of Pakistan that brings the international community rushing into South Asia to prevent a wider holocaust. That India chose not to proceed further to the third rung is a testimony to not only the bloody nose it got at the hands of the PAF, but also the cold calculations that nuclear weapons could come into play sooner rather than later. That, ladies and gentlemen, is nuclear deterrence at work and not nuclear bluff.

Given the foregoing overview of India's conduct as a nuclear weapons state during the Pulwama stand-off, one cannot but conclude that India's conduct as a nuclear state led most recklessly by the Chairman National Command Authority the Prime Minister clearly bordered between irresponsible and insane.

Next, I shall attempt to place Responsible Behavior by a nuclear power in an academic and historical perspective with respect to India by reflecting back in time.

Strategic stability in a crisis prone region as a concept between two Nuclear Weapons State (NWS) encompasses the prevailing political conditions, security circumstances, respective doctrines and force postures. In view of our latest experience with India, I think I would now like to add Responsible Behavior on the part of a NWS as a primary requisite for strategic stability.

But then we must also try and define in more tangible terms as to what is "Responsible" Nuclear Behavior? In my opinion, the criteria for defining a responsible NWS should include some of the following policy approaches:



- a. A responsible NWS does not develop nuclear technology for the purposes of gaining international prestige and recognition, or for a place in the global order. Pakistan does not, India does and its leaders like Nehru and I K Gujral are on record on that. The birth of the Indian nuclear program itself is a product of the country's desire to match the grandeur of superpowers of the world. Homi Bhabha's announcement in 1965 that India could produce a nuclear weapon within 12 months was an attempt to show off India as a technologically advanced State. This prestige seeking obsession continues to drive India's motives even today.
- b. Far from seeking international prestige, a responsible NWS while outlining its Force Development Strategy remains focused on what it considers as a realistic and conservative threat assessment with respect to its legitimate security calculus. Hence the logic of Credible Minimum Deterrence, the emphasis being on Minimum and of course Credible. This professionally logical approach as followed by Pakistan is in contrast to an open ended pursuit of a frenetic and mindless arms build-up by India through the pursuit of every destabilizing technology in sight like Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD), Conventional Prompt Global Strike (CPGS), hypersonic glide vehicles, Anti Satellite capabilities, offensive cyber capabilities, etcetera.
- c. In this respect, Pakistan has been careful and conservative. In Pakistan, strategists have firmly guided the force development needs as per its nuclear strategy and the scientists have followed successfully delivering on the identified goals. On the contrary, in India, the cart has been placed before the horse. The scientists of DRDO and the Indian Atomic Energy Commission have led the force development process without recourse to a professionally developed national nuclear strategy. It is the strategists who have adjusted their weapons needs to the scientists' technical strategy and perhaps whims. This is lop sided, betrays lack of responsibility, professional understanding and undercuts the Indian military from the decision making loop.



India, over the years, has continually justified its open and blatant disregard for responsible behavior whether it is the case of diverting fissile materials for its so-called peaceful nuclear explosion of 1974, or proliferating foreign technology for developing nuclear submarines, ballistic and cruise missiles, or the space programme, or sneaking up the Pakistani border with aggressive intent under the garb of Exercise Brasstacks in 1986-87, or the genocide and gross human rights violations it has unleashed on the hapless Kashmiris on a daily basis. This dismissive behavior towards established norms of a responsible state especially a nuclear state has already led to serious ramifications for regional peace and security.

It will not be out of place to mention that some countries have been complicit in India's disregard for responsible behavior and have encouraged its recklessness by condoning and rewarding a variety of violations of international conventions and norms. The NSG exemption, membership of arms control cartels, brutal repression in Kashmir and the latest green light to attack Pakistan at Balakot are some examples of rewarding irresponsible state conduct.

Responsible nuclear behavior requires a NWS to manage and resolve its political differences vis-à-vis an adversary with maturity and restraint. While this behavior may not seek to arrest one's political ambitions, it surely puts a check on the ways employed in their pursuit. In this context, continuously trying to test Pakistan's nuclear threshold, planning to find space for limited war against a nuclear Pakistan, and now attempting clumsily planned and executed surgical strikes accompanied by aggressive deployment of naval assets is a testament of aggression and irresponsible behavior by India.

And what is one to make of India's stated position of retaliating through massive retaliation in case Pakistan were to hypothetically employ a Tactical Nuclear Weapon on the battlefield even on its own territory, not taking into account the disastrous consequences on India itself of Pakistan's capacity of a counter massive retaliation. Irresponsible, ill considered, immature, perhaps a bit of all three.

For Pakistan, its politico-military leadership and indeed the people of Pakistan, I think it is important to understand and grasp the psychology and frame of mind of the Hindustan of today in order to understand what's going on. Since the advent of the religious extremist BJP/RSS



Government in 2014, amongst many others, I can identify four major drivers of Hindustan's domestic Hindutva policies and by extension its policy towards Pakistan.

One, Hindutva philosophy is an effort to overcome and erase the negative psychological complexes and sense of defeat and humiliation of the Hindu nation of a thousand years of Muslim rule.

Two, in order to do that, Hindutva seeks the restoration of an imagined past glory of Hindu India going back to the Vedas, Chandragupta Maurya and Ashoka of 300 BC, and hence the pathetic claims that one hears every now and then from no less a person than Mr. Modi himself of Hindustan in the past having invented or discovered any numbers of cutting edge technologies much before the modern era.

Three, the ambitious and relentless pursuit of becoming a regional and global power, oblivious of its many vulnerabilities and weaknesses, which drives Hindustan's relationship with international powers particularly Pakistan.

Four, a self-delusional one-way competition with China under the guise of standing up as western bulwark with strategic over-reach now up to the Pacific.

In many ways, while Hindustan's new found back to the roots discovery is quite in line with the current universal trend of the surge of strong nationalistic politics in countries like the US, UK, France, Italy, Israel, even the Middle East, the nationalistic politics especially those like in Modi's India based on a vicious anti-Muslim, anti-Pakistan sentiment together with recourse to misplaced muscular policies carry far reaching consequences for regional peace and security including irresponsible conduct as nuclear state.

The Indian leadership now proudly acknowledges that they were active lieutenants in the Indian enterprise to foment discord in East Pakistan leading to Pakistan's breakup, not that it was a state secret earlier. Espousal of such an all pervasive strategic culture and mindset generates national irrationality, and that in a nuclear armed country is dangerous.

Indian strategists would be well advised to get real and take into account the huge gap and imbalance that exists between their national ambition and national capacity failing which they



will continue to falter and live dangerously putting the stability of the region in repeated jeopardy. With national ambition and psyche out of step with national capacity India will continue to suffer the indignities of Doklam, Balakot and Rajauri.

A stable environment requires a NWS to take steps at all tiers, including political and military, to avoid confrontation. However, Indian strategic behavior persistently seeks predominance in the region by relying heavily on hard-power and hybrid tactics, particularly at the sub-conventional level. Please recall that the Prime Minister of India took pride in announcing from the ramparts of the Red Fort in Delhi that India would pursue a Baluchistan policy in the sub-conventional sense.

Pakistani conduct as a responsible nuclear power stands out in contrast. As a responsible nuclear power, Pakistan does not believe in brandishing its nuclear arsenal or coercing its neighbors. Also, Pakistan continues to abide by all the tenets of the definition of a responsible NWS. Pakistan's policy is not driven by any delusions of international glory but is defined by restraint and responsibility in order to ensure national security.

Nuclear parity and arms race has never been Pakistan's agenda – we seek qualitative balancing.

The fragile strategic stability in South Asia demands that India and Pakistan, two eyeball to eyeball nuclear powers, move beyond the notions of crisis management and pursue conflict resolution, including the issue of Jammu & Kashmir, with sincerity of purpose. Responsibility on Pakistan's part is reflected in its continued calls to engage India in conflict resolution mechanisms and numerous proposals that seek to attain durable peace through dialogue.

The Indian narrative citing limited strikes against Pakistan as the “new normal” holds no ground. As demonstrated Pakistan is prepared to counter any such aggression in the future as well as it continues to reserve the right of self-defense like any other responsible and sovereign State.

The recent crisis signaled that India's attempts to exploit conventional advantages in a nuclear environment undermine deterrence stability. Yet, India remains unfazed and continues to explore space for limited war or non-contact warfare with Pakistan. While it failed to achieve any military objectives, recent Indian aggression only put regional peace and stability in jeopardy as



also lowered the professional reputation of its military internationally – and simultaneously risked a nuclear catastrophe.

Ladies and gentlemen, in conclusion I would like to come back to the question posed in today's Seminar: Is India a responsible nuclear state? Having examined the political and strategic behavior of a nuclear India put on display during and after the Pulwama crisis, together with the long history of decades of devious and arrogant conduct as a state, India has risked strategic stability in South Asia and put in serious jeopardy global peace through its irresponsible and ill-considered conduct repeatedly.

While there may be many more conclusions to be drawn, I would like to focus on four of these.

One, that India conclusively, is not a responsible nuclear state, not today and has not been at any time in its history. There is no doubt that some in the international community bear responsibility for giving encouragement and solace at every stage to India in the pursuit of its irrational ambitions and irresponsible conduct as a nuclear state. Far from exercising caution, the world has brought India into the international mainstream of nuclear states by providing one exception after another to India in violation of their own designed conventions some of them prompted, ironically, by India's irresponsible behavior.

As is the norm in the real world of statecraft, here too *realpolitik* is at play in that the international players are willing to look the other way and ignore India's transgressions because of their obsession with trying to build up India as a counter weight to China and India's attraction as an investment hub for weapons sales and for international funds. That obviously trumps everything else and that is the reality that Pakistan has to live with, and therefore take measures so as to look out for itself.

Two, far more dangerous than that, Hindustan's nuclear weapons have now well and truly fallen into the hands of religious extremists and Hindu fanatics, whose shallow knowledge base makes them seriously believe that they possess the mother of all nuclear bombs, whatever that means, that these do not need to be saved for Diwali fireworks, that Pakistani radars can be blinded in cloudy weather, that India can attack a nuclear power like Pakistan under the assumption that its nuclear capability is a bluff, that there is space for conventional limited war despite the presence



of nuclear weapons in South Asia, that therefore a new normal can be imposed on Pakistan, that India can block Pakistan's rivers and render the country dry, that India is now so powerful that it can isolate Pakistan diplomatically, etc, etc. This, ladies and gentlemen, is the delusional mindset of Hindustan's extremist and religiously fanatic nuclear custodians.

Three, Pakistan, at the national, diplomatic and military levels, now needs to recognize the stark reality that with the advent of a resurgent Hindutva India, now more Hindustan than India, the nature, mindset and approaches of our adversary have changed entirely. With the elections of 2019, India has undergone a seismic change internally and that change will exert a more assertive, aggressive and arrogant policy towards Pakistan. We therefore must come up with rapid adjustments in our national, diplomatic and military calculus to the new challenges.

As the old military saying goes, do not prepare to fight the last war. Ladies and gentlemen, the last war is gone, long gone. It was buried under the combined weight of Pakistan's conventional and strong nuclear deterrence. The Indian elections of 2014 were only the harbinger of things to come; the elections of 2019 will now define a fundamentally new aggressive India which will not be shy of deploying its economic, diplomatic and military muscle including nuclear weapons, howsoever irresponsible one may label that.

A new war, including what is now belatedly being recognized as Hybrid and fifth generation is already upon us and we need to stare it in the face boldly and be ready to counter it. Pakistani strategists and planners need to rapidly come out of their comfort zones. The new war focuses on Destabilization, Exhaustion and Slow Corrosion, I'll repeat, the new war focuses on Destabilization, Exhaustion and Slow Corrosion. It is already upon us. If one cares to notice, one can discern it playing out in our national and provincial psycho-social fabric, in our politics, in our vulnerable western border areas, in our streets and cities, in our institutions of higher learning, in our print and electronic media, in fact it is in the minds and on the palms of each one of us as we play around with our mobile phones in search of Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter and fake news. Pakistan and Pakistanis need to wake up to the phenomenon of hybrid warfare, recognize the games being played by our adversaries, and be prepared to not only confront it but defeat it comprehensively.



While Pakistan cannot change geography and the neighborhood, it must continue to adopt and display rational, responsible and mature state conduct when dealing with a belligerent and irresponsible Hindustan. Pakistan must remain steadfast in its firm and restrained responses as displayed with maturity during the Pulwama crisis, confident in its capabilities and capacity to deter and if need be to thwart any Indian machinations while pursuing the diplomatic path of managing and resolving disputes peacefully.

And finally, ladies and gentlemen, the fourth conclusion is that the gloves are off, the mask is off, and the veneer of secularism is dead. India in 2019 is now well and truly Hindustan, of the Hindus, by the Hindus and for the Hindus. This has been validated by the landslide victory of the BJP/RSS and of the Hindutva philosophy. The transformation from India to Hindustan, over a period of 72 years, now carries the duly stamped ownership of the vast multitudes of the Hindu population which has voted for the BJP/RSS heavily – twice in five years.

Let us then recall and rejoice in the great wisdom, foresight and vision of Pakistan's founding fathers led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah who nearly eighty years ago formally declared in March 1940 that there were two nations in Hindustan: Mussalmans and the Hindus. He therefore demanded the creation of the separate homeland of Pakistan for the Mussalmans of India and won it in 1947. Ladies and gentlemen, the Indian Elections of 2019 are a landslide for Jinnah's Two-Nation Theory all over again.

## **Working Session**

# **Responsible Nuclear Behavior: Pulwama Crisis**



The session was chaired by **Ambassador Zamir Akram**.

Speakers in the session included: **Dr. Rizwana Abbasi**, Bahria University; **Dr. Zafar Khan**, NDU; **Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal**, QAU and **Dr. Mansoor Ahmed**, CISS.





## PRESENTATION

### Parameters of Responsible Nuclear Behavior

**Dr. Rizwana Abbasi**

*Associate Professor, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Bahria University, Islamabad*

It is well-known that international system is overwhelmingly archaic in nature, yet the global politics is being run through set of rules, norms and principles that create a sense of responsibility within the states. At the international level, states try to exhibit reasonable behavior and adhere to widely accepted norms in pursuit of their interests.



At the domestic level, states demonstrates the level of responsibility through governments, development, legislation and education. Similarly, nuclear behavior and responsibility is a characteristics of a state that fulfil norms and exhibit legitimate nuclear behavior. Norms and responsibilities of nuclear responsibility are not fully enshrined in international law, but yet are subjectively determined nuclear responsibility.

These norms and practices are somehow formalized through international institutions and nuclear regimes. For this purpose, states are required to fulfil domestic and foreign obligations and adhere to normative practice. Within this back drop, my argument is that states are not homogenous entities in terms of their hierarchy, structures, history, culture and ideologies. Thus, it is necessary that we first understand a state's broader political behavior in order to determine its nuclear behavior.

I will now briefly talk about state's broader political behavior which is essential to understand whose responsibilities are in question, and for what they are responsible. Can we find universal patterns of activity or universal rulers that how states behave? In social sciences, theories are considered as scientific tools to understands state's behavior. In social sciences we can't run



experiments since we are dealing with subjectivity and our relationship with social and political entities. Thus, we use historical data to test these theories in order to evaluate state's behavior.

A basic question is how do we examine states behavior? Based on their domestic stability, wealth and power projection capabilities, we categorize states into three different groups such as super powers, middle powers and small powers. We adopt several level of analysis through which we evaluate states behavior. First level is the system level analysis under which we evaluate state behavior not domestically, but internationally. For some theorists, change in the international system cause a change in behavior of state domestically. While for other scholars, internal behavior of the state impacts its global behavior. In both the cases, realism guides us to understand that states seek power to increase their own power at the expense of their adversaries. Power seeking states are greedy, aggressors and revisionist. But it is important to note that practically, they don't want war.

States behave well when they believe that they cannot win war and impose their will by force. A real hegemonic power is the one who has more economic and military power than other states and can produce economic stability which is seen as collective public good in the international system and all the surrounding states benefit, regardless of the fact whether they contribute in it or not. Liberals also add value in this discussion. To promote cooperation over rivalry, they generalize the role of international institutions that can influence the behavior of states by spreading values of rules based behavior. The liberal foundation is grounded in Kant's concept of a perpetual peace who laid out three particular articles for peace. One, domestic constitution should safeguard the interests of people, second is the union of alliances with liberal states, and the third is about cosmopolitan law.

These set of arguments help us understand states behavior more narrowly. Second dimension of liberal argument is that democracies are inherently peaceful which do not go to war easily and they appear to be non-violent. Political leaders in democracies drive their power from electorate, thus it's not only in public interest, but also in leaders' interest that they practice non-aggression in policy. This aspect will be related to India's behavior later.

The second level of analysis is state level analysis. In this level, we examine the foreign policy behavior of state. State's behavior differs in terms of their hierarchy, their strengths and strategic



culture. Constructivism guides us to understand how additional factors influence foreign policy behavior. Third level is the individual level analysis which helps us to assess people's behavior. The role of leaders and personalities is important in this context.

There are three patterns of requisite nuclear behavior to assess state's nuclear behavior. A responsible nuclear weapon state adopts all possible means, channels and mechanisms to stabilize deterrence and avoid war. First is to establish a robust nuclear regime to avoid war. This parameter helps to understand the compulsion of the state to develop nuclear weapons. States adopt a transparent deterrence regime when they have purpose no other than security. They adopt doctrinal strategies that aim at stabilizing deterrence in avoiding war. They prefer defensive postures over offensive ones. States adopt policies of communications which aims to avoid accidental wars or risks. Then they promote dialogue to manage conflicts and institutionalize arms control mechanism to avoid arms race.

Other parameter for responsible nuclear behavior is adhering to non-proliferation norms both horizontally and vertically. The states preserve rights for peaceful uses of nuclear technologies and they also avoid misusing nuclear material for weapon purposes. States also establish stringent mechanism for nuclear safety and security.

Third parameter for responsible nuclear behavior is genuine efforts to promote disarmament. States do not merely pay lip service to international community, but take practical steps to declare regions as nuclear weapons free zone, promote reduction of military budgets and reduction of armed forces. They do not weaponize space and adopt confidence building measures to achieve disarmament.

India is a revisionist state but who loves war hysteria. From the outset, we have seen Indian national congress leaders outlining a view of establishing Indian hegemony under the slogan of secularism. India aspires to build its soft image via democracy. In parallel, the greater India vision means that India will play a great power role in world affairs commensurate with its size and potential. Cumulative Gandhian and Nehruvian philosophy of Greater India derives its aspiration from historical Hindu strategist Kuteliya. India seeks power globally and demonstrates aggression in the region.



India's ambition for its rise is guided by offensive realist thinking. India does not care about regional growth, prosperity and stability. It is a selfish state actor which only maximizes its own relative gains at the expense of regional peace.

Second parameter of Indian behavior is internal factors. Historically driven radical concepts like "Akhand Bharat" and "Hindutva" populated with anti-Pakistan and anti-Muslim sentiments have been extensively used by political parties and extremists alike. Hindu fundamentalism continues to generate extreme anti-Pakistan drive. The postulates of RSS have been adopted by Indian BJP to cover its electoral mileage and Modi even pulled the region to the brink of war without any hesitation.

Modi foreign policy is based on hedging policy against China and remained focus on bolstering India with aims that go beyond China and Pakistan. Thus pressurizing Pakistan.

Third parameter of Indian behavior is escaping institutional arrangements for talks. In 1948, India took Kashmir dispute to the United Nations and agreed to conduct plebiscite on Kashmir. Nevertheless, India did not fulfil its promise, thus bypassing global institutional obligations and norms. Thus, Indus Water Treaty is the only mechanism left untouched by New Delhi, but India continues to violate this treaty. For many years, India maintained a critique of global nuclear order embedded in NPT while developing nuclear weapons capability in parallel. India rejected establishment of Nuclear Weapons Free Zones (NWFZ) in South Asia, and later it also rejected CTBT and remained silent on FMCT negotiations.

Under the NSG waiver given to India through the efforts of US, India continues to violate global nuclear norms.

Fourth parameter of Indian behavior is adoption of war fighting doctrines under a nuclear umbrella. It is clearly moving towards nuclear counter force targeting strategies away from its official doctrinal position of No First Use (NFU). Such behavior on part of India means increased arms race and belligerence in the region.



## PRESENTATION

### General Trends in Responsible Nuclear Behavior

**Dr. Zafar Khan**

*Assistant Professor, Department of Strategic Studies, National Defense University, Islamabad*

It is extremely difficult to define responsible nuclear behavior in a complex nuclear order where every nuclear weapons state considers itself responsible. Today, many more countries are part of the nuclear club, although 90% of the nuclear weapons are held between Russia and US. Five of the nuclear weapons states belong to the Nuclear-Non-Proliferation Treaty and are



formally recognized. The problem with defining responsible nuclear behavior is that a state may see itself as responsible, but other may not see it as such.

It is important to define a framework of responsible nuclear behavior. There are nuclear doctrine and posture; force modernization; the introduction of new technologies; nuclear non-proliferation record and arms control and disarmament; and nuclear safety and security both in terms of safe and secure command and control mechanism and preventing non-state actors from accessing nuclear weapons and components. All these parameters together can be helpful in assessing parameters of responsible nuclear behavior. Also, a number of key questions may arise when it comes to responsible nuclear behavior in terms of who is more responsible and in what terms. Is the responsible nuclear behavior related to force posture? Does the definition lies with the non-proliferation and disarmament behavior? It is also a question of whether the world can be a better place without nuclear weapons?

A responsible nuclear behavior can be assessed against 3 main parameters. Nuclear doctrine and posture, arms control and disarmament; and peaceful use of nuclear technology. Important question that need to be assessed when looking at responsible nuclear behavior of a state is why



did that state acquire nuclear weapons in the first place. Who is it that it needs to deter. Who is responsible for command and control besides the state leadership? What strategic factors will affect the increase or decrease in its deterrent forces. How, when and where a state will use its nuclear weapons?

Responsible nuclear behavior can be determined on the following parameters vis a vis force and doctrine posture. Doctrinal postures are crafted to deter the adversaries and is one of the parameters against which responsible nuclear behavior can be determined. Also, developing new technologies, modernizing forces, nuclear signalling, political statements are some of the general trends that are exercised by nuclear weapon states. A state also has, as part of a criteria for a responsible nuclear state, to declare under what circumstances it would contemplate the use of nuclear weapons. A nuclear weapons state cannot be too ambiguous on its policy of nuclear use, nor can it be too open. Another parameter for responsible nuclear behavior is a country's arms control and disarmament record or efforts. The ultimate purpose of most non-proliferation regimes is nuclear disarmament. However, progress on disarmament is negligible or non-existent. Non-nuclear weapon states would call it irresponsible nuclear behavior. Nuclear weapons states are not willing to disarm anytime soon. So responsible nuclear behavior would be how best to manage the existing nuclear weapons.

Nuclear deterrence would continue to be relevant. The non-proliferation regime would continue to be discriminatory where only five states are recognized as nuclear weapon states, and other states will struggle for the recognition and acceptance of their nuclear weapons status. Nuclear weapons states will continue to modernize their forces and develop sophisticated delivery systems which would likely generate an arms race and instability, and security dilemmas. Finally, it would become harder to decide who will determine the behavior of nuclear weapon states as responsible or irresponsible.



## PRESENTATION

### India's Nuclear Behavior in Pulwama Crisis

**Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal**

*Professor, School of Politics and International Relations,  
Quaid-e-Azam University, Islamabad*

States' behavior evolves, it is not formed overnight. There are three schools of thought for studying state behavior in international relations. One is the neorealist school that international structure is a determinant of a state's behavior and foreign policy. In case of India's post Pulwama actions, it is not a consequence of international structure or



the regional politics. Second is institutionalist school that always follows the norms. In this context, India's actions and policies do not fall within the ambit of this school either. Article 51 of the UN Charter does not permit the kind of behavior India displayed. India violated the Line of Control. It has been evolving a narrative over the last few years that justifies the surgical strikes since it depicts itself as a victim of terrorism. They justified a hot pursuit across the de facto border and this became part of their formal doctrines like India's doctrine for joint forces released in April 2017. It became visible what they meant by a surgical strike. So they evolved from hot pursuit to surgical strike. In the resolutions that were released post 9/11, there is no reference or justification against a surgical strike against even in a disputed territory.

The third school is the domestic politics. This is the one that best explains India's behavior. Within India, there is fragmentation whereby Hindutva forces are gaining influence. Post 1998 nuclear tests, Indian Prime minister Vajpayee used threatening rhetoric against Pakistan. During the post Pulwama crisis, Prime Minister Modi used threatening and irresponsible rhetoric like: these weapons (nuclear weapons) are not for Diwali and "Qatal Ki Raat". This extremist streak and a move towards surgical strikes is creeping into doctrines and widely propagated by the civilian and military leadership. The academic circles in India are warning of the dangers



associated with such extremist thinking and behavior. In 2016, Rahul Gandhi said in criticism that the Indian leadership is doing "khooon ki dalali", meaning it is using the blood of martyrs to win votes. India is also going from a policy of No First Use of nuclear weapons to its first use.

Due to the influence of Mr. Modi, institutions like the parliamentary systems are moving towards presidential system and also the election commission within India are transforming which is creating a vacuum. Due to domestic transformations, India's nuclear behavior has transformed - time will tell where it is stabilising or destabilizing. However, the current trend is showing negative connotations.



## PRESENTATION

### Pakistan's Nuclear Behavior in Pulwama Crisis

**Dr. Mansoor Ahmed**

*Senior Research Fellow, Center for International Strategic Studies Islamabad*

India-Pakistan strategic landscape has witnessed stability-instability paradox since overt nuclearization in 1998. Yet, Pulwama crisis and Indian strike in Balakot is reflective of the offence-defence imbalance and the offence-defence theory which is dominating the South Asian strategic discourse and nuclear behavior of India and Pakistan. According to Robert



Jervis, the offence-defence theory is defined as the shift towards offence dominance which is said to generate tendencies towards pre-emptive strikes and preventive wars. It is also believed to be linked to reduced incentives towards negotiated conflict resolution, and opportunistic expansionism. This essentially encompasses the Indian behavior.

There were three models brought forward in the wake of the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis that defined nuclear behavior during the Cold War. One was the rational actor model that drove the decision-making process. Responsible nuclear states were said to be those that followed this rational actor model in their decision making during a crisis.

Not only this model, but the respective doctrines of India and Pakistan were put to test during the Pulwama crisis. Pakistan was labelled as having the fastest growing nuclear program. Its full spectrum deterrence posture was misconstrued as a war fighting strategy. However, Pakistan's full spectrum deterrence posture was also misinterpreted by the international community. Pakistan was portrayed as a trigger-happy country in the last decade or so and India's build-up was constantly and systematically underplayed. Pakistan's conventional capabilities were either ignored or underplayed. Pakistan was able to re-establish its conventional deterrence in the



morning of February 27, 2019. That essentially exposed the allegation that Pakistan was a trigger-happy country. India's nuclear bluff was not called, there was no question of calling its nuclear bluff because Pakistan has developed, practiced and put into action its conventional capabilities on February 27. Pakistani leadership exercised restraint maturity and responsibility in the face of unprecedented provocation.

For the future, India-Pakistan power differential is likely to be exacerbated and would result in arms race instability. India-US strategic partnership has already opened up avenues for many destabilizing technologies like missiles defense components. One has to give credit to India as the only country in the world to have secured high tech conventional arms purchases from Russia, Israel, Europe and US at the same time. This is a reflection of their economic potential and international clout. However, this is generating instability in South Asia. The power asymmetries in military terms, as well as on diplomatic front were reflected in the Pulwama crisis. India was nuclear trigger happy despite its doctrine of no first use. India was the first one to deploy second strike delivery platform in an offensive posture. On the other hand, Pakistan did not use any nuclear signalling that it was ready to deploy its nuclear assets. Because it had already given its conventional response and there was no question of moving towards the nuclear dimension. Yet, the statement by Indian Prime Minister confirmed what was going on in the crisis. This is reflective of technological edge that India is getting through high tech arms purchases and is moving towards pre-emptive strike option which will cause first strike instability.

Pakistan cannot engage in an arms race. There has to be a concerted, comprehensive national effort to apprise the international community about the growing state of crisis instability in South Asia. India hegemonic behavior is a direct consequence of how the world is looking at India as a global player. This would ultimately lead to deterrence failure if not dealt with appropriately.

Pakistan's nuclear capability was in response to India's growing conventional threat in the wake of the dismemberment of East Pakistan. All subsequent conventional and strategic choices Pakistan made were in self-defense. In future as well, if it ever comes to nuclear deployment, it would be in exercise of the right of self-defense. Pakistan is not a trigger-happy country and will continue to exercise a minimum level of deterrence. While India is moving towards a full



spectrum conflict capability. Indian Army's land warfare doctrine is essentially talking about fighting in a nuclear environment towards a full spectrum conflict capability which is actively being bolstered by arms purchases. If the international community wants peace and stability in South Asia, the onus lies with them to facilitate responsible behavior rather than fuelling India's regional ambitions.



## QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

*A question was asked about the utility of discussion of responsible or irresponsible nuclear state in an atmosphere where the butcher of Gujrat, Mr. Modi, is after the very existence of the state of Pakistan, and that shouldn't Pakistan also develop nuclear submarine option for assured second strike?*

Dr. Jaspal said that Modi's behavior is very threatening and many people think that there will be a change or shift in India's policy toward Pakistan, but Modi's Pakistan policy will not change in substance. He said that a single incident cannot define the entire relationship and you have to see what Modi has been doing since last five years. So that pattern will not change. He said that discussing responsible or irresponsible nuclear behavior is important because Pakistan and India are nuclear states. As a confident nuclear state, Pakistan has to articulate and sensitise and this is deterrence strategy and we are not going to fight a war. But February 27 proved that if there will be aggression, Pakistan will respond. Pakistan has to counter a selective and biased international approach to label Pakistan as an irresponsible nuclear state. So this discussion is important. Regarding triad of nuclear weapons, Dr. Jaspal said that Pakistan has a range of weapon systems for assured second strike including submarines. Now we do not require nuclear powered submarines per se as our coastal lines and conventional submarine fleet is sufficient to deter Indian aggression.

*A question was asked that if India's belligerence and surgical strikes in a nuclear environment becomes a new normal, then how should Pakistan mitigate high risks and how would the speakers explain full spectrum deterrence and credible minimum deterrence?*

Dr. Jaspal said that there are three reasons why Modi went to strike at Balakot and if we can address those three reasons then we are in a better position to answer this question. First is that Pakistan accepted India's compellence strategy in crisis especially after 1999 onwards till date when India successfully courted US pressure on Pakistan. Second is India's domestic environment and elections, and third is role of international community. Two important statements cannot be ignored. One was the statement of Mike Pompeo on February 26, 2019 defending Indian aggression against Pakistan as "defensive counter terrorism measure". Second



was a telephonic conversation between NSA John Bolton and Ajit Doval where reportedly, Bolton gave green light to India to attack Pakistan. India interpreted these signals as a go ahead against Pakistan. Talking about moving ahead, Dr. Jaspal said that the way forward lies in responding to Indian aggression as we did on February 27. We have to invest in full spectrum deterrence for deterrence stability.

Dr. Mansoor argued that full spectrum deterrence is a posture which is necessary to meet full spectrum of threats Pakistan is facing. He said that it is India centric, and by definition includes conventional forces as well. He added that Indian nuclear powered submarine Arihant was deployed to deter possible Pakistani deployment of nuclear weapons for first strike should things escalate. It should be noted that India is already moving in the direction of offensive counter force posture and they are already integrating their Brahmos cruise missiles with Sukhoi SU 30 jets. There is a sea-based nuclear leg of Pakistani submarines equipped with cruise missiles. He said that it is important to recognize the threat that India is moving in a dangerous direction of full spectrum conflict and escalation dominance.

*A question was asked about the available options for Pakistan to deal with an irresponsible nuclear India as Pakistan is the only country in the region that can counter balance Indian moves?*

Dr. Zafar said that under the ambit of credible minimum deterrence, nuclear signalling, brinkmanship and diplomatic moves are important to deter India from aggression. On the other end, he opined that Pakistan should keep offering Strategic Restraint Regime proposal as a responsible nuclear state in the region.

*A question was asked whether Pakistan was responsible for India's conservative behavior because Pakistan has also been giving hostile statements against India.*

Dr. Jaspal said that you have to see the context in which hostile statements are made against each other. Pakistani statements threatening India are necessary in a defensive setting where it is our requirement to amplify deterrence due to conventional asymmetry with India. On the other hand, what Modi had done was radically different and as opposed to 2001/2002 standoff, this time



there was a military engagement at Air Force level first initiated by India. So you cannot compare the two. Pakistan has exhibited great restraint against Indian belligerence.

*A question was asked about explaining the difference in declaratory behavior of the state and actual policy on ground, and that what will Modi 2.0 entail for Pakistan?*

Dr. Rizwana said that there is a whole lot of literature explaining this apparent duality/contradiction of actions by states. She opined that India certainly projects its global image as an upholder of international norms, while in the region its belligerence is quite evident to observers.

Dr. Zafar said that some ambiguity and gaps in declaratory posture and actual policy will remain in order to confuse the enemies and competitors and this is relevant for all nuclear weapon states, not just India.

Dr. Mansoor said that we are witnessing revolution in military affairs in South Asia and technology is definitely driving the policy and this is a very clear pattern in India.

*A question was asked as to how should Pakistan read the signalling emanating from Indian leadership when they give hostile statements or media leaks about deploying nuclear submarines?*

Dr. Jaspal said that India did not expect the February 27 response because they thought that their compellence action a day earlier had worked. Indian messages after February 27 reflected frustration with Pakistan.



## CONCLUDING REMARKS BY SESSION CHAIR

### Ambassador Zamir Akram

Three trends would continue in the future. First, India's continued pursuit of its hegemonic ambitions, and great power ambition. These are the real driver for both the technological developments in India and its doctrinal evolutions. The second factor or trend is the growing Indo-US partnership against China, which will continue to impact the security and



stability in South Asia. Third is the instability in occupied Kashmir which will continue to pose a security threat in South Asia. This will continue to be a security threat giving rise to incidents like Pulwama.

Technological acquisitions have already caused changes to the doctrinal and strategic thinking. After the 1998 nuclear tests, deterrence was established between India and Pakistan on the basis of counter value deterrence. After 2004, India moved towards the Cold Start Doctrine which is a limited war doctrine despite the existence of nuclear weapons. They tried to find space for limited war under the nuclear threshold. Pakistan's response to that was the doctrine of full spectrum deterrence. Now what we are seeing is a transformation from Cold Start towards pre-emptive strikes. This is supposed to be the capability that aims to destroy Pakistan's nuclear assets through a strategy of counterforce. This is the transformation that one sees in the Indian strategic thinking. This essentially means that India is moving from a strategy for war prevention to war fighting despite the nuclear capability, if one assumes that Indians are not stupid or suicidal. But I think this is the nature of Indian leadership. Under Prime Minister Modi, the Indians are resorting to a very dangerous game of nuclear brinkmanship. This would be dangerous and destabilizing



## CONCLUDING REMARKS

**Ambassador Khalid Mahmood**

*Chairman BOG, Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad*

It is time to refresh our memories of Indian nuclear behavior. It was India that conducted its first nuclear explosion in 1974 under the garb of "peaceful nuclear explosion" using nuclear fuel from Canadian reactors which was supplied under the "Atoms for Peace" initiative for peaceful purposes. This was the most glaring example of proliferation activity by



any country. As such, India became the first country to divert peaceful nuclear resources towards weapons use. In fact, the Nuclear Supplier's Group (NSG) was created in the wake of this explosion specifically aimed at preventing the diversion of civil nuclear technology for military purposes in future. India has also proliferated by indulging in illicit procurement of dual-use nuclear items, by leaking centrifuge know-how, and by running a poorly implemented national export control regime. And more notably, India was the first country to introduce nuclear weapons in South Asia.

It needs to be highlighted that the international narrative led by the US, is seeking to portray India as a responsible nuclear state. The international community is eager to do nuclear business with India and is willing to make India-specific adjustments to the non-proliferation regime. The US nuclear agreement with India in 2005, and the subsequent NSG waiver given to India in 2008 reflect inclination to the acceptance of India as a so-called responsible nuclear state. The de facto acceptance of India in the international nuclear club has emboldened it and created additional space and legitimacy for India to invest in nuclear weaponization. US is actively supporting Indian membership of the NSG and is willing to make India-specific criteria for membership. Pakistan, on the other hand, has campaigned for a criteria based approach to membership.



On the internal front, since the government of Narendra Modi came to power in 2014, India's domestic environment has undergone a radical rightward shift. As part of its aggressive pursuit of Hindutva, the Modi government has consciously cultivated forces of Hindu extremism and has provided them the space to carry out their violent campaigns against minorities including Muslims, Christians and others. This has led to an intolerant society. With the re-election of Mr. Modi in May 2019, this trend is likely to intensify.

It is also likely that the Modi government would pursue more aggressive policies towards Pakistan and adopt a much harder stance on Kashmir. This shift towards extremism is also not conducive to responsible nuclear behavior. The post Pulwama strike within Pakistan was partly a pre-election tactic, and partly an effort to appease the extremist elements within India.

All through the Pulwama incident, Indian media pursued an aggressive hate campaign against Pakistan, with unfounded accusations of it supporting terrorist elements. This fuelled a war hysteria within India. Every time a terrorist incident happens within India, it is blamed on Pakistan without any credible evidence. This trend has continued and intensified over the last two decades.

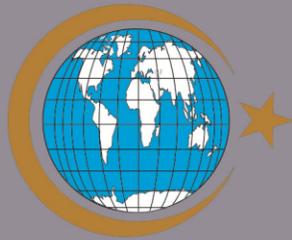
India is trying to create military strikes within Pakistan as a "new normal". However, Pakistan's measured and rational response to Indian incursion effectively deterred India on a conventional level. Our nuclear deterrence also held. Many have questioned whether Pakistan's nuclear deterrence has failed resulting in claimed Indian surgical strike. However, nuclear deterrence is not supposed to deter at conventional level. Pakistan's conventional capability is supposed to deter any conventional surgical strikes. And it did so post Pulwama. Nuclear deterrence comes in when conflict reaches the nuclear threshold. Therefore, both Pakistan's conventional and nuclear deterrence held.

However, the fact remains that any thought of direct conflict - conventional or otherwise - is highly risky in a nuclear environment and counterproductive to peace and stability in the region. Even at the height of Cold War, the two super powers refrained from engaging in any direct conflict because it risked triggering a nuclear war. The Cuban Missile Crisis was an exception, but both sides acted with rationality and managed to avert the crisis. India and Pakistan need to learn a lesson from the two Cold War foes and avoid treading the dangerous nuclear path.



Indulging in adventurism like the post Pulwama strike by India is highly risky between two nuclear armed adversaries. It has the potential to escalate into a nuclear exchange. It is certainly not the action of a responsible nuclear power. Surgical strikes like this one, thus, must not become the 'new normal in South Asia'.

The dialogue process between India and Pakistan has been suspended for over a decade now. Ultimately, both countries, as nuclear armed neighbours, would have to revert to a process of dialogue between them to sort out their difficulties. The festering issue of Kashmir is the biggest hurdle to amelioration of ties between India and Pakistan. As rational, responsible nuclear states, they would have to pursue conflict resolution. That is the only rational way forward.



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