
The India-Pakistan-China Strategic Triangle and the Role of Nuclear Weapons

In collaboration with the Atomic Energy Commission (CEA)

Brahma Chellaney

Winter 2002



**Security Studies
Department**

Ifri is a research center and a forum for debate on the major international political and economic issues. Headed by Thierry de Montbrial since its founding in 1979, Ifri is a non-profit organization.

The opinions expressed in this text are the responsibility of the author alone.

L'Ifri est, en France, le principal centre indépendant de recherche, d'information et de débat sur les grandes questions internationales. Créé en 1979 par Thierry de Montbrial, l'Ifri est une association reconnue d'utilité publique (loi de 1901). Il n'est soumis à aucune tutelle administrative, définit librement ses activités et publie régulièrement ses travaux.

Les opinions exprimées dans ce texte n'engagent que la responsabilité des auteurs

©Ifri, 2002 - www.ifri.org

Institut français des relations internationales
27 rue de la Procession - 75740 Paris Cedex 15 - France
Tél. : 33 (0)1 40 61 60 00 - Fax: 33 (0)1 40 61 60 60

Winter 2002

***The India-Pakistan-China
Strategic Triangle and the Role
of Nuclear Weapons***

Brahma Chellaney

Proliferation Papers

Though it has long been a concern for security experts, proliferation has truly become an important political issue over the last decade, marked simultaneously by the nuclearization of South Asia, the strengthening of international regimes (TNP, CW, MTCR) and the discovery of fraud and trafficking, the number and gravity of which have surprised observers and analysts alike (Iraq in 1991, North Korea, Libyan and Iranian programs or the A. Q. Khan networks today).

To further the debate on complex issues that involve technical, regional, and strategic aspects, Ifri's Security Studies Department organizes each year, in collaboration with the Atomic Energy Commission (*Commissariat à l'énergie atomique*, CEA), a series of closed seminars dealing with WMD proliferation, disarmament, and non-proliferation. Generally held in English these seminars take the form of a presentation by an international expert. The *Proliferation Papers* is a collection, in the original version, of selected texts from these presentations.

The following text is based on a presentation given by Brahma Chellaney at Ifri on the March, 15th, 2002.

Brahma Chellaney is Professor of Security Studies at the New Delhi-based Centre for Policy Research (CPR), a privately-funded think tank. He specializes in international security issues, particularly arms control and disarmament. Professor Chellaney has held appointments at the Brookings Institution, Harvard University, Johns Hopkins University and the Australian National University.

Contents

<i>Regional Balances and Imbalances</i>	5
<i>The Nuclear Element</i>	9
<i>Nuclear posture and challenges</i>	13
<i>Pakistan</i>	15
<i>India</i>	19
<i>China</i>	21
<i>A Changing Asian Landscape</i>	25

Regional Balances and Imbalances

Societies since the earliest times have been shaped by conflict and war. “The story of the human race is war,” wrote Winston Churchill. “Except for brief and precarious interludes, there has never been peace in the world; and long before history began murderous strife was universal and unending.” Those who expected the end of the Cold War to usher in an era of peace and cooperative security have been disappointed by the events of the past decade. In fact, the global strategic environment today is more competitive and lethal than ever before. The end of the Cold War did not lead to the ‘end of history’ or a new world order. Nor did it bring disarmament or an era of stability and shared prosperity. Instead it engendered fresh political, technological and economic rivalries and unveiled new destructive capacities.

The events since the September 11 terrorist strikes on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon have heralded a new chapter in international relations. The world has been fundamentally changed by that one hour on September 11. Not only has the world become less friendly, the geopolitics has also changed. New power equations are emerging. Policies are being premised on new principles with the emergence of new principles and norms in international relations. Serious new challenges are posed by the upsurge of international terrorism in an age of globalization and information revolution.

The rise of international terrorism is a reminder that the Information Revolution is both an integrating and dividing force. Greater public awareness flowing out of the advances in information and communications technologies has encouraged individuals in many societies to search for their roots, and to define their identity more clearly. This has spurred ethnic nationalism, sectarian unrest, religious extremism and localism. The decline of the power of secular ideology, including Marxism and Leninism, has also contributed to the rise of nationalism as a means to mobilize popular support. Internationalism goes hand-in-hand with nationalism. With the increasing tendency in many societies to search for individual identity in terms of religion, ethnicity or localism, communalism has emerged as a powerful force.

Another facet of the new strategic environment is that the role of the state is coming under scrutiny. While state sovereignty remains paramount,¹ the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of another state has come under open pressure as a result of internal wars or terrorist sanctuaries. State sponsorship or protection of terrorism makes

¹ Stephen D. Krasner, “Sovereignty,” *Foreign Policy*, No. 122 (January/February 2001), pp. 20-29.

this principle even more difficult to uphold. States that do not fulfill their responsibility in ensuring that they and their citizens do not engage in roguish acts are going to see an international encroachment on their sovereignty. States today have to be fully accountable for their actions and those of their citizens. No longer can a state take refuge in the alibi that a transnational action was carried out by some individuals and groups on its territory, not by the national government.

The diffusion of advanced technology is facilitating acts of terror and rearing new forms of terrorism. Some regimes that murder, maim and menace the innocent are employing export of terrorism – like classical national power projection – as an indispensable component of state power. The world can also expect that sub-state actors – promoted by regimes or operating with the connivance of elements within the national military, intelligence or government – will continue to employ religion or ethnic or sectarian aspirations to justify their acts of terror.

While the forms and dimensions of conflict have been changing since the end of the Cold War,² with intrastate strife on the rise, it would be wishful thinking to expect interstate war to disappear as a feature of international relations. In fact, in history, “the only thing more common than predictions about the end of war has been war itself.”³ Equally significant is the fact that momentous international events continue to be shaped by changes in political geography. The collapse of the Soviet Union, the crumbling of Yugoslavia and the separation of East Timor from Indonesia have had far-reaching ramifications. Despite the sanctity attached to existing interstate frontiers and the prevailing international norms against redrawing borders in blood, the desire of some states to extend their frontiers to territories they covet is a major cause of regional tensions. Export of terror as an instrument of state policy is also tied to regional ambitions. Both these elements are at the root of conflict in southern Asia.

With 60% of its present territory comprising homelands of ethnic minorities, China has come a long way since the Great Wall represented the outer security perimeter of the Han empire. Yet the redrawing of frontiers has not ended, as is evident from China’s territorial claims and maritime ambitions. China claims India’s Arunachal Pradesh state, Spartlys, Paracels, Senkakus and Taiwan as its territories. In fact, official Chinese maps show three Indian states as independent. China is the only nation in the world to view India’s Sikkim state as independent. The Chinese formulation that the border issue with India can be resolved when “conditions are ripe” really means that the balance of power first has to clearly shift in China’s favor as it did vis-à-vis a weak Russia and Central Asia before Beijing agrees to any border deal.

In the competition between status quoist India and irredentist Pakistan, Kashmir is the symbol, not the cause, of the conflict. Kashmir is critical for both India and Pakistan, although it is important to bear in mind that the 1962 Sino-Indian war was also triggered by Chinese encroachment

² Lawrence Freedman, “The Changing Forms of Military Conflict,” *Survival*, Vol. 40, No. 4 (Winter 1998-99), pp. 39-56.

³ Donald Kagan, *On the Origins of War* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1998).

on a portion of Kashmir.⁴ The Kashmir issue is the glue that holds together a Pakistan still in search of a national identity. The future of the secular, democratic, united India is tied to its ability to hold on to Kashmir.

The subcontinental hostilities spring from history, religion and the politics of revenge, epitomizing competing visions and conflicting worldviews and a divide along civilizational fault-lines. Ominously, they also imply that India and Pakistan are locked in a mortal combat. While China and India publicly say they want a stable relationship based on equilibrium, competition defines their perceptions of each other. New Delhi's evolving Asia policy reflects the need to build an arc of strategic partnerships with China's key neighbors, and with the United States, to help neutralize the continuing Chinese military assistance and activity around India.

The rise of transnational terrorism based in Pakistan, and its impact on Indian and Chinese security, add a dangerous dimension to regional (ISI) agency. Nothing can be more potent than the mix of terrorism and nuclear hazards characterizing Pakistan's present security. So do the links between such terrorists and the Pakistan military, in particular its Inter-Services Intelligence situation.

The southern part of Asia encompassing Afghanistan, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Chinese-ruled Xinjiang and Tibet, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Burma, is troubled by terrorist, insurgent and separatist violence in a manner unmatched elsewhere in the world. The number of annual fatalities in terrorist-related violence in southern Asia far exceeds the death toll in the Middle East, the traditional cradle of terrorism. After all, the epicenter of international terrorism is located in the Afghanistan-Pakistan belt. The only thriving democracy in this vast southern Asian region is India.

Terrorism and Frankensteins like Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar are the haunting by-products of the war against communism and atheism that the West was supposed to have won. Clearly, the war on terrorism will be a long-lasting affair because difficult goals need to be accomplished – rooting out militarily the vestiges of the Taliban and al-Qaeda, and deracinating politically the pernicious culture they represents. It is this culture – mirrored in the spread of the Taliban-like mindset in Pakistan and elsewhere, including among top political, military and intelligence circles – that threatens secular, democratic, pluralistic nations.

Given that terrorism springs from religious extremism shielded by political autocracy, the most daunting task is to instill a secular and democratic ethos in societies steeped in bigotry. Terrorism can be effectively contained only by strengthening the current international consensus and by inculcating the values the West stands for. Democracy and human rights are the antidote to terrorism. Terrorism not only threatens the free, secular world but also springs from the rejection of democracy and secularism.

⁴ China occupies almost 20% of Kashmir and Pakistan 35% of it. The remainder 45% of the original state of Jammu and Kashmir is with India. Militarily, it is not possible to undo the division of Kashmir into three parts held by India, Pakistan and China. Kashmir thus is likely to remain for some time to come the focal point of disputes over territory, sovereignty and nationalism.

The Nuclear Element

The nuclear element has acquired a lower profile, both regionally and internationally, in the post-September 11 situation, but this could change, especially as popular concerns rise that terrorists like al-Qaeda members could get hold of some nuclear materials, if not nuclear weapons. State-related nuclear aspects tend to be a cause of concern when viewed in relation to political instability and terrorism. Yet, nuclear issues are less controversial, as reflected by the quelling of the heat and controversy kicked up by the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty's uncertain future, the continuing deadlock at the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament, or U.S. missile-defense plans.

However, a number of converse developments suggest a greater role for nuclear weapons, reversing a trend to relegate them as weapons of last resort. The U.S. Nuclear Posture Review, conducted under the direction of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and approved by President George W. Bush, has led to two initiatives – the administration setting up “advanced warhead concept teams” at the country’s three nuclear-weapons labs to work on new warheads or warhead modification; and the government’s Nuclear Weapons Council establishing a three-year study into developing a nuclear earth-burrowing warhead that can destroy underground command-and-control posts.

The most controversial aspect of the NPR study (which calls for developing mini-nukes) is that it suggests drafting contingency U.S. plans for use of nuclear weapons against at least seven countries – China, Russia, Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Libya and Syria.⁵

The Bush White House now has plans for a new ICBM to be operational in 2020, a new SLBM and SSBN in 2030, and a new heavy bomber in 2040 – all carrying new warheads.⁶ Washington also intends to integrate missile defense into the “New Triad” to help enhance America’s ability “to use its power projection forces” and to “counteract WMD-backed coercive threats,” according to the NPR study and Pentagon briefings. While advertising its intent to downsize its “operationally deployed” warheads to a maximum of 2,200 within 10 years, Washington plans not to

⁵ William M. Arkin, “Secret Plan Outlines the Unthinkable,” *Los Angeles Times*, March 10, 2002, <http://www.latimes.com/la-op-arkinmar10.story>

⁶ Natural Resources Defense Council, *Faking Nuclear Restraint: The Bush Administration’s Secret Plan For Strengthening U.S. Nuclear Forces*, NRDC Report, February 13, 2002, p. 1.

destroy the surplus weapons but to store them so that they can be reactivated at quick notice.⁷

China continues with its nuclear and missile expansion – currently the largest of any country – even as it refuses to halt covert nuclear and missile transfers to Pakistan or stop its missile dealings with Iran. State-sponsored proliferation is being practiced as a strategic trump card. Having decided to go overtly nuclear only in 1998, India is presently working to militarily integrate its nuclear weapons and develop new intermediate-range delivery systems.

Despite the new “unequivocal” undertaking of the traditional nuclear powers enshrined in the 2000 Review of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, there appears no international commotion over this renewed nuclear modernization. The lack of commotion probably reflects the fact that arms control and disarmament fell by the wayside long before September 11, fostering a virtual sense of international helplessness.

In the present scenario, it is difficult to achieve effective measures, as mandated by NPT’s Article VI, “relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament,” or to make “systematic and progressive efforts” to reduce nuclear weapons (as agreed by the parties in 1995 when the NPT was indefinitely extended). In fact, at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, the traditional nuclear powers gave an “unequivocal undertaking” to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals.

Whether we like it or not, the reality is that nuclear weapons will stay for a long time. As the NPR study points out (employing terminology from the September 2001 U.S. Quadrennial Defense Review), the possession of nuclear weapons serves a four-fold purpose: to “assure allies and friends,” “dissuade competitors,” “deter aggressors” and “defeat enemies.” The NPR report concludes that nukes continue to play a “critical role” because they possess “unique properties” that provide “credible military options” for holding at risk “a wide range of target types” important to a potential adversary who threatens to use “weapons of mass destruction” or “large-scale conventional military force.”⁸

In the regional context, the United States (like Russia) has tacitly accepted India as a nuclear-weapons state. This acceptance has been most evident under the Bush administration, which is forging close military and strategic ties with India. In fact, as the U.S. ambassador to India, Robert Blackwill, likes to remind Indians, the Bush administration has not uttered the ‘N’ word to New Delhi. This is a big change from the concern that was stirred by India’s 1998 nuclear tests, which prompted Pakistan to follow suit. The tests were seen in the West as challenging the nuclear nonproliferation regime as well as the hierarchy of global power based on a five-nation nuclear monopoly. This concern has eased. While India certainly jolted the nonproliferation regime by gate-crashing the nuclear club, it has not

⁷ *Ibid.* and Walter Pincus, “U.S. Studies Developing New Nuclear Weapons,” *International Herald Tribune*, February 20, 2002, p. 3.

⁸ NRDC, *Faking Nuclear Restraint*, p. 1.

sought to openly challenge the regime. In fact, it has offered to extend cooperation to the nonproliferation regime in consonance with its national interests. By carrying out what it called a 'peaceful nuclear explosion' (PNE) in 1974 and then shying away from going overtly nuclear, India got the worst of both worlds, bearing the burden of an open option (which came with U.S.-sponsored technology sanctions) while not reaping deterrent benefits. When India finally declared itself a nuclear-weapons state in 1998, the resultant sanctions did not last long. In fact, just a few months after the Indian and Pakistani tests, Washington began lifting the 1998 sanctions against New Delhi and Islamabad – a process completed post-September 11. In any case, the 1998 sanctions had a minimal effect on India, although their impact on the more vulnerable Pakistani economy was greater.

It may be possible to accommodate India, Israel and Pakistan within the existing nonproliferation regime. These nations could be made full members of the NPT's subsidiary arrangements, such as the Nuclear Suppliers' Group, and even the Missile Technology Control Regime. As such, they would be part of the outer nonproliferation ring, with its attendant responsibilities, without the need to make them enter the inner ring – NPT, the "sanctum sanctorum." This seems to be the only conceivable way to accommodate the newer nuclear states and preserve the credibility and utility of the NPT regime.

The international line-up on President Bush's missile defense may be a precursor of things to come – the United States, its traditional allies and India on one side; China and its militaristic friends like Pakistan, Burma and North Korea on the other side; and Russia somewhere in the middle but moving closer to the West. India's positive response to U.S. missile-defense plans fits well with its options and interests in an Asia marked by missile build-ups and growing power imbalance. While the action-reaction cycle triggered by missile defense could impact adversely on Indian security, some of the visible elements of the new arms racing in Asia were already in place much before Washington decided to push ahead with a national missile defense system.

Another significant facet of the new situation is that international and regional developments are beginning to run counter to much of the traditional wisdom on non-proliferation. This is evident not only from the rise of India and Pakistan as declared nuclear-weapons states and the U.S. NPR report, but also from Bush's stand on the CTBT, Biological Weapons Convention verification, START process, and nonproliferation-related sanctions. The abandonment of the congressionally mandated sanctions approach against proliferators itself marks a watershed in U.S. nonproliferation policy. The lifting of punitive sanctions became necessary to reward Pakistan for its role in the U.S. military campaign in Afghanistan and to forge close strategic ties with India. As a U.S. official put it: "This shared threat from terrorism on the part of the United States and India has hastened the redefinition of our relationship in all its manifestations, and catapulted our strategic collaboration to unprecedented depth, breath and intensity ... India is central to the emphasis that American foreign policy

places on building a concert of democratic states in response to problems of world order.”⁹

Although it is still not overtly accepted in Washington, the United States is now seeking to pursue a *differentiated* rather than *universal* nonproliferation policy. The argument that a differentiated policy would embolden other potential proliferators is akin to the now-discredited contention that a closed nuclear club would only encourage proliferation. The action-reaction cycle on any issue involves counteractions only by those states directly threatened and not by others. Many officials and analysts in the world are also beginning to question the argument that the carefully woven global nonproliferation regime would unravel if India, Israel and Pakistan were tacitly treated as nuclear-weapons states. While the unstable, terror-breeding Pakistan is a unique case, India and Israel fully support nonproliferation norms, have an impeccable record on non-export of nuclear technology, and are willing to enter into NPT’s subsidiary arrangements. U.S. policy so far has been based on the premise that nuclear proliferation is necessarily inimical to American interests. Reflective of the desire to shift from a *universal* to a *differentiated* nonproliferation policy, some in the Bush team are beginning to say (at least privately) that India’s nuclear deterrent is a potential source of stability and counterweight in Asia.

However, it is always difficult to move away from a well-established policy. The fear of change, and the wider ramifications of a shift, continue to spur caution in Washington. Still, it is only a matter of time before a more nuanced but result-oriented nonproliferation U.S. policy emerges – one that distinguishes between proliferators that threaten U.S. interests and those that seek nuclear weapons merely to address their regional insecurities.

⁹ Robert D. Blackwill, U.S. Ambassador to India, “The Transformation of U.S.-India Relations: A Status Report,” Address to the Delhi Policy Group, Habitat Center, New Delhi, February 26, 2002.

Nuclear posture and challenges

The China-India-Pakistan nuclear triangle will remain complex, with latent instability. To the complicated India-China and India-Pakistan equations have been added pressing concerns over the role of sub-state actors. Do Pakistan's internal problems increase the threat to regional security? This is a key question. The risks of state failure in nuclear-armed Pakistan cannot be brushed aside, especially when that country is seen as a potential nuclear Somalia. The specter of nukes in the hands of radicalized zealots eager to export religious extremism and terrorism adds an element of volatility to the regional situation.

An examination of the nuclear postures of regional state actors is not sufficient to understand the situation. First, the state itself may not be cohesive enough to be fully in charge of its systems, especially in a crisis or during cataclysmic events. Second, elements within the national military, police or intelligence may be operating in league with sub-state actors. The killing of a U.S. journalist in Karachi, for example, has cast doubt on whether military dictator Gen. Pervez Musharraf is fully in charge, for he was voicing hope that the abducted reporter was alive a week after the chief suspect had reportedly confessed to Pakistani intelligence about the murder. Musharraf's grip on the situation and his ability to stabilize Pakistan's collapsing system have been brought into question.¹⁰

In a regional environment where one player with an unconditional no-first-use posture (India) confronts an adversary with a conditional NFU (China) and another adversary with an overtly first-use posture (Pakistan), with the latter two closely aligned, the inherent risks as well as the challenges to stability need to be properly addressed. It is clear that nuclear deterrence in southern Asia will not be patterned on classical deterrence models, nor will it be adequately stable. After all, the situation involving three nuclear-armed states that share disputed borders is unique.

Moreover, the nature of nuclear deterrence remains hazy, with a lot of unanswered questions. What are the military missions for which nuclear weapons will be relevant? What should be the right mix of offence and defense in deterrence? For deterrence to be credible, what level of force and alertness is required in the regional context? How does deterrence work in relation to a state that appears sinking (Pakistan) or is totally opaque (China), or when the two are hand-in-glove?

¹⁰ Jim Hoagland, "Murder In a Dark Place," *Washington Post*, February 23, 2002.

Pakistan

Pakistan is confronted with a serious crisis, and the question is whether it will continue to muddle along or sink further. Its fate once again is in the hands of three As – Allah, Army and America – although now the sequence has changed to America, Army and Allah. As the creator of the Taliban and home to transnational terrorists, Pakistan should have been in the international doghouse in the post-September 11 scenario. But dictator Pervez Musharraf's U.S.-forced desertion of the Taliban saved the situation for Pakistan.¹¹ Nonetheless, the desertion of the Taliban is one of the most bitter pills Pakistan has had to swallow in its 55-year history, spurring renewed social and political ferment and raising the specter of civil and military disturbances striking at the nation's very foundations.

The key to Pakistan's future may not be the three As but the three domestic Ms – mullahs, madrasas and the military. The critical challenge is how to de-radicalize a society where the *jihad* culture has been eating into its vitals since the 1980s. The process of de-radicalization will continue to pose not only serious regional and international challenges, but is also likely to prove difficult and long. According to a Pakistan-born analyst, "Pakistan is on the way to becoming the world's first failed nuclear state,"¹² while an American analyst has described Pakistan as a "Colombia with nukes and Islamic fundamentalism."¹³

It is important, however, to remember that the 'Pakistan problem' springs more from the Scotch whiskey-sipping generals than the rosary-holding *mullahs*. It is the self-styled secular generals who have reared such fundamentalist forces. The 1999 Kargil invasion into Indian Kashmir, with the Army's Northern Light Infantry as the vertebral column, was carried out by those generals. So was the 1971 genocide in East Pakistan – one of the world's worst slaughters of Muslims in the 20th century. The generals' agenda on Kashmir today is no different from their predecessors' in 1965 or 1947-48. But blaming their *jihad* policy on their *mullah* puppets, the generals have made many outsiders believe that the key is to contain the religious fringe, not the puppeteers.

¹¹ In a speech to the nation on September 19, 2001, Musharraf explained that he had no option as he faced a U.S. ultimatum – join the United States or fight it. Stating that the nation's very survival was at stake, Musharraf declared in other public statements that had he resisted, Pakistan would have risked losing its "strategic assets" – a euphemism for nuclear weapons.

¹² Mansoor Ijaz, "Stop Pakistan's Fall Into Nuclear-Armed Failure", *International Herald Tribune*, May 4, 2000.

¹³ Sebastian Mallaby, "Pakistan's Palaver Turns Democracy on Its Head", *International Herald Tribune*, April 28, 2000.

The military's alliance with narco-terrorism has criminalized even the top echelons, blurring the line between civilians and military terrorists cloaked as *jihadis*. Without a reform of the Pakistan military, there can be no regional peace, no end to transnational terrorism, and no nation-building in Pakistan.

The international agenda concerning Pakistan has to try not only to uproot the *jihad* culture, but also to promote a reform of the Pakistani military. The need is for meaningful, long-term structural reforms to build a stable, peaceful Pakistan. Military reforms also have to target the Inter-Services Intelligence agency, which has functioned virtually as a state within the state. It "may be especially difficult to end the agency's role in Kashmir," where the ISI has been waging a proxy war against India.¹⁴ Of course, the key to bringing the ISI under civilian oversight is the introduction of a true democracy – a grueling challenge in a militaristic, wayward state.

Pakistan's drift toward chaos raises the threat that it could lose some of its "crown jewels" – nuclear weapons – to *jihadi* elements, a scenario in which U.S. commandos may have to preemptively seize and secure all such arms. The danger that some *jihadi* Pakistani nuclear scientists might facilitate acts of nuclear terrorism through their links with the al-Qaeda network cannot be lightly dismissed. The United States, in fact, has deployed hundreds of sophisticated sensors along its borders, on overseas facilities and in choke points around Washington, and placed its elite Delta Force on standby alert, to prevent any act of nuclear blackmail or terrorism.¹⁵

Pakistani nuclear scientist Sultan Bashiruddin Mahmood, who met Osama bin Laden twice in Afghanistan, has been put on the U.S. list of designated terrorists, compelling Pakistani authorities to freeze his assets and keep him under virtual house arrest with a guard watching over him 24 hours a day.¹⁶ The detention and interrogation of some Pakistani nuclear scientists for alleged links with the Taliban and al-Qaeda has to be seen against the background of Pakistan's officially nurtured *jihad* culture, the strength of Islamists within its military and nuclear-weapons establishment, and the origins of the Pakistani program rooted in nuclear smuggling and espionage¹⁷ – elements that reinforce the present nuclear dangers. Add to that the visits of Saudi and United Arab Emirates officials to Pakistan's

¹⁴ Douglas Jehl, "Pakistan Cutting Its Spy Unit's Ties to Some Militants," *New York Times*, February 20, 2002.

¹⁵ Barton Gellman, "Fears Prompt U.S. to Beef Up Nuclear Terror Detection," *Washington Post*, March 3, 2002, p. A1.

¹⁶ Peter Baker, "Pakistani Scientist Who Met Bin Laden Failed Polygraphs, Renewing Suspicions," *Washington Post*, March 2, 2002, p. A1.

¹⁷ For accounts of Pakistani nuclear smuggling, see Steve Weissman and Herbert Krosney, *The Islamic Bomb* (New York: Times Books, 1981); Leonard S. Spector, *Going Nuclear* (Cambridge, MA: Ballinger, 1987); Zalmay M. Khalilzad, "Pakistan and the Bomb," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, Vol. 36, No. 1 (January 1980); Harold Freeman, "Pakistan's 'Islamic Bomb' is Almost Here," *International Herald Tribune*, December 2, 1985; *Report of the Inter-Ministerial Working Party Responsible for Investigating the 'Khan Affair'* (The Hague: Dutch Foreign Ministry, October 1979); and United States Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, "Summary of BBC Program on Pakistan's Nuclear Program," Memorandum from Thomas W. Graham, June 20, 1980.

nuclear complex in Kahuta in May 1999, and deals between that center and North Korea – both reported by U.S. intelligence.¹⁸

Nuclear weapons were supposed to be Pakistan's most precious strategic assets. But in Pakistan's highly combustible political climate, they are proving a strategic liability, endangering internal and regional security and prompting the U.S. military to prepare contingency plans for their evacuation for safekeeping in the event of calamitous political events.¹⁹ The threat to divest Pakistan of its 'crown jewels' was cleverly used by the United States first to force Gen. Musharraf to reverse his policy concerning the Taliban, and then to ward off would-be coup plotters against Musharraf.

The United States seems determined to stay engaged in Pakistan to help de-radicalize that state. Unlike the 1991 Gulf War that was financed by some of their allies, the Americans are spending their own money in the current antiterror operations. They are determined to get lasting results. The U.S. presence is already having a positive effect on Pakistan's nuclear-related conduct.

The Pakistani military has always been in charge of nuclear weapons. Since returning to the political saddle in 1999, the military took major steps in the pre-September 11 era to integrate nuclear weapons more fully within its structures, formulating a clear nuclear doctrine pivoted on first use and establishing a nuclear command. In the present situation, however, Pakistan (which once used to play up the regional nuclear dangers to deliberately present the subcontinent as a potential nuclear flashpoint) has been compelled to de-emphasize the nuclear risks. The nuclear flasher no longer finds it possible to flash the nuclear threat. Rather, it has to do the opposite. Instead of nuclear blackmail, which it repeatedly practiced during the 1999 Kargil war, Pakistan of late has been dousing all talk of nuclear war, lest its brinkmanship and unsheathed nukes provide an opportunity for U.S. or Indian forces to divest it of its 'crown jewels.' Pakistan's nuclear posture is unequivocally pivoted on first use, even against a conventional attack. The rationale is that India's aggregate conventional-military power is superior to that of Pakistan's, which thus has to employ the nuclear threat to deter an Indian conventional attack. By that logic, India should have a first-use nuclear posture against China. In reality, Pakistan has sought to employ nuclear weapons both as a tool to engage in conventional military adventurism and clandestine war against India (as evidenced by its Kargil invasion and export of terror), and as a shield against Indian retaliation. The events since September 11, however, have thrown a spanner in the Pakistani works.

Controlling the lethal mix of terrorism and nuclear dangers that epitomizes the Pakistani situation will prove a daunting task since Pakistan links nuclear weapons with its sovereignty and survival. It will stoutly oppose any Western-aided transparency and physical-security measures that could dilute the secrecy surrounding its nuclear storage and

¹⁸ Nayan Chanda, "Urgent Worries About Pakistani Nuclear Arsenal," *International Herald Tribune*, November 2, 2001.

¹⁹ Seymour M. Hersh, "Watching the Warheads: The Risks to Pakistan's Nuclear Arsenal," *The New Yorker*, November 5, 2001.

deployment practices. Given its narrow strategic waistline, Pakistan has emphasized offence, including preemption, in its conventional military and nuclear doctrines.

Adequate security, including physical protection of assets, can be ensured only when the government is in complete control of nuclear weapons and materials. When danger lurks of renegade Islamist elements within the military, intelligence and nuclear establishments seizing control of some nuclear assets or even seizing power, the risks of nuclear blackmail and terror cannot be effectively contained. Fissile material or radioactive waste can be employed crudely for spreading terror.

With the United States expected to stay engaged in Pakistan, one thing is clear: Pakistani nuclear posture and the role of nuclear weapons in overall Pakistani strategy will be influenced by American presence and activity. The latter aspect, moreover, could complicate and help control Chinese nuclear and missile assistance to Pakistan. Despite their heavy strategic investments in Pakistan, the Chinese now find themselves supplanted there by the Americans: such has been the cost of the Pakistani military's alliance with terrorism for China. America's recent military presence in Pakistan and formidable leverage over the Musharraf regime have even complicated China's construction of a Pakistani naval base at Gwadar. Gwadar, and Chinese radar facilities and other naval equipment on islands off the Burmese coast, have been part of China's strategy to position itself along the key sea lanes from the Arabian Sea to the disputed Spratlys and control traffic between the Indian and Pacific oceans.

India

India has been slowly but surely developing its nuclear posture, capabilities, and command-and-control structure. Given the time-consuming intra-governmental processes in India, the progress on those fronts has been inevitably unhurried, if not dawdling. In the coming years, India will increasingly focus on developing and strengthening its intermediate-range nuclear capability as part of its proposed triad of air-, land- and sea-based assets. As a latecomer in the nuclear world, India has no choice but to concentrate on modest nuclear modernization to meet its perceived defense needs.

India's goal is to acquire a minimal deterrent capability against China and Pakistan, while avoiding the fusing of warheads with delivery vehicles during peacetime and any weakening of its tradition of keeping strict civilian control over the military. India's intention is to use its deterrent simply to give pause to any would-be attacker or blackmailer.

India's no-first-use nuclear (NFU) posture, however, only heightens its need to develop and deploy second-strike capabilities. With a no-first-use (NFU) posture, a nation necessarily has to have the ability to survive a first strike and retaliate. Unless a nation wishes to practice deterrence solely through a first-strike posture, as Pakistan is doing, it has to invest in second-strike assets. India's decision to add a sea-based component to its nuclear deterrent is to be understood in this context, since the least-vulnerable nuclear weapons are those on board submarines. This is why a first-use nuclear doctrine is the simplest, most cost-effective posture, especially for a state not at the top end of the technology ladder. While NFU has historically been employed by China and the Soviet Union to cover windows of nuclear vulnerability, its credibility is tied to expensive second-strike assets. Unlike India, Israel has not declared NFU despite its nuclear monopoly in the Middle East.²⁰ With China qualifying its NFU as it advances in nuclear-deterrent capabilities, India is the only nuclear state with a totally unconditional NFU applicable in all circumstances.

In the current military standoff on the subcontinent, India has had to send out clear signals to Islamabad that Pakistan's geography and narrow strategic waistline render its nuclear weapons useless for anything other than blackmail. The core message conveyed was that, as underlined by Pentagon war games, a nuclear first strike by Pakistan would amount to national suicide. Conveying that message became essential as the 1999 Kargil war led to the dangerous belief in Pakistan that its nuclear weapons were good enough to deter India from crossing the line of control in

²⁰ In a no-first-use spoof, Israel has declared that it will not be the first to introduce nuclear weapons in the Middle East nor will it be the second.

Kashmir or the border elsewhere, while the Indian nukes were no deterrent to Pakistani adventurism. This intense but localized war showed that classical nuclear deterrence theory makes little regional sense in the context of a sinking state that values nuclear weapons as a shield for military adventurism.

In Kargil, Pakistan also busted the central theory of the Cold War years that two nuclear-armed nations do not take each other militarily. The published official Indian inquiry into why the military could not deter the Kargil invasion, however, failed to address this question.²¹ In fact, the inquiry whitewashed the failure of Indian deterrence. The smaller state did not get deterred by India's nukes and stealthily invaded Kargil, but India did not cross the line of control even in retaliation, preferring to fight the entire war on Indian territory and on terms dictated by the enemy. After carefully reflecting upon the lessons of Kargil, India has decided that it will no longer be blackmailed. The Indian threat to mount a full-scale war after the December 13 terrorist attack on the Indian Parliament was designed to disabuse Pakistan of its Kargil-related belief. The message conveyed was that Islamabad could no longer believe that India would not mount a large-scale retaliation because of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal.²² The lack of stability in the nuclearized regional environment has been further compounded by the fact that India's other nuclear adversary, China, is opaque and works hand-in-glove with Pakistan.

Looking ahead, the Indian nuclear doctrine will continue to be essentially driven by six parameters outlined by the National Security Advisory Board in 1999: a minimal, flexible arsenal; credibility; survivability based on developing a "triad" of assets; deployment practices eschewing hair-trigger alert; NFU; and no arms-control fetters on research and development. A small, secure, dispersed Indian nuclear force with a sea-based component would also aim at minimizing command-and-control problems.

In the coming years, India's intrinsically cautious, reactive and cost-conscious decision-making process should incrementally meet the national deterrent requirements. The country does face a number of pressing deterrent challenges. The smallness of the planned arsenal, and its limited compass, impose high reliability standards. What has been described as Deterrence 'Lite' comes with a heavy challenge. Moreover, unlike deterrence relationships elsewhere, India faces two hand-in-glove nuclear neighbors. It does not have to qualitatively or quantitatively match China, but it needs to build an adequate strategic reach against that country, which is now at the forefront of nuclear modernization trends. India's moderate goals aim at assuaging its own fears of Chinese nuclear blackmail without generating commensurate fears in China.

²¹ From Sunrise to Reckoning: The Kargil Review Committee Report (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2000), pp. 183-213.

²² Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "For India, Deterrence May Not Prevent War," *Washington Post*, January 16, 2002, p. A1.

China

China's ambitious nuclear modernization concentrates on building new strategic weapons. It is expected to build and deploy 75 to 100 new solid-fuel, mobile strategic ballistic missiles over the next 10 to 15 years, according to U.S. intelligence.²³ According to official Russian analyses, China is expected by 2010 to deploy 4 to 6 new 'Project 094' nuclear submarines armed with MIRVed JL-2 SLBMs, several dozen DF-31 and DF-41 ICBMs with an 8,000-12,000 kilometer range and carrying multiple warheads, and hundreds of sub-strategic missiles.²⁴

The revolution in military affairs (RMA), and the consequent weakness of China's conventional capability compared to NATO states, have only helped to enhance the value of non-conventional capabilities for the People's Liberation Army. Missiles are at the center of China's force modernization. Rapidly modernizing its missile forces, China has been deploying missiles as soon as they were produced. Along the coastal area opposite Taiwan, the number of deployed Chinese medium-range missiles has gone up from a few dozen in 1995 to an estimated 700 today. Priority, however, is being given to strategic missiles.

Missiles constitute a sacred area for Beijing, - on this subject, it refuses to accept any type of restraint or agree to participate in any meaningful international or bilateral talks. For China, shorter range missiles allow political coercion, while longer range missiles are useful to help induce U.S. restraint. In every conceivable scenario of a Chinese invasion of Taiwan, Beijing gives a central role to ballistic and cruise missiles to "soften up" the island before carrying out an amphibious assault. The introduction of new missiles in Tibet, however, indicates the value Beijing places on such assets against other potential targets.

The strategy of minimum deterrence is currently under intense debate in China, with some critics within the defense establishment seeing the future as demanding a more flexible approach. This has given rise to speculation on whether China has moved from minimum deterrence to limited deterrence, and whether there is a shift from countervalue targeting to counterforce targeting. A shift from minimum to limited deterrence would

²³ See U.S. Intelligence Community (IC), *Foreign Missile Developments and the Ballistic Missile Threat Through 2015*, unclassified annual report to the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, 2001.

²⁴ Russian Ministry of Atomic Energy, *Nuclear Weapons, Nonproliferation and National Security* (Sarov-Moscow: Atomic Energy Ministry, 2001), p. 71.

mean that China is developing warfighting capability.²⁵ Some analysts argue that China is now pursuing a three-pronged approach: (i) credible minimal deterrent against the United States and Russia; (ii) limited deterrence around its periphery where local conflict is conceivable; and (iii) offensively configured counterforce strategy, with even a preemptive hypothesis. The second and third approaches are of direct significance to Indian security.

Like many other things about China, it is not clear what exactly is happening, except that the Chinese nuclear doctrine is evolving and that new warheads and missiles are being built. It is now considered likely by different sources that China will MIRV its missiles. With technology reportedly stolen from the United States, the MIRVing of missiles may now be possible.

It is important to note that China's NFU position is also changing. Beijing dropped the word "unconditional" from its nuclear posture in 1995 and added conditionality – membership in the NPT or a nuclear-weapon-free zone. That effectively excludes India.²⁶ China could declare a NFU in the 1960s because it was a peripheral rather than a central player in the East-West nuclear competition and it needed time to plug major vulnerability gaps in its capability. Now that it has made progress in acquiring a second-strike capability and MIRV technology, its NFU posture is becoming less unconditional.

Yet another facet of Chinese behavior is Beijing's determined use of the proliferation card. Over the years China has played that card far and wide, supplying missiles or missile components to Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Saudi Arabia and Syria, and nuclear materials or technology to Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Iran, Iraq, North Korea and South Africa. U.S. intelligence has called China the "most significant supplier" of WMD goods and technology. But all of China's other proliferation activity pales in comparison to its extensive and sustained transfers to Pakistan. The transfers have included nuclear-warhead blueprints, complete missiles and technologies for local production. It is evident that as long as Pakistan survives, China will use it to countervail India.

Three different theories have been put forth to explain China's proliferation conduct: (i) that it is on a learning curve, and that it is gradually

²⁵ See Paul H.B. Godwin, "China's Nuclear Forces: An Assessment," *Current History* (September 1999); and Alastair Iain Johnston, "China's New 'Old Thinking': The Concept of Limited Deterrence," *International Security*, Vol. 20, No. 3 (Winter 1995/96).

²⁶ The original Chinese policy was enshrined in a letter delivered to the UN Secretary General on 28 April 1982, which stated that "at no time and under no circumstances will China be the first to use nuclear weapons, and that it undertakes unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear countries and nuclear-free zones". The revised posture, released by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Beijing on 5 April 1995 and placed in the records of the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament the following day, states that China's policy not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons "naturally applies to non-nuclear-weapon states parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) or non-nuclear-weapon states that have undertaken any comparable internationally binding commitments not to manufacture or acquire nuclear explosive devices." The shift from an unconditional to a conditional NFU posture effectively left out only India, Israel and Pakistan. The policy change, however, could not be directed at close ally, Pakistan, or even Israel, with whom Beijing has collaborated in military-technology projects. The shift appeared aimed at sending a message to New Delhi.

becoming more responsible, as evidenced by its joining the nonproliferation regime; (ii) profit motives; and (iii) that it consciously plays the proliferation card for leverage and containment. While China certainly wants to present itself as a responsible state by signing international agreements, it often prefers not to meet its obligations under these agreements. While commercial motivations are no doubt important in Confucian thinking, China values its horizontal proliferation most as an indispensable component of balance-of-power politics.

The objectives of its proliferation activities are threefold: (i) countervailing or gaining leverage on the United States, India and Japan; (ii) building client states; and (iii) obtaining advanced military technology in exchange. These objectives explain why China has constantly broken its nonproliferation pledges to Washington since 1993.

President George W. Bush's failure during his February 2002 state visit to persuade China to honor its last agreement on non-transfer of missile technology underlines the Chinese complexity and proclivity for bargaining. China is now linking the last accord reached in November 2000 to various U.S. concessions,²⁷ including Chinese commercial launching of American satellites, an end to American proliferation-related sanctions against Chinese companies, and denial of sophisticated U.S. arms to Taiwan.

In the years to come, China's nuclear doctrine, despite its ongoing evolution, will probably remain pivoted on ambiguity by design.²⁸ China is the least transparent of the nuclear-weapons states, and the only major nation not to publish details or breakup of its defense budget. While the India-China nuclear asymmetry is likely to widen, the gap between Chinese and Russian nuclear forces is expected to narrow considerably. Driven by economic imperatives, Russia is currently going down from several thousand strategic warheads to only a couple of hundreds – a level at which Chinese nuclear weapons will stay. And while Russia has only two nuclear-armed subs on patrol duty today, China is intending to build 4 to 6 such subs over the next eight years. The Chinese buildup impinges directly on its neighbors. The bulk of China's missiles, in terms of range, will continue to be a threat only to its neighbors.

²⁷ Eric Eckholm, "China Says Next Move in Arms Talks Is Up to U.S.," New York Times, [February 27, 2002](#).

²⁸ See "China, Nuclear Weapons, and Arms Control: A Preliminary Assessment" (Washington, DC: Council on Foreign Affairs, 2000), pp. 34-35.

A Changing Asian Landscape

While the international security environment has been changed by September 11 and the subsequent events, the Asian landscape stands out as the most affected. Asia has been profoundly affected both by the level of terrorist violence it is confronted with and the strategic changes triggered by the global antiterror campaign. Not many realize that Asia accounts for 75% of all terrorism casualties worldwide.²⁹ This is the continent with the world's fastest-growing markets, fastest-rising military expenditures, and most serious hot spots, besides having the epicenter of international terrorism.

The most dramatic development in Asia since September 11 has been the rapid expansion of U.S. strategic presence across the continent, from the Red Sea to the Pacific. Many thought that the United States would withdraw from world affairs after the September 11 strikes exposed its vulnerability at home. Instead, the United States has done the opposite: It has aggressively gone out and put in place a network of forward bases stretching across the entire length of Asia. With American forces now ensconced in nations where they had never been present before, Washington has vantage platforms from which to launch attacks on any nation or group that threatens U.S. interests. In the name of fighting terrorism, the United States is setting up long-term military bases in places where it was unthinkable before September 11 that it could do so. These places include Kyrgystan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan, which together constitute the cockpit of Asia, overlooking major powers like Russia, China, India and Iran. U.S. troops are also stationed in Pakistan. The United States is building a close military relationship with India, and the two countries are considering joint naval patrolling and other collaboration. U.S. military advisers are now in Yemen and Sudan, while U.S. special forces have gone to Georgia and the Philippines.

The new U.S. forward bases, built around countries of concern to Washington, can provide support for huge military reinforcements if required. With the setting up of these new bases, U.S. forces today are active in the biggest array of countries since World War II. However, it was apparent even before September 11 that the Bush administration intended to shift the focus of U.S. policy from Europe to Asia. A Rand study, for example, had suggested that Washington concentrate on Asia and widen its strategic alliances there, setting up new military bases in vantage

²⁹ U.S. Department of State, Patterns of Global Terrorism – 2000 (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Coordinator for Counterterrorism, Department of State, April 2001).

locations like Oman and Gaum.³⁰ The post-September antiterror campaign came in handy for the United States to consummate that shift in focus.

The new, evolving Asian landscape is to China's disadvantage but not to India's. In fact, India and the United States appear headed toward an enduring strategic partnership, underlined by their growing cooperation in a number of critical fields and the number of high-level visits.³¹ No sooner had the United States announced a war on terrorism that India offered to open its military bases, airfields, and intelligence to American forces in that campaign. Having denied Soviet forces access to Indian military bases during the Cold War years, the offer marked a tectonic shift in New Delhi's strategic posture.

While working toward a long-term, mutually beneficial military relationship with the United States, India has also taken care to nurture its friendship with Moscow. Russia is currently negotiating the lease to India of two Viktor III class nuclear-powered submarines capable of extended patrols; the lease of two Tu-22 Backfire nuclear-capable intermediate-range bombers useful for maritime reconnaissance; and the sale of the Kiev class aircraft carrier, Admiral Gorshkov. The five-year leases of Viktor III class subs from about 2004 would give India time to complete work on its own indigenous nuclear submarine.

Furthermore, "Russia is interested to explore the possibilities of trilateral no-first-use obligations in a China-India-Russia triangle," given India's and China's NFU policies and the Sino-Russian bilateral NFU accord.³² In contrast, despite their July 2001 friendship treaty, Russia and China are far from engaging in a stable and committed friendship as the one between Moscow and New Delhi. Indeed, China's rising power (at the strategic expense of Russia) is leading Russian analysts to warn their government that "any strengthening of offensive weapons of China against the USA is equal to strengthening its offensive potential against Russia."³³

Currently, China is on its best behavior since long, refraining from criticizing the United States in any manner and adding more saccharine to its public comments on India. Despite the alacrity with which it linked its Uighur separatists with the al-Qaeda network, China is uncomfortable with the rapidly-transforming Asian strategic landscape. The fast-changing strategic scene not only undercuts Chinese ambitions to dominate Asia, but also puts greater pressure on China's Leninist rulers at a time when the Jiang Zeming-Li Peng-Zhu Rongji triumvirate is set to retire one by one by

³⁰ Zalmay Khalilzad, David Orletsky, Jonathan Pollack, Kevin Pollpeter, Angel Rabasa, David Shlapak, Abram Shulsky and Ashley Tellis, *The United States and Asia: Toward a New U.S. Strategy and Force Posture* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2001).

³¹ As part of India's desire to patrol the sea lanes in the Indian Ocean and monitor Chinese naval activity off the Burmese coast and in the straits of Southeast Asia, the United States may sell New Delhi the P-3 Orion multi-role maritime aircraft, Harpoon anti-ship missiles and Sea Hawk helicopters. "India Contests for Sea Lane Control, Builds Toward Nuclear Triad," Stratfor, February 5, 2002.

³² Alexander Nikitin, "Nuclear Weapons and Asian Security in a Post-ABM Era," Paper presented to 2nd Pugwash Workshop on East Asian Security, Beijing, March 7-9, 2002, p. 4.

³³ Analyst S. Trush's opinion cited in *ibid.*

the end of next year. Jiang is expected, however, to continue to head China's most powerful institution, the Central Military Commission.

Given the altering landscape and the long-standing Indo-Russian strategic relationship, the last thing Beijing wants is a U.S.-India military tie-up. But it is likely to reap what it has sowed. Just as it pushed India to go overtly nuclear through its proliferation at home and abroad, China is driving New Delhi closer to the United States by seeking preeminence through balance-of-power politics. At a time of growing Indo-U.S. consultations on strategic cooperation, Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji's recent Indian tour signaled Chinese desire to decelerate that process by emphasizing areas of potential Sino-Indian cooperation.

The fact, however, is that China's strategic goals aim to achieve military and economic security in a way that imposes limits on the capabilities of its potential rivals in Asia. The Sino-Indian relationship – characterized by slow, tentative and hardly hopeful negotiations to resolve the Himalayan border dispute – is likely to be more competitive than cooperative in the years ahead. The Indo-Pakistan relationship is going to remain even more uneasy. The nuclearized regional environment does not alter the basic military equations between India and Pakistan, or India and China. However, unless the international community can help stop Pakistan's state-sponsored cross-border terrorism, war on the subcontinent would be "inevitable," leading to consequences potentially disastrous for Pakistan's unity and integrity.³⁴

Regionally, the chances of peaceful transition to post-Taliban rule in Afghanistan seem bleak, given the bloodbaths and ethnic cleansing of the past and the deep divisions along ethnic and sectarian lines in Afghan society. In the foreseeable future, any government in Kabul, however multiethnic in character, will be able to exercise only nominal control over entire Afghanistan, with regional and local warlords ruling the roost. In the same way that the NATO protectorate of Bosnia-Herzegovina stands functionally partitioned into Serbian, Croatian and Muslim components despite outside intervention, the antiterror war in Afghanistan will not be able to stop powerful warlords who command ethnically pure military forces from forming or maintaining ethnic entities. These enclaves will form shifting, uneasy coalitions among themselves.

The 'Talibanization' of Pakistan, with the dominant Punjabi ethnic group playing the same role as the Pashtuns in Afghanistan, will exacerbate the ethnic schisms within the Pakistani society, posing a serious threat to the country's ability to hold itself together or provide stable governance. The ethnic ferment in Afghanistan and Pakistan – two artificially created states with no roots in history that have searched endlessly for a national identity – is a continuation of the ethnic unrest in the geographically contiguous Central Asia, Kashmir and Xinjiang.

Asia has at least three types of important players. Those like China which habitually use the expression "peace-loving nation" as a cover for aggressive pursuit of national interests. Those like the United States which

³⁴ Russian scholar Pavel Felgenhauer quoted in "War with India Would Split Pakistan: Expert," *Hindustan Times*, March 11, 2002.

use the idiom of “stability” to justify intervention in the affairs of other nations. And those like India that are afflicted by the “victim syndrome” and are reactive by nature, portraying themselves as victims in order to win international sympathy.

Only time will tell whether the regional practice of nuclear deterrence will be affected by the post-September 11 Asian developments and the expanding U.S. military presence on the continent. At a time when the United States itself is examining novel concepts of nuclear-weapons employment and new types of warheads, the theory and practice of deterrence cannot remain stagnant.

In a complex world marked by conflicting trends, it is apparent that each deterrent relationship will be different from the other. One thing, however, is already apparent: Pakistan no longer has the space in the new environment to openly brandish a nuclear threat against India. However, in China’s case, with nationalism serving as a substitute for declining ideology, nuclear weapons are likely to assume a greater national-security role.