
Executive Summary

Conflict Resolution and Peace Building: India-Pakistan Dialogue



The Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies organized a two and a half day India-Pakistan dialogue on Conflict Resolution and Peace Building in Bangkok from 5-7 October 2009, with support from the Ploughshares Fund. The aim of this dialogue was to provide members of the strategic community on both sides with a common platform to discuss issues that plague Indo-Pak relations and reflect on the possibilities of charting alternative course in the near future. The significance of this Track II initiative was further reinforced by the stalling of the composite dialogue process at the Track I level in the aftermath of the Mumbai attacks. The discussions, spanning over eight sessions, touched on a number of issues which are of critical importance in the bilateral relations ranging from analyzing Confidence Building Measures (CBM's), cross LoC interactions, the Siachen dispute, sharing of the Indus river waters, possibility of forging a common strategy for Afghanistan, expansion of Indo-Pak trade, the challenge posed by religious radicalism and terrorist violence to evolving better joint mechanisms for countering terrorism. The discussions, not only brought out the Indian and Pakistani perspectives on the issues highlighted above but also helped put forth key recommendations which will contribute towards addressing some of the key impediments that have constrained a forward movement in some key areas of concern in Indo-Pak relations such as Siachen, enhancement of Indo-Pak trade, expansion of CBM's.

SESSION 1: Two decades of CBMs: A Critical Assessment

Focus Questions

What have been the major achievements/failures of CBM's?

What are the major issues needed to make this effective?

What are the priority issues and areas for CBM's?

Pakistani Perspective

The Pakistani perspective was that CBMs have successfully worked in the areas of military, non-military and cross LOC in Kashmir. In the military sphere, the cease fire has been holding since 2003 (26 Nov), and the establishment of better communication channels between DGMOs were the other positives. The impediments have been the role of the intelligence agencies on both sides, lack of contact between senior military officers, and infrequent contacts at the highest political levels. The new issues adding to mistrust are terrorism, water disputes and Afghanistan. Two non-controversial issues amenable to negotiating new CBMs are environment and agriculture. A question repeatedly posed was what has been the cost of the status quo. There were references to institutional weakness in Pakistan hindering the expansion of CBMs. It was also debated whether the dialogue needs to move beyond the core issue, i.e., resolution of the Kashmir issue, and progress can be enhanced on non-core issues; thereby increasing mutual trust and an attempt made thereafter to address the core issue.



Indian Perspective

The Indian perspective was that the CBM process has followed a stop-go pattern, interrupted by incidents of blatant aggression and provocative terrorism against India which was seen in India as being aided and abetted from Pakistan. Nevertheless, CBMs like the ceasefire along the LoC have held, nuclear CBMs were negotiated and non military CBMs like increased road and rail connectivity were important. To bridge the trust deficit, resolution of issues like Siachen, further discussion of nuclear doctrines and policies as mentioned in the Lahore agreement and a relaxation of visa and trade restrictions would provide a fillip to



confidence building.

Looking Forward

There was a general consensus that the following would enhance mutual trust: military to military contacts; direct contacts between and intelligence agencies in India and Pakistan; frequent and less high profile contacts between the political leaderships; exchange of visits between the National Defence Colleges; utilizing the media to convey a message of harmony



and common values rather than allowing it to be a catalyst of distrust; bridging the gap between the lack of awareness among youth about each others' countries and harnessing civil society groups including associations of farmers and workers for better mutual understanding. There should also be a relaxation of visa norms and exploitation of the potential for enlarging bilateral trade. A proposal was suggested that a 50 page common history of the sub-continent be written jointly by eminent historians in order to remove mutual misperceptions among future generations.

Additionally, it was recognised that the 'core' issue as understood by both countries may have shifted with Pakistan raising the issue of water as a critical concern and India being no longer willing to sidestep the terrorism issue without concrete and transparent action being taken by Pakistan against the perpetrators of 26/11. The need to find a way around these constraints to resume the composite dialogue was acknowledged.

SESSION 2: Expanding the CBMs across the LOC

Indian Perspective

The Indian perspective was that the CBMs across the LOC were welcome, but they have thrown up functional problems due to the



Focus Questions

What will be the main benefits and costs to both countries?

What are the likely problems and issues that will be encountered?



varied needs of the people on both sides of the line of control. These problems arose from the restricted number of contact points on both sides of the LoC despite local demands, and new crossing points not being opened up like between Kargil and Skardu. There were further problems regarding modes of payment, as barter of goods was being employed. Additionally, travel restrictions across the LoC need to be reduced to facilitate the movement of people. The human issue of divided families, particularly Hindus and Sikhs, and the historic links between Jammu and Sialkot, as also between Ladakh and Skardu need to be recognised. An additional and powerful bonding modality can be the exchange of students and access to medical facilities.

Focus Questions

What is the current status of CBMs across the LoC?

What additional measures can be considered?

What force reductions may be possible by both sides?

How do we address the issue of the cross border movement of undesirable elements?

Can we make the LoC irrelevant?

Pakistani Perspective

The Pakistani perspective was that these CBMs were welcome. They did not impinge on the resolution of the core issue, for which other steps needed to be taken like making the LoC irrelevant, demilitarization, self governance and autonomy. The change of status in Gilgit and Baltistan appeared to be a step towards crystallization of the existing boundaries. On the negative side, the cycle of dialogue and its frequent interruption by acts of terrorism within India remained intact. Cross-LoC CBMs can only be a subset of India-Pakistan CBMs. The approach to CBMs has to be incremental, and should not overload the capacity to build on what has already been achieved before introducing new ideas. Means have to be found to link these CBMs, and create some common ground between the people on both sides of the LoC to address the issue of greater autonomy.

Looking Forward

There was agreement that cross-LoC CBMs have had a positive impact though their full potential remains to be exploited for reasons of practicality or lack of political will to take follow up measures. Trade needs to be depoliticised and seen as a cementing factor



for reviving economic links and traditional trade routes across the LOC.

SESSION 3: Resolving Siachen

Indian Perspective

The Indian presentation addressed the practical steps that could be taken by the Indian military for a step-by-step demilitarization of Siachen after the authentication of actual ground position line (AGPL) is undertaken. In the past the Indian Army has insisted that maps showing present positions must be countersigned. However, the requirement could be achieved by attaching marked maps and satellite photos obtained by national technical means with the demilitarisation agreement. It was also contested whether the shrinkage of this glacier is entirely due to human intervention or is part of a global fluctuation in the size of glaciers due to climate change and so on. In principle, the entire glaciated region between falling within the NJ 9842, K2, KK Pass triangle should be declared an international science park and peace zone and made the locus of a range of meteorological, glacier and hydrological studies that will enable both sides cooperatively to cope with climate change impacts. This will require political authentication of the AGPL and delineation of the LOC from NJ 1982 “thence North to the glaciers” without leaving any no-man’s land, as prescribed under the Karachi Agreement of July 1949.

Pakistani Perspective

The Pakistani presentation emphasised the link between military presence in the glaciated region and its unprecedented rate of shrinkage. The entire issue of Siachen needs to be de-strategized as linking it to strategic consequences would make the issue more intractable. It should instead be turned into a peace park.



Looking Forward

It was recognised that while the ecological argument of Pakistan can be used as a counter to the Indian

Focus Questions

Why is the strategic relevance of the Siachen glacier region?

Why has a resolution evaded both sides and what are the principal reasons for the continued occupation?

How do we break the deadlock?

What are the prospects of a high altitude ecological park?

Focus Questions

Does the Indus water treaty address the issue of river waters between India and Pakistan today?

What are the new issues/problems emerging, in relating to water?

strategic argument and, furthermore, while India can defend its stand on demilitarization only after authentication of current positions while Pakistan can insist that the issue is political and not cartographic, no overall progress is possible until there is greater trust between India and Pakistan.



SESSION 4:

Optimizing river water use: Reviewing Indus Water Treaty after 50 years

Pakistani Perspective

Pakistani presentations recognised that the Treaty had functioned successfully and did not need to be abrogated. There was however an impression in Pakistan that they were denied their fair share of water. This was becoming a sensitive public issue. Pakistan has proposed joint watershed management as the inevitable solution to maintain sustainable flow in the upstream states to control floods and soil erosion. Greater transparency regarding hydrological data of all upstream areas including 3D data was demanded. It was also conceded that public discourse on water in Pakistan was being shaped by ill informed public articulations based on rumour and rhetoric. Because Pakistan was reaching levels of water distress, corrective measures like meetings between officials dealing with water on the two sides, and more informed public discourse was essential.

Indian Perspective

The Indian presentation underscored the success of the IWT which had served well by dividing the Indus basin waters and enabled each country to move forward and accomplish a first green revolution. However, India has been able to utilize no more than a fraction of its prescribed share of the waters of the three western rivers, owing to political objections





from Pakistan, while the latter has no access to the upper catchments of the three rivers allocated to it as these lie in Indian controlled territory. Hence the need to avail of Article 7 of the Treaty titled “Future Cooperation” in order to maximize utilization of the potential of the

three Western rivers to mutual benefit in a sustainable and optimal manner through joint surveys and development of the upper basins of the three Western rivers in view of the threats and uncertainties emanating from gathering climate change. There would be no more potent means of making “boundaries irrelevant” in J&K and binding the two parts of the erstwhile Princely state as well as India and Pakistan in a common cause for the greater good of all concerned.

Looking Forward

In view of water being vital for both nations due to livelihood and agrarian demands, growing public dissonance can negatively impact bilateral relations in years to come and become a new core issue. Steps can be taken to increase exchange of information to increase transparency on supply and utilization of existing water resources. The public discourse needs to be better informed and less rhetorical. Perhaps a public discussion between experts from the two countries can help in shaping perceptions.

SESSION 5: Evolving a common strategy for Afghanistan

Pakistani Perspective

The Pakistani presentation underlined that instability in Afghanistan is likely to persist, and would impact Pakistan and India. It emphasised the potential encirclement of Pakistan by an unstable Afghanistan to the west and India to the east, underscoring the need for a stable Afghanistan. NATO and the US are seen as



Focus Questions

What specific measures need to be pursued to effectively harness the river waters?

How do we address future water needs of both countries?



occupying forces and the only lasting solution to Afghanistan is to let Afghans run their own affairs. The Taliban will continue to be a factor in the future of Afghanistan. It cannot be denied its regional role. Indo-Pak cooperation in Afghanistan is hampered by a great trust deficit between the two countries. If the Indian role is restricted to developmental assistance, that could be the starting point for Indo-Pak cooperation (implicit being Pakistan allowing overland transit for Indian goods shipped to Afghanistan). Any regional security role in Afghanistan is unacceptable to Pakistan other

than the security forces of Islamic countries minus the Arabs. The ideal means for bilateral discussion on this sensitive issue are through the back channel and not as part of Indo-Pak parleys.

Focus Questions

Assessment of the current situation after the Presidential elections.

What are the implications of the US Af-Pak strategy and its likely fall outs, including possible withdrawal.

Indian Perspective

The post election stability in Afghanistan and the Obama administration's likely course of action was spelt out. The worst case scenario was a calibrated withdrawal by US-ISAF forces followed by a Taliban upsurge leading to their defacto control of political power in Afghanistan. This would drive neighbours like India, Iran and Russia to form a pre 9/11 alliance to support the forces within Afghanistan that oppose the Taliban. For ensuring that this does not happen, India has a vested interest in the success of the NATO and US forces to stabilise Afghanistan and establish a new neutral multiethnic federal structure which would perforce have a weak centre with greater delegation of authority to the regions. India should be willing to discuss with other regional players, including Pakistan, the contribution of security forces to a hybrid (US)/Nation-regional force under UN auspices in order to attain counter-insurgency success. If Pakistan has indeed realised that its threat is greater from radical Islam as represented by Taliban/al Qaida than from India, then the greatest confidence building measure for India and Pakistan would be cooperation to stabilise Afghanistan and neutralise the Taliban. India has reassured Pakistan that its Consulates and aid



programme in Afghanistan are in no way involved in fuelling insurgency in Balochistan.

Looking Forward

While there was agreement that a neutral Afghanistan would be in the interests of both countries, there was divergence on what a 'stable Afghanistan' meant. While for Pakistan that phrase implied a free hand being given to the Taliban, for India it would have to be a new Taliban sans the senior leadership from the pre-9/11 period which has close links to al Qaida and the Pakistani military.



To overcome this hiatus, the following can be considered:

1. A track II Indo-Pak in-depth discussion of Afghanistan
2. Joint reconstruction and development projects where material can be utilised from Pakistan and funds and technology from India
3. Cooperation in the energy sector by switch trade of electricity from Central Asia being utilised by Afghanistan-Pakistan with an equal amount being made available by Pakistan to India.

Re-examining the viability from the security and economic angles of TAPI (Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India) pipeline.

SESSION 6: Enhancing India-Pakistan Trade

Looking Forward

There was greater consensus on the issue of trade and recognition that in today's globalised world trade will move with or without the support of governments. Hence the informal trade between India and Pakistan, i.e., via third countries is much larger than direct bilateral trade. The potential for official trade is huge and



Focus Questions

What are Indian and Pakistani strategic interests in Afghanistan?

How could the differences in strategic interests be rationalized to mutual advantage?

Can we evolve a common strategy for Afghanistan?

Focus Questions

What are the obstacles to the implementation of the SAFTA?

What are the major issues in improving the bilateral trade and who are the major stakeholders?

What specific measures to be pursued to enhance the Indo-Pak trade?

largely unfulfilled. The reason for this has been the use of trade as a negotiating chip in bilateral relations. The industrial base in Pakistan being narrow, there is a fear of Indian imports damaging it. Similar fears existed in India when India opened up its market to China. The result has been a success story where trade has flourished while political differences like over the border issue have been placed on a parallel track. A number of suggestions were made on the future steps that can be taken. These are

1. Increase the positive list of tradable goods
2. Open additional border trade axes and increase air links
3. Facilitate grant of business visas and contact between Chambers of Commerce and groups of traders
4. Re-examine energy links and gas pipelines
5. Consider cooperation in pharmaceutical and agriculture sectors
6. Work towards opening transit routes through Pakistan for integration with the South Asian and Central Asian markets. In turn, Pakistan could have overland access to Bangladesh and the ASEAN through the planned Asian Highway.

An expanding Indian economy, instead of being perceived as a threat by Pakistan could become the engine for South Asian economic and industrial integration and growth, bringing investment and jobs to Pakistan.



SESSION 7: Religious Radicalism and dangers of terrorism and violence

Pakistani Perspective

Various factors were listed as the trigger points for religious radicalism in Pakistan, particularly those stemming from Wahabi orthodox beliefs. The main factor was the funding available both within Pakistan, and



from the Arab world for promoting Wahabi Islam. While the declining institutional capacity of the Pakistani state has failed to deliver on governance and created space for religious extremism, the rise of religious radicalism has accelerated the demise

of democratic structures in Pakistan. The fallout of the Iranian revolution on religious radicalism in the region cannot be understated.

Indian Perspective

For India, the phenomenon of religious radicalism is not new and has existed with both intra and inter-faith dimensions. What has made it more potent was the recent mix of terrorism and radicalisation. Additionally, developments in India's neighbourhood have tended to radicalise Indian groups.

Looking Forward

There was general consensus that Islam was not the only religion undergoing radicalisation. The rise of radicalisation needs to be viewed within the context of a global religious resurgence, which stems from generous funding, but also the heightened sense of despondency among the people that states are unable to adequately address. This institutional incapacity needs to be addressed first to arrest and understand rising religious fundamentalism.

SESSION 8: Evolving better Joint Mechanisms to Counter Terrorism

Pakistani Perspective

Pakistan recognises the danger that radical Islam is posing to its polity and way of life. However, public pressure from India to act against the top leaders of LeT, generates resistance as Pakistan does not want to be seen as submitting to Indian pressure. The



Focus Questions

What are the major issues relating to radicalism and terrorism in India and Pakistan?

How does radicalism and terrorism in one country affect the other?

How can India and Pakistan work together to address the challenges emerging out of radicalism and terrorism?

issue would have been better resolved if it had been taken up through the back channel. It was also proposed that joint investigations would be politically more acceptable to deal with terrorist acts when cross-border complicity is suspected.

Focus Questions

What measures exist in India and Pakistan to jointly counter terrorism?

How imperative is a joint mechanism?

What should be the focus of this mechanism and could this be pursued?

Indian Perspective

Terrorism has interrupted the Indo-Pak dialogue process over the last decade. Since the Mumbai train bombings in 2006 it was found no longer possible to ignore this phenomenon. The dialogue was only restarted after a Joint Anti Terror Mechanism (JATM) was set up to address the issue in a focussed an ongoing basis. This was to insulate the dialogue process from any further terrorist acts. It was, however, found that the mechanism was ineffective in addressing the basic problem of Pakistan not recognizing the existence of this nexus. After 26/11, this conundrum has finally surfaced. The issue now confronting India is to insist on visible steps being taken by Pakistan to punish the obvious perpetrators, but also those who have created the terrorist organisations and are their leaders. No other mechanism is likely to facilitate the restoration of composite dialogue at this moment.

Looking Forward

A widely accepted view was that it would be useful for contacts being established between the intelligence agencies of the two countries. It was recognised that the difficulty would be a mismatch between the agencies on the two sides, since there is no equivalent of the Federal Investigative Agency (FIA) in India.



INDIAN DELEGATION

1. Maj Gen **Dipankar Banerjee**, Director IPCS
2. AVM **Kapil Kak**, Additional Director, CAPS
3. Brig **Gurmeet Kanwal**, Director CLAWS
4. Brig **Arun Sahgal**, Consultant IPCS
5. Mr **PR Chari**, Research Professor, IPCS
6. Dr D **Suba Chandran**, Deputy Director, IPCS
7. Mr **Dhirendera Singh**, Member of Second Commission on Center-State Relations
8. Amb **KC Singh**, Former Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs
9. Mr **SS Bloreia**, Former Chief Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir
10. Dr **Mallika Joseph**, Deputy Director, IPCS
11. Mr **Raghav Sharma**, Research Officer, IPCS



PAKISTANI DELEGATION

1. Amb **Riaz Khokkar**, Former Foreign Secretary, Pakistan
2. Amb **Aziz Khan**, Former High Commissioner to India
3. Prof **Rasul Baksh Rais**, Professor, School of Humanities and Social Sciences, LUMS
4. Prof **Pervez Hoodbhoy**, Professor, Department of Physics, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad
5. Amb **Najimmuddin A Shaikh**, Former Foreign Secretary
6. Mr **Arshad H Abbassi**, Consultant UNDP
7. AVM **Shahzad Chaudhry**, Former Ambassador to Sri Lanka



THE IDEA BEHIND THE DIALOGUE

The Institute, as a part of its project titled “Conflict Resolution and Peace Building,” organized a Indo-Pak dialogue at track-II level in Bangkok during 5-7 October 2009. The main objectives of this dialogue are the following:

- To facilitate a dialogue process on all these issues and keeping official channels informed.
- Formulate areas of common action and policies.
- Address issues of concern to both nations in order to facilitate a dialogue process whenever it commences at the official level.
- Build a core group of concerned senior experts to address these issues of mutual concern and suggest feasible alternative resolution mechanisms.

Focus of the Project

The primary focus of the dialogue were the following four themes:

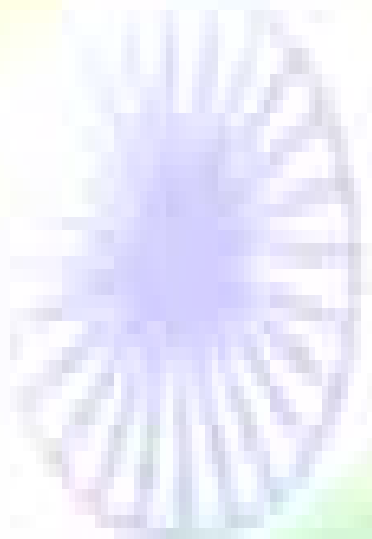
- Confidence Building
- Religious Radicalism and the dangers of terrorism and violence
- India-Pakistan Cooperation and Collaboration on issues of Mutual Interest
- Evolving Better Joint Mechanisms to Counter Terrorism

Phases of the Project

The Institute executed this project in three phases. In Phase I, the Institute commissioned Background Papers on issues relating to the project. These background papers have a common pattern; they include a short history of the issue, perspectives of India and Pakistan, major questions involved, attempts towards conflict resolution in the past and recommendations. These background papers have been published as Issue Briefs on the IPCS website.

In Phase II, the Institute organized the bilateral dialogue, in which ten experts from both countries discussed the four themes mentioned above. At the end of the Dialogue, the IPCS prepared a Workshop Report, summing up the proceedings.

In Phase III, the Executive Summary of the Workshop Report (the current document) was presented in New Delhi to elicit opinion from the government and the strategic community.



INSTITUTE OF PEACE AND CONFLICT STUDIES

B 7/3 Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi 110029, INDIA

Tel: 91-11-41652556-59; Fax: 91-11-41652560

WWW.IPCS.ORG