INDIA – PAKISTAN RELATIONS FROM FOREIGN POLICY PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract: The ever intriguing relationship between India and Pakistan is the subject in this paper, where the main argument throughout the text refers to the tensions of both countries where escalation would not come as a surprise. Both nuclear powers with undetermined nuclear arsenal present a continuous danger in the South Asian region. Nevertheless, balancing and containment foreign policy is increasingly being implemented by both countries, where the main conflict of interests refer to the Kashmir region and spreading their power and domination in Afghanistan.

Keywords: India, Pakistan, conflict, nuclear race, foreign policy

1. INTRODUCTION

Ever since the partition of the Indian subcontinent in 1947 under the British Empire, India and Pakistan are major rivals. Their enmity has religious and historical aspects, and is reflected in the long-running conflict over Afghanistan and Jammu - Kashmir. This recently escalated into a dangerous armed and nuclear arms race.

In the days of the Russian occupation of Afghanistan, India has proved to be a good neighbor to the Afghans giving refuge to thousands of Afghan refugees, while Pakistan did the opposite by imposing various forms of harassment. In addition, the Taliban were created by Pakistan for the destruction of Afghanistan, which is not only a front line in NATO’s fight against the Taliban, but also indirect/proxy war between India and Pakistan. Pakistan is trying to develop closer ties in the uptake of United States in 2001 when they took down the Taliban from power in Kabul. New Delhi here saw the opportunity of exploiting the gap between the newly formed Afghan civilian government and Pakistan in order to expand its influence in Afghanistan, which in turn is strongly supported by the United States.

Another conflict hotspot is Kashmir, for which India and Pakistan have fought at least three times, including Indo-Pakistani wars of 1947, 1965 and 1999. India officially believes that Kashmir is an integral part of India, and she was willing to give autonomy but within the scope of the Indian constitution for Kashmir. On the other hand, Pakistan claims that Kashmir is part of its “Chicken’s neck”\(^{190}\), whose final status should be decided by the people in Kashmir.

2. INDIAS’ FOREIGN POLICY

India is developing towards an open economy, but traces of the autocratic policies of the past still exist. Economic liberalization, industrial deregulation, privatization of state companies and the reduced control of foreign trade and investments began in 1990 and therefore the country’s development was accelerated. From 1997 onwards it averaged more than 7% per annum. The Indian example is original from international political economy perspective, since it relies more on domestic market than the classic Asian strategy of import-export of labor-intensive services and low-cost products. Its policy is directed toward stimulating Indian population to be consumer oriented instead of attracting investment in the production of cheap products. It primarily stimulates investment in the services sector rather than industry. This approach provided isolation against the global crisis and a degree of stability, which is as impressive as the degree of its development. From today’s perspective India is becoming a superpower that has a leading role in world stability, not only in the Asian region but in the Arab-African and other neighbor regions.

Aside from long-term strategic relationship with Russia (USSR was a major supplier of weapons to India during the wars with Pakistan and China), India has close defense ties with France and more recently with Israel. After the Cold War the country is continuously increasing its economic, strategic and military ties with the US and EU.

The request for India to become a permanent member of the Security Council of the United Nations is based on the fact that it is not only the 4th fastest growing economy, but it has shown its leadership abilities internationally, through its contribution to UN peacekeeping missions, and the contribution and responsibility to

\(^{190}\) The Chicken's Neck, or the Akhnoor Dagger is the name for a narrow strip of Pakistani territory that extends into the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir south of Akhnoor. [1]
third world. In security terms, aside of its active role in the Association for Regional Cooperation in South Asia, and the World Trade Organization and also actively contributes to 35 UN peacekeeping operations. In the late 80s the Indian army intervened twice overseas at the invitation of neighboring countries peacekeeping operation in Sri Lanka (87-90) and armed intervention in order to stop a coup in the Maldives.

India participated in the East Asia Summit, the G8 + 5 as well as other multilateral forums. The conclusions of the summit of G-20 held in May 2012 decided to increase the financial resources of the IMF 460 million dollars out of which 10 million are provided by India, which make this country in the world political stage among the leading political and financial contributors in the world.

India has close economic ties with the countries of South America, Asia and Africa and is actively working to strengthen the partnership with ASEAN, Japan and South Korea. One of the priorities of the foreign policy of India is to improve bilateral relations with China and expand the strategic cooperation, thus putting aside the possible side bottlenecks in the relationship given that the US will increase its presence in the Asia-Pacific region. The nuclear test in China in 1964 and Chinese military threats for intervention in support of Pakistan has forced India to develop its own nuclear weapons. However, today India adheres to the policy of "no first use" of nuclear weapons. India also is developing its own anti-missile shield and together Russia's a fifth-generation aircraft gunner.

3. RELATIONS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND INDIA THROUGH AFGHAN PERSPECTIVE

India’s strained relations with Pakistan are reflected in the four military conflicts of 1947, 1965, 1971 and 1999, where three out of the four wars were fought for the disputed territory of Kashmir. Both Pakistan and India prioritize their relations with Afghanistan than with any other country. Taliban regime in Afghanistan was strongly supported by Pakistan before the attacks of September 11 to which India firmly opposed and criticized Pakistan for its support.

The objective of India is building relations with Afghanistan in order to establish a presence in the country and contain Pakistani influence. India is currently engaged in bilateral talks with Pakistan, where one of the main themes that runs continuously, is the use of bases in Pakistan by militant groups aiming to attack India. The developing relations between New Delhi and Kabul - specifically, the exchange of intelligence information - allows India to acquire information about the activities along the Afghan-Pakistani border and militant networks that occupy the region. This information is then used as an asset in bilateral talks with Pakistan. Pakistan sees the inclusion of India in Afghanistan as a threat to its concept of "strategic penetration", in which Afghanistan is seen as a "backyard" of Pakistan.

To India, Afghanistan is a door to minerals and energy supplies in Central Asia that are needed to maintain its rapid economic growth. However, major infrastructure investments by India must be protected from attacks by Taliban plots based in Pakistan.

India's ambitious package of aid in Afghanistan is more than 1.5 billion - to build a remote mountain roads, the establishment of telephone, Internet and satellite connections and re-opening of schools and hospitals. Another strategic project is the opening of the so-called 'Afghan Silk Road "', supported by India and Iran, which would elude the Pakistani-Indian border Vaga, strictly controlled by Pakistan.

On the one hand, the rise of India, its superiority in terms of indicators of power (territory, population, economy, power), on the other hand, the weakening of Pakistan due to internal challenges caused by rising aggressiveness, social fragmentation and economic problems could to transform this rivalry in an irrelevant conflict of two unequal parties. However, this asymmetrical relationship and rivalry stand, despite India's power engine as significantly greater than Pakistan who is constantly degraded as a credible challenger to India, a number of factors influence mitigation and reducing this disparity between them:

• non-resolution of the territorial dispute in Kashmir where prevails rebellious style operations and tactics; Gilgit, and Balochistan;
• opening of new fronts, strategies and tactics of warfare to terrorism;
• the nuclear capabilities of both countries;
• Pakistani blockade of supply transport routes to India through Afghanistan;
• the US "double game" in terms of common interests with Pakistan and with Afghanistan through its AvPak strategy, which results with the increase of vulnerability of both countries where rivalry and distrust prevail in the background.

4. NUCLEAR RIVALRY

CIA indicates the permanent Indian-Pakistani conflict as a hotspot with the greatest danger of escalating into nuclear war. During the Kargil war in 1999, Pakistan came close to using its nuclear weapons in case of further deterioration of the military situation. This conflict remained the only war between the two declared nuclear powers.
The Indo-Pakistani conflict of 2001-2002 was a military conflict which resulted with the recruitment and placement of soldiers along the line of control of the international border from both sides in the Kashmiri region. These two confirmed nuclear powers never signed the agreement on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Both countries have weapons of fission, similar to the original designs developed by the United States in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Pakistan’s main nuclear weapons are assembly rockets and India are reportedly gravity bombs deployed on fighter jets. Nevertheless it is difficult to determine the actual size and composition of the nuclear arsenals of India and Pakistan. It is believed that India has about 30 to 35 nuclear warheads, slightly less than Pakistan, which in turn might have up to 48.

5. EFFORTS FOR PEACE

Pakistan is in political crisis itself. The much needed peace and reconciliation in neighboring Afghanistan was essential to stability in neighboring Pakistan. Due to this reason the US and Kabul sought an active role from Islamabad to facilitate the process by persuading Afghani Taliban to join the peace process. Pakistan has repeatedly promised to help in the peace process.

Despite the serious and relatively recent threats, relations between India and Pakistan fluctuate over the last decade. However, after the terrorist attacks of November 26, 2008 in Mumbai, India would not reject war with Pakistan. Although Pakistan and India talk to resolve longstanding disputes, the new prime minister Nawaz Sharif (2013-) faces challenge of how to restore the confidence of India for fruitful outcome of the dialogue. The enthusiastic upswing that was in perspective, resulted with worse outcome than expected. The Cross-Line of Control operations established by India to tackle terroristic groups in Kashmir, as a response to the attack at Uri in Kashmir on 18th of September in which 19 Indian soldiers were killed, only made Pakistan more angry accusing that India is providing support to separatists movements in Balochistan. India indeed supports Baloch movement of self-determinism, but for according to Pakistan for selfish causes since Balochistan possesses large quantities of Pakistan’s natural resources and provides access to the Arabian Sea.

Nevertheless an alignment policy to superpowers seems to take place gradually with the Chinese investments in Pakistan as part of the One Belt, One Road initiative and the U.S. increasing support to India. With Beijing guarding its back, the international pressure on Pakistan to discontinue its support to terroristic organizations, seems milder. As well as military attempts to destabilize the country endanger Chinese investment projects worth billions of dollars such as the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor. It looks like the rules of the game are narrowed down to an eye for an eye policy, with India adopting more aggressive policy that before.

6. TERRORISM IN PAKISTAN

Pakistan has been accused by India, Afghanistan, the US and UK of involvement in terrorism in Kashmir and Afghanistan. In July 2009, the President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari admitted that Pakistan's government has “created and fed” terrorist groups to achieve its short-term foreign policy goals. According to an analysis published by ‘Sabani’ - Center for Policy in the Middle East at the Brookings Institution in 2008, Pakistan was the “most active” state sponsor of terrorism worldwide, including helping a large number of terrorist groups fighting against India in Kashmir and is a major sponsor of the Taliban forces fighting against the Afghan government backed by the United States.

Terrorism has become a major and highly destructive phenomenon in recent years. Two of the main causal factors of terrorism in Pakistan are sectarian / religious violence and active fostering of the Pakistani state terrorism for indirect strategic objectives.

The bombing in 2008 in Kabul was a suicide bomb terrorist attack on the Indian embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan. US intelligence officials have suggested that the intelligence agency of Pakistan has planned the attack. Pakistan tried to deny the responsibility, but former President George W. Bush faced the then Pakistani Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani with evidence and warned that in case of another such attack he will take “serious action”.

7. CONCLUSION

India and Pakistan have a long way to go if they want to build a relationship based on confidence. The conflicts at stake are gradually expanding, hence proving a sense of conflict spillover instead of increasing cooperation spillovers. It has been argued that perhaps greater economic interaction can promote interdependence which would inevitably stimulate cooperation and relaxation of tensions. However, their relationship is quite complex having in mind the cross-border terrorism coming from Pakistan, territorial disputes over Kashmir and conflicts over Afghanistan and Balochistan and their increasing stubbornness reflected in revolt present huge obstacle which require investments from both side to overcome these differences.
REFERENCES