

# THE ROLE OF CRISES IN THE ARMS CONTROL PROCESS

## A LESSON FOR INDIA AND PAKISTAN

*This article explores how crises help in the initiation of arms control processes and how catastrophic relationships at times have positive impacts. It examines how the Cold War helped start arms control talks between the United States and the Soviet Union and why the two countries took steps for controlling, managing and regulating their weapons. Events like the Cuban Missile Crisis highlighted the possibility of nuclear war and urged the two superpowers to take steps to control and reduce their arsenals. In South Asia as well, India and Pakistan learned from Cold War lessons and initiated arms control measures after engaging in potentially disastrous confrontations. This article details Cold War and South Asian arms control processes and points out that most agreements and treaties have been signed after coming to the brink of nuclear conflict or waging major wars.*

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**T**he value of peace is seldom appreciated by nations at peace, as it is perceptible only after facing crises. At the same time, the horrors of war are rarely recognised by nations that are not engaged in battle. In the early years of the Cold War, the United States of America (US) and the Soviet Union did not contemplate the need to control and regulate their weapons. However, after the Cuban Missile Crisis, both countries took steps to control their arms and weapons. This paper focuses on how the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Star Wars issue impacted

the control of armaments between the US and Soviet Union and how the South Asian nuclear states of India and Pakistan followed suit after *Brasstacks* (the South Asian Missile Crisis) and other crises.

#### THE PRE-DÉTENTE PERIOD AND THE IMPACT OF THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS ON ARMS CONTROL

In the contemporary world, the politics of deterrence has shifted to the politics of arms control and disarmament. The Cuban Missile Crisis was an important milestone in the legacy of arms control as it ushered in a new era where the two superpowers took steps to control weapons. The latent conflict in the Cold War erupted in the form of confrontation

in the Cuban Missile Crisis, termed by many as the “most dramatic and hazardous” confrontation of the nuclear age (Kurt Gottfried and Bruce G Blair, *Crisis Stability and Nuclear War*, US: Oxford University Press, 1988, p169). Following this crisis, the two superpowers initiated several agreements and treaties on global arms control like the *Partial Test Ban Treaty (PTBT)* and the *Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)* as well as bilateral efforts like the *Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT)* and the *Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START)*. In other words, the Cuban Missile Crisis compelled the two superpowers to face the challenges of controlling and regulating arms and weapons and even disarming.

The Cuban Missile Crisis left an important legacy central to nuclear safety, as the nuclear threat became a real possibility. On 20 June 1963, just after the crisis both the US and Soviet Union concluded an important memorandum of understanding (MoU) at Geneva regarding the establishment of a direct communications link popularly called the *Hotline* (US State Department (USSD),

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available at <http://www.state.gov>). The agreement stated that each government would be responsible for the arrangements of the link on its own territory, including taking necessary steps to ensure the continuous functioning of the link and delivery of messages from the other party. Nuclear checks and balances and other important strategic tactics had been demonstrated in the Cuban Missile Crisis, as before it a series of disarmament and arms control initiations had taken place like the *Antarctic Treaty* (1959) and the *Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Treaty* (1961). The *Hotline Agreement* had important consequences in the relations between the two rivals. Both countries now ensured the delivery of important messages to the heads of

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government and the hotline was widely used during the arms control process. In 1971, the US and Soviet Union modified and supplemented the previous MoU at Washington. The hotline was used during the Middle East Crises of 1967 and 1970 (John H Barton and Lawrence D Weiler, *International Arms Control: Issues and Agreement*, Arms Control Study Group, Stanford: Stanford University

Press, 1976). Although it was a modest instrument and a small step, the *Hotline Agreement* laid a strong foundation for building the arms control process.

In 1963, after the resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis, a negotiation on test ban was re-initiated at Moscow. In 1962, the US had submitted a working paper to an eighteen-nation disarmament committee on the reduction of risk in war through accidents, failures of communication or miscalculations. The US proposed the establishment of reliable and rapid communications amongst heads of government including the United Nations (UN) Secretary General. The paper also highlighted the Soviet draft treaty on general and complete disarmament of 15 March 1962, which however did not mention certain provisions like risk of war by accidents, miscalculations or surprise attacks. However, a deadlock ensued as the Soviet Union only “agreed in principle to a testing ban with no verification regime or protocols” (*Wikipedia*, available at <http://www.en.wikipedia.org>). The

problem was resolved after Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev agreed to ban underground nuclear weapons tests. He had experienced the risk of an imminent nuclear war during the Cuban Missile Crisis and the real danger of such a war may have urged him to reach an agreement. The *PTBT* on the prohibition of nuclear tests (available at <http://www.nti.org>) was signed by the foreign ministers of Britain, the Soviet Union and the US secretary of state on 5 August 1963 and entered into force on 10 October 1963. *PTBT* negotiations were lengthy and time-consuming—they started on 15 July 1963 and an agreement was reached only 21 days later (*Wikipedia, ibid*). The *PTBT* required member-states to prohibit, prevent and not test nuclear weapons. It prohibited carrying out nuclear weapons explosions in atmospheric outer space, as well as underwater including the high seas. The treaty has an unlimited duration. Arms control experts and scholars as well as public opinion believe the “*PTBT* marked a breakthrough in disarmament” (Marek Thee, “Arms Control: The Retreat from Disarmament, the Record to Date and the Search for Alternatives”, *Journal of Peace Research*, vol14, no20, 1977, p97).

The *PTBT* was the first attempt to control nuclear weapons and was followed by another significant multination treaty. The US and Soviet Union were optimistic of prohibiting the spread of nuclear weapons and in 1968 initiated a new agreement—the *NPT*. The treaty was made during the peak of the Vietnam War (regarded as an indirect war between the two superpowers). The UN General Assembly endorsed the American and Soviet resolution on limiting the proliferation of nuclear weapons and passed a resolution, which was opened for signature on 1 July 1968. Nuclear weapon states including the US and Soviet Union signed the resolution. The *NPT* came into force on 5 March 1970 and urged nuclear weapon states to help curtail the nuclear arms race. Some countries however refused to sign it and accused the *NPT* of upholding the monopoly of nuclear powers and not achieving nuclear disarmament (Thee, *ibid*, p106). The

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duration of the *NPT* was extended indefinitely in 1995. The nuclear danger today is increasing as several nations have acquired nuclear weapons and restricting their spread has become necessary for the safety of the world. The initial Cold War period (before *détente*) witnessed many dangerous events and the US–Soviet relationship was constructed on the maxim of “mutually assured destruction”

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(MAD). The US formulated strategies called “Massive Retaliation” and “Brinkmanship”, the Western bloc formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), while the Eastern bloc countered with the Warsaw Pact. The Berlin Crisis, the Poznan Rebellion, the October Event in Poland, the Hungarian Revolution and the Suez Crisis took place in the early period of the Cold War. These catastrophic events

emphasised the need to prevent nuclear conflict.

In the 1970s, with *détente* there was an easing of tension between the two blocs. The *détente* was due to the financial burden borne by the Soviet Union in the nuclear arms race and the financial exhaustion of the US from the Vietnam War. The fear of nuclear war and the emergence of Sino–Soviet differences also contributed to increased relaxation. *Détente* helped the superpowers move towards arms control and disarmament. The duration of *détente* is not fixed and its timeline varies for different scholars. According to Csaba Békés, Director, Cold War History Research Centre, Budapest, Hungary, (*Cold War, Détente and the 1956 Hungarian Revolution*, working paper submitted at “The Cold War as Global Conflict”, International Centre for Advanced Studies, New York University, September 2002, available at <http://www.nyu.edu>) *détente* started after Stalin’s death, but real *détente* occurred only in the mid-1960s. However, according to the *Britannica* (available at <http://www.britannica.com>) *détente* took place from 1969 to 1979. A conference on European security was held in Helsinki (3–5 July 1972) in which both West and East bloc nations participated. On 1 August 1975, thirty-five heads of state from Canada, the European nations and the US formulated the *Helsinki Final Act*,

a code for security and building good relations, aimed at promoting mutual respect of sovereignty, territorial integrity, non-use of forces, peaceful settlement of disputes and the non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. Relations, both political and trade, between the two blocs were cordial.

The relationship between the US and Soviet Union however, remained tense as the Cold War carried on and there was competition on militarisation. However, these did not hold back the arms control process. Poor relations had raised the nuclear war risk for both countries and now urged them to tackle the problem. The two continued taking steps towards arms control and

significant agreements were signed during this difficult time. The rounds of *SALT* talks started in 1969. After a series of negotiations held alternately in Helsinki and Vienna, two important interim agreements on strategic offensive arms and anti-ballistic missile were signed in

Moscow in May 1972. *SALT I* negotiations were the first attempts to limit the delivery vehicles of nuclear weapons—both strategic nuclear offensive and defensive weapons (Thomas Graham, *Disarmament Sketches*, Washington: University of Washington Press, 2002, p36). *SALT II* was negotiated from 1972 to 1979. Basic elements of the *Aide Memoire*, which recorded this agreement, included a 2,400 equal aggregate limit on strategic nuclear delivery vehicles, limits on the deployment of new types of strategic offensive arms and important elements of the interim agreement were incorporated in the new agreement (USSD, *ibid*). *SALT* was an important landmark in arms control. According to the American arms control expert Avis T Bohlen (“The Rise and Fall of Arms Control” *Survival*, vol45, no3, Autumn 2003, pp7–34), the death of *SALT* (pause of arms control) indicated an end to serious arms control.

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#### THE SECOND EDITION OF THE COLD WAR: STAR WARS NEGOTIATIONS

In the 1980s, tensions between the two blocs heightened. The period of détente was over and there was talk of a “second” Cold War or “Star Wars” period. American President Ronald Reagan termed the Soviet Union an “evil empire”; the

latter stunned the US by conducting exercises in 1982; NATO countered with “*Able Archer*” in 1983; the “Euro Missile Crisis” took place and the *Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INFT)* talks failed in 1987 (“Superpower Diplomacy: The ‘Second’ Cold War 1980–5”, available at <http://www.americanforeignrelations.com>). As the danger of nuclear war escalated, both powers learnt new lessons. A tense decade was transformed into a productive one as a new milestone in arms control was reached—the foundation for *START* was laid, even though the agreement was signed only in the following decade.

The US and Soviet Union realised the necessity to secure their nuclear weapons. In October 1986, Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev met in Reykjavik, Iceland and agreed to begin formal negotiations to establish nuclear risk reduction centres. An agreement to this effect was signed in Washington on 15

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September 1987 and centres are located in respective capitals. After *SALT*, the US and Soviet Union negotiated another bilateral arms control pact. Although, negotiations for *START* (USSD, *ibid*) began in 1982, the treaty for the reduction and limiting of strategic offensive arms was signed only on 31 July 1991 and enforced in 1994. *START* had a series of arms control processes and *START II* was launched in 1993. It

aimed to continue the reduction of weapons, supplement the shortcomings of previous arms control treaties and fill the vacuum that existed under *START I*. However, *START II* did not come into force as in reaction to the US’s withdrawal from the *Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty*, Russia pulled out from *START II*.

The *INFT* was a successful arms control treaty signed on 8 December 1986, by Reagan and Gorbachev and came into force on 1 June 1988. It was the first treaty whereby the superpowers agreed to eliminate entire categories of nuclear weapons (The Arms Control Association, available at <http://www.armscontrol.org>). The *INFT* was signed on the eve of the collapse of the Soviet Union and before the end of the Cold War. Since then, the US and Russia have pursued their efforts for

bilateral arms control. Due to its economic collapse, Russia could not implement the programme for reducing, removing and safeguarding its stockpiles of nuclear weapons. US Senators Richard Lugar and Sam Nunn even proposed helping the former Soviet Union destroy and secure its weapons and stockpiles. The US supported the destruction of Soviet weapons under the *START I* programme. Billions of dollars have been spent to consolidate, destroy and secure weapons (Federation of American Scientists (FAS) “Cooperative Threat Reduction”, available at <http://www.fas.org>). The series of arms control measures did not end with the collapse of the Soviet Union, even though most efforts were a result of Cold War politics.

The US and Soviet Union were party to the *Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty*, signed in Paris on 19 November 1990 and entered into force in 1992—22 NATO member-states and former Warsaw Pact countries were participants. The US and Russia are also members of the Australia Group,

Missile Technology Control Regime, Nuclear Suppliers Group, Wassenaar Arrangement as well as the International Atomic Energy Agency. Both are founder members of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and participate in the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. Michael Krepon (“Nuclear Risk Reduction in South Asia” in PK Kumaraswamy (Ed), *Security Beyond Survival*, New Delhi: Sage Publication, 2004) while listing the nuclear risk reduction measures taken during the Cold War, argues that the US and Soviet Union agreements would not change the territorial *status quo* in the European theatre by military means. They avoided nuclear brinkmanship during the Cuban Missile Crisis by minimising or avoiding dangerous military practices. Although, the two powers engaged in indirect wars in Korea and Vietnam, they have not had direct

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military confrontation. Nor did they become involved in major military collisions or accidents during the Cold War.

Successfully executed lengthy negotiations over *SALT* and *START* led to positive results. The hotline communication link is practical and useful and both superpowers learnt the importance of establishing a reliable nuclear command and control system. Not satisfied with existing treaties, the two countries upgraded

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and supplemented agreements with modified versions. A new *Hotline Agreement* was signed in 1971, to complement the previous one signed in 1963 and *START* was signed to supplement *SALT* (Krepon, *ibid*, pp219–25). Cold War negotiations were mutual and reciprocal for selective and balanced arms limitations (Alexander and Keiger 2006: 188). In retrospect, the Cold War arms control

processes were products of a tense period and arms control treaties were signed during difficult times. The US and Soviet Union may not have freely chosen to coexist peacefully, but circumstances forced them to take action for peaceful coexistence—arms control was one way to achieve this goal.

#### LESSONS FOR SOUTH ASIA: A BLESSING IN DISGUISE

Cold War experiences gave rise to the exigency for arms control between the two superpowers, while several other countries realised the importance of arms control after suffering the horrors of war. India and Pakistan too learnt from such experiences. The Cuban Missile crisis led to the arms control process between the two superpowers—after *Brasstacks*, India and Pakistan also took initiatives on arms control measures and treaties were signed between the two.

In 1986, *Brasstacks* saw the biggest military exercise in South Asia. It involved the largest number of manpower, equipment, use of air power and deposits of ammunition near the exercise area. For India, *Brasstacks* was a routine military

exercise. At its peak, India deployed 400,000 troops (about half the Indian Army) near the Pakistani border (available at <http://www.globalsecurity.org>). India regarded the operation as a testing ground for new concepts of mechanisation, mobility and air support devised by the Chief of Army Staff, General Krishnaswamy Sundarji. Although, some believed that India intended to “launch swift surgical strikes against Sikh terrorist training and planning sites inside Pakistan” (*ibid*). It aimed at testing the Indian Army’s strategy of “offensive defensive” Hagerty, Devin T., 1998. The

Consequence of Nuclear Proliferation: Lesson from South Asia, Cambridge: MIT Press. However, the exercise sparked a crisis when Pakistan retaliated hastily. To counter India, it decided to arrange winter military exercises—one in Bahawalpur and another near the Jhelum–Chenab corridor. *Brasstacks* then transformed into a deep crisis due

to misperceptions and misconceptions, which became both the causes and effects of war (Kanti P Bajpai, PR Chari, Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema Stephen P Cohen, Sumit Ganguly, *Brasstacks and Beyond: Perception and Management of Crisis in South Asia*, New Delhi: Manohar, 1995, p100). From 8 December 1986 to 23 January 1987, India and Pakistan remained on the brink of war. The crisis was resolved through diplomatic negotiations. Some strategists believe the legacy of *Brasstacks* quickened the pace of nuclear proliferation in South Asia and led India and Pakistan to nuclear deterrence.

During *Brasstacks*, the hotline was used to avoid a serious arms race between the two states. The crisis pushed for Islamabad and New Delhi to convey messages to each other and both expressed their willingness to hold talks to ease tensions. *Brasstacks* was a good lesson for military strategy (George Perkovich, *India’s Nuclear Bomb: The Impact on Global Proliferation*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000, p281) and after it a recommendation was made for arms control measures and the establishment of direct political level contacts between the two nations. The use of symbolic actions like Pakistani President Zia ul Haq’s cricket diplomacy (Haq came to India to watch a cricket match in February 1987 followed by talks)

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and Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's participation in the Africa Fund defused tensions. The establishment of crisis management institutions, not relying on a single intelligence source and regular bureaucratic and military personnel consultations prevent crises from escalating (Bajpai, *et al, ibid*, pp111–2).

The lack of communication and miscommunication led to the *Brasstacks crisis*. Pre-notifications of military exercises are helpful and hotlines assist in conveying important messages. Although, during the crisis, neither country had nuclear

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weapons, nonetheless, the nuclear threat was a dominant issue (*ibid*, p106). The crisis urged the two states to move towards the development of nuclear weapons. Through *Brasstacks*, both India and Pakistan became aware of the importance of military strategy and the art of diplomacy. *Brasstacks* was not only a military exercise, but also a test of conventional deterrence between India and Pakistan and left an important legacy in arms control. Both countries realised that conventional deterrence

could fail between them. Before the crisis, India and Pakistan had fought major wars, but had also concluded repatriation and rehabilitation treaties to restore normalcy. The two states only aimed to regain what they had lost in war. After *Brasstacks*, the arms control process was started. In 1988, India and Pakistan signed nuclear confidence building measures like the *Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack against Nuclear Installations and Facilities*. Although neither country had acquired nuclear weapons until then, they paid attention to nuclear related installations.

#### SPREADING THE NET

*Brasstacks* was the beginning of confrontation between India and Pakistan. In 1990, terrorists started operations in Kashmir and this militancy changed relations between the two countries, which steadily worsened. Pakistan started

instigating infiltrations across the border. In 1989, Rubaiya the daughter of then Union Home Minister Mufti Mohammad Sayeed was kidnapped, ushering the start of militancy in Kashmir—local people were the first victims. From the beginning of 1990, militants actively ambushed and exchanged fire with Indian military forces. In 1990, New Delhi deputed a new governor to Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), showing that it wanted to resolve the Kashmir problem with “the stick rather than the carrot” approach (Sumit Ganguly and Devin T Hagerty, *Fearful Symmetry: India and Pakistan in the Shadow of Nuclear Weapons*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press and Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2005, p87).

The events of 1990 in Kashmir transformed into a conflict between India and Pakistan (David Hagerty, *The Consequences of Nuclear Proliferation: Lessons from South Asia*, Cambridge,

Massachusetts: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 2001, p140). The “Kashmir” or “Spring Crisis” is often viewed as the world’s second nuclear confrontation (PR Chari, Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema and Stephen P Cohen, *Perception, Politics and Security in South Asia: The Compound of Crisis of 1990*, London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, p3). It was an important episode between India and Pakistan since it provoked the further development of nuclear weapons. It was a complicated

and unique crisis—it involved domestic politics that led to the involvement of superpower states (Chari, *et al, ibid*, p2). Some strategic experts regard it as a nuclear crisis, as Pakistan put its nuclear arsenal on alert. *The Spring Crisis* was not a minor crisis even though US President George Bush did not certify whether Pakistan had nuclear weapons (Perkovich, *ibid*, p312). It was acute to the extent that India set up a secret committee headed by Defence Minister AS Arunachalam to respond to a nuclear attack from Pakistan (Perkovich, *ibid*, 313). Some scholars

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have designated South Asia as the most dangerous conflict prone region in the world (Chari, *et al, ibid*, p239).

With the “Spring Crisis”, both countries became aware of the importance of advance warnings about military exercises and movements. On 6 April 1991, India and Pakistan began significant confidence building measures and an agreement on the *Advance Notice of Military Exercises* (available at <http://www.stimson.org>) was

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signed by Indian Foreign Secretary, Muchkund Dubey and his Pakistani counterpart Shaharyar M Khan in New Delhi. The two states recognised the need to formulate jointly an agreement at the government level on giving advance notice on exercises, manoeuvres and troop movements to prevent a crisis arising due to misreading of the other side’s intentions. Along with the pre-notification of military movement, an agreement on the *Prevention of Airspace Violation and Permitting Over Flights and Landing by Military Aircraft* was also

signed (available at *ibid*). The foreign secretaries of both countries also signed a joint declaration on the complete prohibition of chemical weapons on 19 August 1992 in New Delhi (available at <http://www.indianembassy.org>). The two governments also declared their support of the *Protocol for Prohibition of the use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare*, signed in Geneva on 17 June 1925. Although, the agreements were made in the aftermath of the “Spring Crisis”, it is likely that they were a result of *Brasstacks*—the “Spring Crisis” just urged them towards a speedy conclusion.

India–Pakistan relations are conflictual and there is a lack of coordinated effort on regional issues in world bodies like the UN (Mahmud Ali Durrani, *India–Pakistan: The Cost of Conflict, the Benefit of Peace*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000, p12). In 2001, the US publicly condemned terrorism after *al Qaeda* attacked the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon. That same year,

tensions between India and its neighbour intensified when the Pakistan-backed terrorist group *Lashkar-e-Taiba* (*LeT*) attacked the Indian Parliament on 13 December. Prior to that attack, the J&K Legislative Assembly had been attacked on 1 October 2001. In protest, India recalled its high commissioner to Pakistan and stopped important transportation in air, land and rail links. The international community blamed Pakistan for the incident and countries like the US played a vital role in easing tensions. In addition, when Pakistan stated that it would take action to control terrorist groups and arrested some *LeT* leaders tensions were reduced. However, the peace process between India and Pakistan was derailed on 14 May 2002 when terrorists attacked an Indian Army camp in Kaluchak in J&K. US Assistant Secretary of State

Christina Rocco was in South Asia when the massacre took place. India could not ignore the acts that occurred after Pakistan had promised to curb terrorist action and was left with no choice but to react (Vinay Shankar, "About Valour and Glory: Operation *Parakram*", 2002, available at <http://www.bharat-rakshak.com>).

On 19 May 2002, India placed a larger number of paramilitary forces along the border and decided to pull out of the *Indus River Treaty*. British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw, European Union Commissioner for External Relations Chris Patten, US Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and US Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage were all present in South Asia and tried to convince both countries to de-escalate tensions. However, as Tariq Rauf ("Nuclear and Missile Confidence Building Measures in South Asia" in Dipankar Banerjee, *Confidence Building Measures in South Asia*, Colombo: Regional Centre for Strategic Studies, 1999, p145 and "Confidence and Security Building Measures in the Nuclear Area with Relevance for South Asia", *Contemporary South Asia*, vol14, no2, 2005, p189) stated, India and Pakistan failed to transform their

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interactions into an explicit strategic dialogue due to the lack of a common strategic language.

India ultimately chose not to engage in a full-fledged war due to a number of reasons (Ganguly and Hagerty, *ibid*, 179–80). If war had broken out, it would have been more dangerous than previous wars as both countries had become nuclear states. After long mediation, the crisis was de-escalated when Pakistani President Pervez Musharaff and Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee met at the *Summit on Confidence Building Measures in Asia* on 4 July 2002, organised by Russia. India

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saw Operation *Parakram* as winning a war without fighting (Ashok K Mehta, “The Cost of a War that wasn’t”, 2002, available at <http://www.rediff.com>). During the operation, India changed its main military aim. At the beginning, it had intended to undertake offensive action in J&K and had been ready for a full-scale war if Pakistan escalated the conflict. In June, it had aimed to launch offensive action in the Rajasthan sector

and destroy the Pakistani offensive formation (VK Sood and Pravin Sawhney, *Operation Parakram: The War Unfinished*, New Delhi: Sage 2003, p88). Vajpayee later announced that India had decided not to attack Pakistan in view of Islamabad’s efforts to curb terrorist action. Caution over *Parakram* proved to be a good call. Both countries tried their best to reduce tensions and resolve the crisis in other ways. The crisis also led to further arms control measures. The agreement on the *Pre-notification of Flight Testing of Ballistic Missiles* (available at <http://www.stimson.org>) was made in 2005. This stated that each party would provide the other advance notification of any flight tests it intended to undertake of any land- or sea-launched, surface-to-surface ballistic missile.

Although, *Parakram* was not a nuclear related crisis, both countries learnt that the nuclear risk could escalate at anytime. Crises cannot be prevented or restricted, but if they do occur, it is best to restrain the devices that could escalate them. Thus, on 21 February 2007 an agreement on *Reducing the Risk from Accidents Relating to*

*Nuclear Weapons* (available at <http://www.hindu.com>) was signed by India's Additional Foreign Secretary KC Singh and his Pakistani counterpart Tariq Osman Hyder in New Delhi. Providing and ensuring the safety of nuclear assets is an important measure for securing nuclear weapons. Both countries set up national nuclear command authorities and agreed to continue working on improving existing channels.

## CONCLUSION

The conflictive relationship between the US and Soviet Union led to the Cuban Missile Crisis, resulting in a dangerous confrontation. However, this had a positive impact, as it mobilised the two to initiate arms control processes, focussing on the limitation, regulation and reduction of existing weapons. The *PTBT* and *NPT* were initiated, while bilateral agreements like *SALT* and *START* were signed followed by other important arms control agreements. The first step in the arms control process was the establishment of a hotline between the two superpowers. India and Pakistan have followed in the footsteps of the US and Soviet Union in arms control. The 1987 *Brasstacks* experience revealed the importance of communication and advance warning of military exercises. The 1999 Kargil War was different from previous India–Pakistan conflicts and demonstrated the futility of nuclear deterrence for both countries. It also reflected the heightened nuclear threat in South Asia and showed the urgency for measures ensuring nuclear safety. As a result, efforts were made toward ensuring security and resolving conflicts through diplomatic means and peaceful dialogue. The US and Soviet Union learnt from their mistakes and took important steps towards arms control. India and Pakistan also realised the importance of taking precautionary and preventive measures before undertaking military operations. For successful arms control agreements and treaties, crises and war are not prerequisites. In times of peace however, it is difficult for countries to implement the steps needed for limiting risks of confrontational relations. 

**Crises cannot be prevented or restricted, but if they do occur, it is best to restrain the devices that could escalate them. Providing and ensuring the safety of nuclear assets is an important measure for securing nuclear weapons.**