

# U.S. Nuclear Policy Towards South Asia Under Obama

Dr. Leena Merlin

\* MG University

DOI: 10.29322/IJSRP.8.9.2018.p8173  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.29322/IJSRP.8.9.2018.p8173>

**Abstract-** The purpose of this study is

1. To analyze the major challenges faced by the nonproliferation policy at the global and regional level.
2. To critically review the nature and dimensions of nuclear proliferation in South Asia.
3. To study incoherent U.S. nonproliferation policies and in appropriate influence strategies that have encouraged other states to advance their nuclear weapon capabilities.
4. To study the current trends in U.S. nonproliferation objectives in south Asia.
5. To analyze how the paradigm shifts in U.S. nonproliferation policy towards India has occurred.
6. To study how American scholars and policy experts understood and reinterpreted the nuclear estrangement with India that enabled the policy change.
7. To study how the U.S. national interests were constructed that necessitated nuclear cooperation with India.

## I. INTRODUCTION

For the first time since the end of Cold War, the top priorities for American nuclear policy put Pakistan in the spotlight. The Obama Administration realized that the nuclear security environment within and around Pakistan is of significant concern to the United States. During the Cold War, the United States worked with Pakistan to meet common security challenges in Afghanistan and the region. But the advent of Non- State Actors in the security dynamics of South Asia, especially in Pakistan forced the United states to a new look at its nuclear strategy. United States realized that Pakistani territory and the surrounding region emerged as a hot spot for the sub-national radical Islamist groups that oppose the United States and its allies. Pakistan's limited and tenuous control of much of its territory, the growing strength of radical Islamist groups in Pakistan, the poor state of Pakistan's economy, and ongoing political turmoil among Pakistani political elites all undermined Pakistan's ability to effectively control radical Islamist elements and to ameliorate growing environmental, economic, and other stresses. Pakistan's status as a nuclear weapon state, its traditional enmity with India, and proximity to Afghanistan and the West Asian region all heighten its importance to U.S. strategic interests.

When President Barack Obama launched his new strategy on Afghanistan and Pakistan in Washington in late March 2009, there was a reinvigorated interest in the regional dimensions of

the problem. The Bush administration had a rather myopic view on the role of Pakistan's neighborhood: it was one issue and one country at the time, in contrast to the more comprehensive perspective that Obama announced. In 2009 President Obama emphasized the importance of the region and his willingness to work with all parties, to stabilize Afghanistan and to prevent Pakistan from imploding. The appointment of Richard Holbrooke as US Special Representative to Afghanistan and Pakistan came with strong signals of a regional turn. The most concrete measures suggested in the March 2009 White Paper were a regional Contact Group and a new forum for security and economic cooperation, neither of which has come to existence by late 2010. For over three decades, Afghanistan has been a battleground in which many of the states of the larger neighbourhood have been involved. The importance of fostering a concerted effort for Afghan peace and stability is increasingly agreed upon. Some analysts emphasize states and their security relationships and see Afghanistan as an insulator caught between different regional state systems, each with a strong dynamic of their own. An alternative perspective which also seems to inform the new US analysis emphasizes various transnational networks, and sees Afghanistan as the core of a larger conflict formation.

## II. POST COLD WAR ERA AND SHIFT IN US STRATEGY

The end of the cold war dramatically changed the nature of international relations by ending superpower patronage of local combatants. Foreign policy of many powers had undergone dramatic changes. This change is more visible in U.S. policy towards South Asia, especially the American approach towards Pakistan. In fact the transformation of the global order in general and the changes in the foreign policies objectives of the major powers in particular have influenced the nature and quality of the relationship with the vast majority of the developing countries. The restructuring of the U.S. global strategic agenda has left a great impact on Pakistan. The fact is that Pakistan's relevance to U.S. global interest has diminished significantly (Hagerty :1996). It is evident from the application of the Pressler Amendment to Pakistan in October 1990, when the U.S. President refused to certify Pakistan's nuclear programme as peaceful. Many factors influenced Washington's approach towards Pakistan(Arnett: 1997). During the cold war Pakistan became the 'frontline' state for furthering U.S. interests in South Asia and Middle East. In the early 1980's Pakistan's importance for the United States increased in view of the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan, the anti-

US Islamic revolution in Iran and the Indo-Soviet economic and security co-operation, Islamabad assumed a centre stage against the US activities against the Soviet in Afghanistan. In addition, it was included in the security consensus in the Gulf along with Saudi Arabia and US to enable the oil rich Arab Gulf states to defend themselves against the threat of Islamic fundamentalism. The collapse of the Soviet Union drastically changed the conditions that had made Pakistan relevant to US global policies. Simultaneously, India began to project the compatibility of Indo-US security and economic interests in the South Asian region. It is interested in developing a multi faceted partnership with the U.S.(Koshy: 2005).

In the post-cold war international environment Pakistan finds itself less relevant to U.S. foreign policy objectives. It is seen as a supporter of Islamic fundamentalism and a serious violator of the nuclear non-proliferation norms. The U.S. concerns over international terrorism and nuclear proliferation effects three areas of Pakistan's interests: Afghanistan, Kashmir and its nuclear programme. The issue of nuclear proliferation occupied the prime agenda of the Clinton administration. Pakistani nuclear strategy was its supreme-priority because of the fluid political situation and its growing nexus with Islamic militant organization. The Clinton administration took several steps to force Pakistan to adopt a nuclear restraint regime in South Asia (Rajan: 1991). In the 1980's, the US overlooked Pakistan's nuclear programme due to their common concern against the Soviet Union. However, Pakistan did assure the US that it would neither detonate a nuclear device nor transfer nuclear technology to any other country. In December 1981, the U.S. Congress approved an aid for Pakistan by waiving application of the Symington amendment for six years. On the expiry of this period, the waiver was extended for another two and a half years(Hassan: 1995). A broader policy consensus on how to drive the Soviet Union out of Afghanistan overshadowed the U.S. non-proliferation agenda. This created an impression among the Pakistani nuclear establishment that its covert nuclear programme could not be a serious impediment in developing the strategic relationship with the United States. But the demise of the cold war and the Soviet withdrawals from Afghanistan forced the United States to refocus its nuclear non proliferation goals in South Asia, especially towards Pakistan. Pakistan also adopted a new policy for pursuing its nuclear agenda. They adopted a new nuclear strategy by using the nuclear card in its confrontation with India in the 1990 crisis (Duranti: 2001). This led to a hasty intervention by the U.S. and the other western powers, pressuring both New Delhi and Islamabad not to escalate their confrontation.

The new nuclear strategy proved successful. Thus the crisis of 1990 was a watershed event in Pakistan's national security strategy. Nuclear weapons were no longer considered merely a trip wire of last resort in the case of a major invasion of the country. Instead nuclear weapons became a key to Islamabad's assertive strategy of escalation of the struggle in Kashmir under a nuclear umbrella restraining Indian retaliation. In 1991, Islamabad considered the New World Order advocated by the U.S. and especially in the call for non-proliferation, a strategic threat to its independence. The new world order does not allow any country in the third world except the American surrogates to possess nuclear weapons(Dunn: 2000). Fully aware

that no single country can confront the U.S. on its own, Islamabad stressed the growing significance of nuclear and military co-operation with other radicals as a profound issue of confrontation with the U.S. Islamabad acknowledged that "Peoples Republic of China and North Korea have been supplying Iran and other Muslim countries with medium range missiles and nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. This co-operation now strengthened as the source of strength for Islamabad's defiance against U.S. pressures, for any alternative would be detrimental to the future of Islam. The Pakistani establishment believed that, if Pakistan surrenders before the Americans with respect to the nuclear programmes, there will be no limit for such a surrender, because the American's endeavour to demolish Pakistan's military power and make her a banana republic so that the Muslim world should be enslaved by the U.S. imposed world order"(Bodansky: 1995).

It was in this context of this strategic perception that the Pakistan military nuclear capabilities were finally admitted officially. On 21 October 1991, Pakistan, for long a known yet not an acknowledged nuclear power, crossed the line and created a precedent. In a Karachi meeting, Dr.Abdul Quadeer Khan, the father of Pakistan bomb, officially acknowledged that Pakistan was a nuclear power(Ziring:2005).Subsequently, the nuclear factor has become a clear and critical factor in the Pakistan national strategy, especially vis-à-vis India and the United States. The United States followed a tough posture towards Islamabad following this development. The U.S. administration could no longer make the certification required by the Pressler Amendment, and the United States military assistance came to a sudden halt. No future contracts could be signed, and all of the equipment already in the pipeline was placed on hold. Besides the F-16 fighter aircraft the equipment included three U.S. Navy P-3C military aircraft, 28 Harpoon surface – to – surface missiles, 360 AIM-9 L "sidewinder" air – to – air missiles and other assorted minor items and spare parts(Lippman W: 1995).

By the time Clinton administration took over in 1993, bilateral relations with Pakistan were badly frayed as a result of the standoff. Debate raged in the administration over how to break the impasse. The non-proliferationists particularly those at the Arms control, and Disarmament Agency, felt that administration should only make concession in exchange for concrete results on the Pakistani nuclear issue. The regionalist, particularly in the State Department Bureau of South Asian Affairs and the Department of Defence argued for a more multi faceted approach to the U.S. policy towards Pakistan that would allow greater co-operation in the areas of drugs, terrorism, peacekeeping and military training (Reiss: 1995). While the regionalist perspective prevailed in the administration, the non-proliferationists led by senator Glenn and senator Pressler, were stronger in the congress. In the House, although representative Hamilton was sympathetic to Pakistan. Representative Benjamin Gilman and several key staffers on the House International Relations Committee strongly supported the Pressler Amendment. Each of the camps enjoyed strong network both between branches and with ethnic and arms control interest groups, including the Pakistani and Indian embassies and their professional lobbyists, all of whom followed the debate closely(CRS : 1996).The issue first came to a head in 1993 when the Clinton administration decided to submit to Congress a broad rewrite of the Foreign

Assistance Act. In late 1993 and early 1993 following repeated crises in Haiti, Somalia, Bosnia and elsewhere, relations between the Congress and the Clinton administration were at particularly low ebb. The redrafted act was widely seen by members and staff as an attempt by the executive branch to reduce, or at least challenge the role of Congress in foreign affairs. It was not well received (Doherty J.: 1994)

Barack H. Obama assumed office as the President of USA in the month of January 2009. As the new U S president he promised change and transformation in global nuclear proliferation. The Change which he said was seemingly imminent as the already gone decade had been completely crisis ridden with various contingencies created by the former U S President George W. Bush's strategic vision, in which the U S relied on unilateral methods like Preemption as a policy doctrine that have guided his nonproliferation nuclear policies as well. Former President George W Bush's major preference for unilateralism began to be viewed as a draconian phenomenon when his counter proliferation initiatives camouflaged political underpinnings like various regime changes. President George W Bush ambitiously promoted active defense and nuclear weapons modernization that eventually triggered the whole new levels of global instabilities instead of enhancing continued peace and security and even resulted in curbing proliferation. President Barack Obama initiated several change in the foreign policy and nuclear security aspects and he began to initiate a transition to reconciliation and engagement. Beyond changing the preliminary steps of the U S nonproliferation policy, his aim was to replace U S arsenal through the reliable warhead programme. In his April 5 Prague speech, President Obama called for the United States to lead international efforts toward a world free of nuclear weapons. A new Council on Foreign Relations-sponsored Independent Task Force report, co-chaired by former secretary of defense William J. Perry and former national security adviser Brent Scowcroft, says that while "the geopolitical conditions that would permit the global elimination of nuclear weapons do not currently exist," steps can be taken now to diminish the danger of nuclear proliferation and nuclear use. To achieve this radical goal, Barack Obama promised the world to take a 360 degree ultimate turn by reviving the Non Proliferation Treaty, also by ratifying the CTBT and taking courage in activating a Fissile Materials Cut off Treaty (FMCT). One of The most radical ideas that he had, however, was his new proposal to make a sweeping number of reforms in the area of nuclear security, this included the tangible steps to make sure that global security of nuclear materials within a period of four years. Barack Obama also promised the global community that a new nuclear energy architecture design which could accommodate a global chain of fuel banks and even the proliferation resistant recycling technologies at the top end. Most of the above promises were made in a poll mode. But still the U S president took many courageous steps towards these security goals in his first tenure in office. Starting with the first Prague speech that he delivered on April 5, 2009, it was at a venue which was to hosting the Nuclear Security Summit and also signing of the renewed strategic arms reduction treaty (START) in the month of April 2010, U S diplomacy was fully at functional mode to prove that Barack Obama really meant business. And at the same time, there were a toned down and very much delayed Nuclear Posture

Review (NPR) which was succumbing to the needs of military establishment's writ. There were several early indications of Barack Obama's propensity to completely compromise and take up the middle line; he often went on reverting to his predecessor's policies, which began to raise questions regarding the total feasibility of the Obama doctrine. This doctrine, which is still in its evolving stage and it is potent enough to discomfit countries, especially those countries like India whose terms of engagement with the non proliferation entities should potentially be redefined. As Far from its initial fears of being cornered on both the NPT and CTBT, the New Delhi has gained some confidence and they are now abide by the non proliferation norms that are democratic.(J Perry:2012). The U S president Barack Obama's political philosophy is really inspired by the liberal generations' that rose in U S during the period of 1980s that got into the U S campuses for opposing star wars and arms races. He even wrote in the Columbia University magazine which is a highly validated one, *Sundial*, about his future vision for a nuclear weapon free World, he always rallied against first and second strike capabilities, and he was really agitated for elimination of global nuclear arsenals. After Two decades, he still continued his activism as a Senator with liberal ideals, he also did not sustain the same fury against nuclear weapons. (P.Shultz:2010)

### III. TENETS OF OBAMA'S NUCLEAR POLICY

After assuming the office of president, President Barack Obama used several numbers of platforms to depict his own nuclear policy. His Prague speech was a landmark and it was an indication for the U S change of policy. The Prague speech was a declaration of intent wherein he officially made out his future plans for a nuclear weapons free world vision, in which, he also believes, that it might not come about in his lifetime.

#### (a) *Toward the disarmament goal*

In Prague speech, President Barack Obama declared that the U S is always prepared to initiate the move towards a nuclear weapons free world, by starting to reduce the number and role of nuclear weapons in its security strategy. President Barack Obama, however, also made it so clear that as long as the nuclear weapons and its related devices exist, the U S will continue to maintain the most secure, reliable and effective deterrent. The number of nuclear weapons reduction process began with a new strategic arms reduction treaty (START) with the Russia which has the potential to bring down the amount of strategic nuclear warheads to be around 1,500 and 1,675 on both sides. In one such month of marathon nuclear diplomacy, he also released NPR and even hosted a Nuclear Security Summit. These were all in April 2010. The newly initiated START program was signed with Russia on the month April 8, but the issue was that the START programs its ability to clear the U S Congress was under real stress, because the Republicans were constantly questioning the *quid pro quo* on missile defence systems and they were even demanding more and more funding for the nuclear weapons modernization programs along with tighter verification articles in the treaty. Similarly, the NPR came without much expected momentum in order to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in U S security planning. The main

issue is that the document only *commits* to further reduction of their roles in deterring a non nuclear attack, but it also clarifies that any such policy that stress a ‘detering only’ nuclear attack as the sole purpose of nuclear weapons is unrealistic. The Convention, most probably is the rarest of instances when the U S had endorsed the possibility for a standalone legal treaty to pursue the final phase of nuclear disarmament. (A Vinodkumar:2010)

**(b) Reviving treaties**

Obama gave out his intentions on Non proliferation treaty In Prague in which he said that the basic bargain of the Non proliferation treaty is to sound the countries which are having nuclear weapons will need to move towards disarmament, and the countries that doesn’t have any nuclear weapons should not acquire them, and all the countries in world eventually can access peaceful nuclear energy. To strengthen the Non proliferation treaty, he said in his speech that, “We need more and more resources and also the authority to strengthen international inspections. We need immediate consequences for countries breaking rules or trying to leave the treaty without cause”. This message was really lucid for violators and deserters and he even advocated that they should be punished and the treaty needs a structural strengthening in a holistic way. There were also other areas that are required to have an immediate redressal as well. These redressal actions should include addressing the ongoing conflict between stringent nonproliferation obligations and the increasing constraints on the access to nuclear trade. and this means that they need to effectively deal with threats from the non state actors too. This was something that Non proliferation treaty was not structured to tackle. The persistent expositions made by the president Barack Obama and his own new non proliferation team during the first year in the office, for strengthening the core three pillars of the Non proliferation treaty, their effort started to raise hopes of a grand Barack Obama plan to reinstate the treaty. FMCT is an internationally verifiable treaty that is capable enough to end the production of weapons grade fissile materials that are seen as the other half of the incremental steps towards disarmament. Barack Obama has already declared his whole hearted commitment to conclude the FMCT, which has already being negotiated at the Conference on Disarmament in an effective manner. (Robert Gates:2010)

**(c) Nuclear security and terrorism**

President Barack Obama firmly believes in the biggest security risk in the 21st century which is not a rogue country with long range missile systems, but of a terrorist group smuggling a very crude nuclear device across the international borders. Announcing about his nuclear security options in Prague, Barack Obama even declared his insight to secure all sorts of vulnerable nuclear materials, globally, within a time limit of four years, and augment initiatives like the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT), ‘in order to stop the smuggling of nuclear materials, phase out highly enriched uranium from the civilian sector, and also to break up nuclear black markets which exists in the world, he also initiated projects to detect and intercept materials in transit and use the financial tools to stop such trade’. The plan was to create a counter proliferation and cooperative threat reduction under the frameworks like the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540. But for this ambitious target which has been designed to

secure all sorts of nuclear materials globally with in a four year time frame. (Kenneth N Lungo 2009)

**(d) Counter-proliferation**

It was crystal clear from Obama’s campaign days that he will not devalue his senior president Bush’s counter proliferation initiatives and also the cooperative policing and interdiction efforts, which are considered to be the primary function of the PSI and Container Security Initiative (CSI). President Barack Obama seeks to magnify their scope of peaceful non proliferation efforts through cooperative enhancement and Strict levels of institutionalization. A structured PSI is a stronger PSI, he made this comment in his campaign and also stated that, “will produce greater international intelligence and policing cooperation, maintain tougher export controls and criminal penalties for violations, and apply the tools developed to combat terrorist financing and shutting down proliferators’ networks”. For an effective border and a better transformational security Barack Obama promised organizational basing and financial support for the CSI and Mega ports Initiatives. In one of the pre election interview, Barack Obama said: “We spend billions on missile defence, but far too little on securing nuclear materials around the world and improving security at our ports and borders”. The PSI, although, had some of the notable mentions when linked to the broader nuclear security plan. The Ballistic missile defense systems are another major stage where Barack Obama has several numbers of dilemmas. As a senator, Barack Obama had voted for major reductions in BMD programs, and he was also non committed with regard to George W Bush’s missile deployment plans. Barack Obama said in his campaign that “We must seek a nuclear missile defense and demand that those efforts use resources wisely to build systems that would actually be cost-effective and will work”. (Greg Mello:2010)

**(e) Nuclear energy**

As one among the core pillars the third pillar of the Non Proliferation Treaty, President Barack Obama supported the expansion of the civilian nuclear energy projects and he even detests any hindrance that are made to the civilian nuclear cooperation. And during his speech in Prague, Barack Obama also said, “No approach will succeed if it’s based on denial of right to nations that play by rules”. In order to facilitate the civilian nuclear energy renaissance, Barack Obama announced a new civilian nuclear energy cooperation framework which chiefly comprising international fuel banks and fuel-supply promises, enabling all those signatory countries to access nuclear energy without increasing any of the nuclear weapons proliferation risks. According to a credible Interpretation by experts, fuel banks could be acting as an energy equivalent to a nuclear umbrella with the development rights being only restricted towards a privileged few, just as in the case of all the nuclear weapons. Since more nuclear non proliferation obligations impeded civilian nuclear trade, Barack Obama could have eventually realized that the need to trade carefully while pushing fuel banks and fuel cycle banks. (M.Grossman:2010)

Besides all the inherent challenges which are present in his move, in each segment of policy making, the Barack Obama doctrine could also be challenged by its unrealistic approach weaknesses. Further, the various divergent perceptions within Barack Obama’s government on how to turn his vision of a

nuclear Weapons free world into a reality could be seen as a potential spoiler.

#### *(f) Pushing a Utopian dream*

Barack Obama's assertion was that the nuclear disarmament will not happen in his lifetime because it has a retrograde effect. Critics even questions on the matter that whether Barack Obama's intentions are genuine or whether it will be remaining as mere concept. At this point of time there could be three perceivable reasons behind his policy:

- a) Total elimination cannot happen at one stroke as this will not be a consensual or sequential movement among the nuclear weapon states.
- b) Incremental steps towards elimination, involving test ban and fissile material cut-off, would mean a long haul;
- c) New nuclear armed states and security dynamics might emerge which could reverse the reduction process.

The main point, here to be examined could be that will Barack Obama work towards pursuing a non proliferation structure in his entire lifetime or will there be any sorts of credible steps towards total Elimination of nuclear weapons? As an alternative way he could have adopted the Nuclear Weapons Convention (NWC) that has more potential to work towards his goal that could facilitate a standalone treaty for nuclear disarmament. (Josh Rogin:2009)

#### IV. DISARMAMENT VERSUS A ROBUST NUCLEAR DETERRENT

Barack Obama had tried to push through a completely new nuclear policy which was consistent with his nuclear disarmament vision. Barack Obama's security establishment is something which keep on insisting and maintaining a robust nuclear deterrent and also by modernizing the nuclear weapons complex before even achieving any reduction benchmarks. The modernization of nuclear weapons debate is a carryover from the George Bush's administration; it had conceptualized the RRW program to be something that has replaced ageing nuclear warheads with brand new ones. The then Defence Secretary Robert Gates, who was in the same office in the George Bush's administration, is a person who vouched for nuclear weapons modernization. The amount of diversity in opinions in the political and military establishments is not without constant crises crossing. A bipartisan consensus was in favour of the reduction and a minimized role for nuclear warheads were highlighted in the Congressional Strategic Posture Commission, headed by William Perry, who, however, recommended that the sustenance of a strong deterrent with an effective advice that the use of modern age nuclear weapons should be only be in extreme conditions. The sentiments of the U S armed forces are reflected in a the department of defence (DoD) report of December 2008, which had called upon the incoming administration to define the new age role of nuclear weapons in deterring threats along with 'suitable modernization of the nuclear deterrent force.(DoD report:2008)

By agreeing to such sorts of budgetary and modernization pressures, Barack Obama signaled his willingness to step down from his already stated positions on the nuclear arsenal, opening up funding for nuclear complex modernization which eventually

manifests in stockpile the modernization of these weapons. Though RRW plans have already been shelved, the most important fact is that the Barack Obama's administration began to endorse the shortcomings of the present life extension methods which already begun to increase the prospects for a later decision to construct new modern warheads. When faced with this amount of crisis over the declaratory policy on nuclear weapons use, a capable warhead modernization call could ultimately derail the whole process of reductions and disarmament of nuclear war heads. Though done with several sorts of nuclear modernization testing, a new warhead creation could project the U S intention to sustain its nuclear weapons arsenal forever while pushing other nations towards reductions. This would undermine its whole operations.(Elaine M Grossman:2009)

#### V. WHAT OBAMA'S NUCLEAR POLICY AUGURS FOR INDIA

President George W Bush's greatest contribution towards Indo U S foreign relations was his capability to bridge the gaps in the areas where there is divergence in the non nuclear proliferation issues. George W Bush had actually facilitated the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) which is strong organization and amended several numbers of U S laws to in order enable nuclear commerce with India. As a senator Barack Obama supported the nuclear deal, but not before the pushing of 'killer amendments' in the Henry J. Hyde Act which eventually known as Hyde act which plays a key role in Indo U S nuclear relations. This act sanctioned the '123 Agreement' with India. This raised many concerns that Barack Obama might put more hindrances and interpretational loopholes as the acting president of U S. although the proposed controls over ENR technology transfers had already raised many eyebrows, and his consent for a reprocessing agreement put all of the rest concerns regarding hindrances to the nuclear deal. Washington D.C has time and again clarified that the nuclear deal will be sacrosanct. And all the real challenges, however, lies beneath the surface. Barack Obama's push for a non nuclear proliferation, by reviving the Non Proliferation Treaty and Operationalising the CTBT, could be a major source for a potential clash. At the core of all the current apprehensions is the feeling is that the traditional divergences on non nuclear proliferation will be regenerated during the Barack Obama era.

#### *Integrating India into the non-proliferation regime*

The Indo - U S nuclear deal was already supposed to have brought India into the non nuclear proliferation Mainstream talks after the decades of technological and economical isolations. But still India's collaboration with the Non nuclear proliferation regime cannot be assumed to be complete since it still stays apart from its cornerstone the Non Proliferation Treaty. India does not rely on any of the incremental steps towards total elimination of nuclear capability, and it also seeks a new age non nuclear proliferation bargain, which will allow transcending the Non Proliferation Treaty centric system. Even being one key initiator of the Non Proliferation Treaty, still India rejected the treaty, saying that it's a 'flawed bargain'. But India still have been claiming to adhere to the Non Proliferation Treaty's principles and it has been consistently touting its record as a responsible nuclear power. (Joe Biden:2009) Even at the event of ratification

by the U S senate, and similar action done by China and others, India will be under pressure to sign the nuclear non proliferation treaty. But still, with India not likely to immediately get into their track, U S always will have to find different types of means to engage with India for a futuristic positive outcome. These outcomes also include the possibility of a renewed nuclear testing by India or even offering India access to any sophisticated design data and all the simulation capabilities. The problem is that both options are seems to be improbable. Barack Obama is not expected to offer India such sorts of capabilities since it will take away his disarmament objectives. Also, if there is another round of testing done by India then it could potentially result in the complete termination of the whole nuclear deal. On the FMCT, India had made a commitment to join any levels of negotiations in accordance with the July 18, 2005 joint statement. By agreeing so, India made a closed her options to resist the treaty despite the growing concerns over its implications for its strategic nuclear program. India was one among the main co-sponsors of the 1993 UNGA Resolution 48/75L in order to negotiate a non discriminatory and internationally verifiable non proliferation treaty banning all the production of all sorts of fissile materials and related enrichment devises. (Susan Burk:2010)

#### ***Divergent perceptions on disarmament***

President Barack Obama and India are two major actors who are solely committed to a nuclear Disarmament process, but due to the divergent perceptions there are real difficulties in realizing such an effort. Barack Obama swears by the traditional way of Non Nuclear Proliferation Treaty route, in which entails incremental steps along with continued and phased reduction of existing nuclear arsenals, potentially leading to a total elimination of the nuclear arsenal. India which feels that this route is a cage without any scopes for total elimination but instead a probable reason why Barack Obama himself ruled out the immediate possibility. India totally discourages the Non Nuclear Proliferation Treaty and still believes it could only retain a non nuclear proliferation position which will not be favorable to disarmament. Further, India really feels a test ban without a proper disarmament roadmap will definitely end up as ineffective. Since India passionately pushes for a non Nuclear Weapons Convention that could initiate a standalone treaty for general and total disarmament, consistent with Article VI of the Non Nuclear Proliferation Treaty. But none of the Non Nuclear Proliferation Treaty signatories are enthusiastic about the NWC. India's answer to Barack Obama's blind play is of not achieving disarmament in his lifetime could be the Rajiv Gandhi Action Plan of June 1988, which had then called for total elimination by 2010, implying that such processes could be undertaken within period of 20 to 25 year period. (A Vonod Kumar :2010)

#### ***Counter-proliferation***

Even after being really supportive towards George W Bush's extensive nuclear policies, India had always been unconvinced about his counter proliferation initiatives. India has always resisted U S intentions which exerted pressure to participate in the PSI, despite being supportive of its principles. The main obstacle to India's participation was that the references which are made to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

on the matter of comprehensive safeguards in the year 2005 Protocol to the SUA Convention (Suppression of Unlawful Activities at Sea), which India had felt that it could lead to the PSI being targeted at non Nuclear Proliferation Treaty states like itself. (Ashly Tellis:2009)

#### **Obama's response to Indian Nuclear Programme**

The Republican Administration's tenure under the president George W Bush should be regarded as a major golden era of Indo – U S relations by signing the major 123 Agreement (Agreement for Cooperation Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy) on October 10, 2008. When President Barack Obama assumed office, a large number of apprehensions have been arisen at that period. When President Barack Obama's focused on the Afghan Pak issues which coupled with India's sensitivity on the cross border terrorism and Kashmir, the global economic crisis with U S in heavy recession and issues relating to outsourcing are some of the major issues that made a real constrict over a fruitful engagement. On the other hand U S was interested to continue talks because of India's relative political and economic stability, a professional armed forces and also a force with high levels of counter insurgency experience has played a great role in creating a leverage with the U S Administration in the backdrop of a huge global financial crack down, industrial slow down, international security concerns particularly in Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Indian Ocean. (Melvin P.Leffler:2009) On the matter of Jammu and Kashmir issue, the Barack Obama's Administration has been convinced that it won't be fruitful to intervene into this matter particularly because of the presence of their valuable and strategic the Pakistan. The successful free and fair Assembly elections in 2008 indicate that the back of militancy has been broken through a comprehensive policy adopted by Indian government and hence the mediation in Kashmir has become totally irrelevant. According to India's economic leverage with the U S has been very important in lots of respects, due to the size and growth of Indian economy. However, Indian influence Can be constrained by the fact that several amounts of sovereign funds are based in the Middle East and China have large amount of shareholdings in most of the American corporations which works in several strategic sectors including the financial sector. The U S is likely to not to go hardliner on the matter of outsourcing, international free trade and economic integration with the World. (Paul K Kerr:2013)

#### **VI. OBAMA'S RESPONSE TO PAKISTANI NUCLEAR PROGRAMME**

Since the hard core thrust of the Barack Obama Administration's nuclear weapons policy and also the threat assessment mechanism is mostly targeted on North Korea and Iran, Pakistan has always given significant challenges that will make the ongoing attention during Barack Obama's Second term. In its drive to increase the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, augment its weapons production facilities, deploy for additional delivery vehicles, also to construct additional nuclear reactors, and expand its reprocessing capabilities, Pakistan has been undergoing serious changes and these are placed for the expansion and improvement of its nuclear weapons arsenal capacity at the core of its overall

nuclear security strategy. When this trend of Pakistan is considered against Pakistan's volatile domestic path way and ongoing regional conflicts, it highlights that there is the need for the Barack Obama Administration to embolden its capacities in assessing and monitoring any threats to Pakistan's nuclear weapons. (Charles D.Blair:2011) The U S has always been in a constant and continued relation with Pakistan that has triggered between necessary coexistence due to the periods of strains in the post 9/11 period. Since the world's fastest nuclear proliferators, is Pakistan it will still continue to become a significant challenge to U S policy makers in the immediate future. Nuclear weapon expert Hans Kristensen estimates that Pakistan has already increased its nuclear weapons capability and increased its nuclear stockpile from an estimated seventy to ninety warheads in 2009 to approximately 90 to 110 nuclear warheads. This has been marked a steady increase from the U.S Defense Intelligence Agency's 1999 projection which placed the number of nuclear weapons with Pakistan is in between an amount of 60 to 80 by the year 2020. Since the Pakistani government had defined the number and type of nuclear weapons that is necessary for it to achieve its minimum deterrent, the Pakistan remains to be in an ambiguous entity for both the U S government and also to the international community. The main motivation behind Pakistan's tendency to increase its nuclear stockpile is much deeper and complex than predicted. There should not be any doubt that its losses to India in three conventional wars over the past six decades were a major driving factor in its determination to develop and maintain its nuclear arsenal. Another such complicating issue is that it pertains to what has been an effective control of Pakistan's nuclear weapons by its military, the military's withdrawal to hand over the control of nuclear sector to the civilian government, and its tendency to each time project the threat from India as the core rationale for keeping such forms of weapons. In essence, for achieving the Barack Obama's "zero" goal, India had to be removed as a projected threat to Pakistan's security. This would also make the Pakistani military to play a small role in the Pakistani political system, and also their concede civilian control over the Pakistan's nuclear weapons. (Hans M Kristensen:2011)

The amplification of Pakistan's nuclear capable warhead designs and related research, development, and production infrastructure has translated into more of a provocative style. This can be clearly seen on the display in late November 2012 when it test launched a medium range ballistic missile which was capable of being armed with high powered nuclear warheads in a complete user trial. After the eighth missile was tested in the year 2012, the operational liquid fueled Ghauri Hatf 5 which is a nuclear capable missile has a range of more than 800 miles and has already engendered all the security concerns on a regional level basis. According to several experts, the Pakistani ambition to accelerate its nuclear arsenal has been motivated by the U S seeking to improve defense ties with India in order to counter act this co operation they are trying to improve their nuclear capabilities resulting in a nuclear threat to whole south Asian Region. (David E Sanger:2012)

## VII. NUCLEAR SECURITY SUMMIT

The Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) is a world summit that has international attentions, they are aimed at preventing any sorts of nuclear terrorism all around the globe. The very first summit of Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) was held in U S on the month of April 12, 2010. And similarly there was a second summit that was conducted in Seoul in the year 2012. The third summit of Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) will be held in The Hague on the month of March 24, 2014. In the year of 2009, President Barack Obama in a speech that he gave in Prague even termed nuclear terrorism as one of the greatest threats to international security and peace processes. With that attitude in mind, Barack Obama hosted the very first Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) in Washington DC in the year 2010, in order to draw attention, a global level of attention at the highest level, on the need to make sure that the secure nuclear material should be prevented from nuclear terrorism. Around Forty seven countries from all around the world and three major international organizations participated in the first summit of Nuclear Security Summit (NSS). In the year 2012, the second Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) and this was held in Seoul. In total around Fifty three countries and four international organizations were invited to take part in it. The very first summit of Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) was concerned with making several political agreements, while the follow up of this happened in Seoul which was focused on the progress that are made in implementing these agreements. The third Nuclear Security Summit (NSS), in the city of Hague in the year 2014, which was the centre on the results achieved and future course of action. Under the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) process, all the countries should work to improve their nuclear weapons and civilian nuclear security on the basis of the Washington's Work Plan, which contains numerous measures and action points. In Seoul a number of additional action points were formulated and set down in the Seoul Communiqué. The Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) process is ongoing, and since 2009 it have required many world leaders and diplomats to devote some of their extra attention to the Raising issue of nuclear security. Extensive consultations were held in the run up to every summit. For Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) 2014 this process had started in the year 2012. The negotiators for the various countries known as sherpas and sous sherpas, they discussed the progress made and even confer on key themes, work plans and measures that are to be adopted in the plan. Ultimately, these negotiations had lead to several effective decisions, which are later confirmed and agreed at the summit and they published it in a communiqué. Forty seven countries and the three international organizations participated in the First Nuclear Security Summit, held in Washington in 2010 at the initiative of President Obama. The aim of this summit was to constantly improve worldwide nuclear security, and find out concrete agreements for securing all the nuclear materials and related facilities. The results of this summit was enumerated in the U S Work Plan in the form of several numbers of concrete action points, and the Washington Communiqué, which contains different levels of commitments and declarations as an intent from the participating countries. The commitments made in Washington in 2010 are:

- the Leaders jointly made sure that the seriousness and urgency to counter the threat posed by nuclear terrorism.
- The participating countries agreed to work to secure all vulnerable nuclear material worldwide.
- The participating countries agreed to shoulder their responsibility for securing nuclear material within their own borders.
- The participating countries agreed to work together as an international community to improve nuclear security.(Inf. On Nuclear security summit:2014)

Following the summit that was carried out in Washington D C in the year 2010 another six new countries like Azerbaijan, Denmark, Gabon, Hungary, Lithuania and Romania, and one new international organization Interpol were invited by South Korea to join the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS). 53 countries attended the second summit in Seoul in the year 2012, which was built on the goals that had been identified in Washington D C. (Bunn Mathew:2012)

#### VIII. U.S RESPONSE UNDER OBAMA

The U S President Barack Obama has already reviewed Homeland Security policy and then he concluded that those "attacks using improvised nuclear devices IED's pose a serious threat and they are increasing national security risk." In his presidential election period, President Bush and state Senator John Kerry had agreed that the most serious danger facing the U S is the possibility that terrorists could obtain any sort of nuclear bomb from any nuclear black market. (Robert M Gates:2010)

#### IX. CONCLUSION

There is no point in Imagining a world without nuclear weapons because it is impossible likewise imagining a U S without any nuclear weapons is also impossible. This paraphrase shows the major hindrances that the President Barack Obama faces in pushing his vision of a nuclear weapons free world. Nuclear weapons are definitely an integral part to U S supremacy in a nearing unipolar world. Even in a transition period to a polycentric order, the nuclear weapons will definitely remain the most potent currency of power for U S. The challenge arose for Obama is whether to reconcile such a strategic realities while propelling his political visions which are merely impossible.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] A. Vinod Kumar, 'India's Participation in Proliferation Security Initiative: Issues in Perspective', *Strategic Analysis*, 33(5), September 2010, pp. 686–700.
- [2] A. Vinod Kumar, 'Promises, Compromises and a Tie Breaker: 2010 NPT RevCon was an Otiose Event', *IDSIA Issue Brief*, July 8, 2010.
- [3] Ahson Saeed Hasan, *From Pressler to Brown Amendment : History and Implications*, *Current Affairs Digest*, Vol. 6, No. 3, November 1995, p. 21.
- [4] Arpit Rajain, *Nuclear Deterrence in South Asia*, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 1999, pp. 276-340.
- [5] Ashley Tellis, 'Manmohan Visits Washington', *Policy Brief no. 85*, Carnegie Endowment, November 2009.

- [6] Caroll J. Doherty, *New Drive to Overhaul Aid Faces Perennial Obstacle*, *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, January 15, 1994, p. 7A
- [7] Charles D. Blair, *Anatomizing Non-State Threats to Pakistan's Nuclear Infrastructure: The Pakistani Neo-Taliban*, *Federation of American Scientists, Terrorism Analysis Report No. 1*, June 2011, 1, *Congressional Record*, Vol. 7, No. 3, October 1996.
- [8] David T. Hagerty, *South Asia's Nuclear Balance*, *Current History*, No. 95, April 1996, p. 165.
- [9] Davide E. Sanger and Eric Schmitt, "Pakistani Nuclear Arms Pose Challenge to US Policy," *The New York Times*, December 31 2011,
- [10] Edward Desmond, *Pakistan's Hidden Hand*, *Time*, July 22, 1991.
- [11] Elaine M. Grossman, 'Inside Obama Administration, a Tug of War over Nuclear Warheads', *Global Security Newswire*, August 19, 2010.
- [12] Elaine M. Grossman, 'US Nuclear Posture Review Delayed Until March', *Global Security Newswire*, January 6, 2010.
- [13] Eric Arnett, *What Threat*, *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, No. 53, March-April 1997, pp. 53-54.
- [14] George P. Shultz, William J. Perry, Henry A. Kissinger, and Sam Nunn, 'How to Protect our Nuclear Deterrent', *The Wall Street Journal*, January 19, 2010. For a text of the Prague speech, see <http://prague.usembassy.gov/obama.html>.
- [15] Greg Mello, 'The Obama Disarmament Paradox', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, February 4, 2010.
- [16] Hans M. Kristensen and Robert S. Norris, "Pakistan's Nuclear Forces, 2011," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 2011 67(91), available at <<http://bos.sagepub.com/content/67/4/91>>.
- [17] Hans M. Kristensen and Robert S. Norris, available at "Pakistan Nuclear Forces" *FAS Blog*, July 7 2011, <<http://www.fas.org/blog/ssp/2011/07/pakistanotebook.php>>.
- [18] J. Perry, Henry A. Kissinger, and Sam Nunn, 'Toward a Nuclear-Free World', *The Wall Street Journal*, January 15, 2012.
- [19] Jed C. Snyder, *South Asian Security After the Cold War*, *Strategic Forum, National Institute of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 3, 1996, pp. 1-4.
- [20] Jeffrey Key, *Beyond Tilting Both Ways: A New Post-cold War South Asian Policy*, *Asian Affairs*, Vol. 25, No. 2, 1998, p. 89.
- [21] Joe Biden, 'The President's Nuclear Vision', *The Wall Street Journal*, January 29, 2010.
- [22] Josh Rogin, 'Nuclear Posture Review Delayed until Mid to Late March', February 25, 2010, at *America's Strategic Posture*, *The Final Report of the Congressional Commission on the strategic Posture of the United States*, United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington, DC, 2009.
- [23] Kenneth N. Luongo, 'Confronting 21st Century Nuclear Security Realities', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, November 10, 2009.
- [24] Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan at the Cross Current of History*, Manas Publication, New Delhi, 2005, p. 132.
- [25] Lewis A. Dunn, *Containing Nuclear Proliferation*, *Adelphi Papers*, London, No. 263, Winter 2000, p. 7.
- [26] Matthew Bunn quoted in Davide E. Sanger and Eric Schmitt, "Pakistani Nuclear Arms Pose Challenge to US Policy," *The New York Times*, September 31 2011
- [27] Melvyn P. Leffler, "National Security and U.S foreign Policy," in Leffler and David S. Painter ,eds. ,*Origins of the Cold War: An International History* (New York:Routledge ,2009,pp.15-39
- [28] Michael Mullen, *Remarks by Admiral Mike Mullen, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*, Town Hall, Los Angeles, September 22, 2008,
- [29] Mitchel Reiss, *Bridled Ambition : Why Countries Constrain Their Nuclear Capabilities*, Woodrowilson Press, Washington DC, 1995, p. 103.
- [30] Mohammed Ali Durani, *India and Pakistan : The Lost of Conflict and Benefits of Peace*, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 2001, pp. 14-34.
- [31] Ninan Koshy, *Nuclear Weapons and India's Foreign Policy in Rajan Harshe and K.M. Seethi (Ed.)*, *Engaging with the World : Critical Reflections on India Foreign Policy*, Orient Longman, Hyderabad, 2005, pp. 35-75.
- [32] Paul K. Kerr and Mary Beth Nikitin, *Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons: Proliferation and Security Issues*,*Congressional Research Service report*, February 13, 2013,
- [33] *Report of the Secretary of Defence Task Force on Do Nuclear Weapons Management*, September 12, 2008, at



- [34] Robert Gates, 'Nuclear Weapons and Deterrence in the 21st Century', Remarks at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, DC, October 28, 2010.
- [35] Robert M. Gates, "Express TV Interview," transcript on US Department of Defense Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs), January 21 2010.
- [36] Selig S. Harrison, South Asia and the United States : A Chance for a Fresh Start, Current History, Vol. 13, No. 2, March 1992, pp. 98-105.
- [37] Susan Burk, "Toward a Successful NPT Review Conference", Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 31, 2010, at <http://www.carnegieendowment>.
- [38] Thomas W. Lippman, Administration Proposes Compromise to Transfer some Weapons to Pakistan, Washington Post, July 25, 1995.
- [39] Vijay Dutt, Pak Does not Rule out use of Nuclear Arms, The Hindustan Times, 25 June, 1996.
- [40] Waltan Brown, Presidential Leadership and U.S. Nonproliferation Policy, Current Affairs Digest, Vol. 18, No. 5, February 1996, p.21.
- [41] Yousset Bodansky, Pakistan's Nuclear Brinkmanship, Embassy of India Publication, 1995, [www.indiaembassy.org](http://www.indiaembassy.org).

AUTHORS

**First Author** – Dr. Leena Merlin, MA, Mphil, PhD,  
Email:[leenamerlin09@gmail.com](mailto:leenamerlin09@gmail.com)