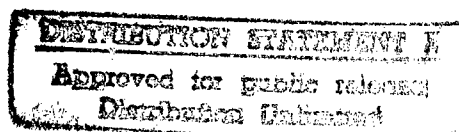


# CRS Report for Congress

## Nuclear Nonproliferation Strategies for South Asia




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# **NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION STRATEGIES FOR SOUTH ASIA**

## **SUMMARY**

Continued expansion of the nuclear weapons capabilities of India and Pakistan, coupled with ongoing conflict between them, raises the probability of nuclear war in South Asia. A nuclear arms race between India and Pakistan could also harm efforts to discourage other nations from acquiring nuclear weapons. United States policy opposes the spread of nuclear weapons because proliferation increases threats to U.S. national security and to world peace and stability. However, there is debate on the dangers of an escalating arms race in South Asia.

Steps taken by the United States and other countries to persuade India and Pakistan to end their nuclear weapons programs have had limited success, at most slowing down their pace. A complicating factor is that India maintains a nuclear capability in part to deter China, whereas Pakistan's nuclear weapons capability is aimed at deterring India's superior conventional and nuclear capabilities.

Analysts and policy officials are divided on how to avoid an arms race in South Asia. The Clinton Administration has renewed efforts to break the deadlock over nonproliferation, but longstanding obstacles have blocked progress. Pakistan favors a regional approach to nonproliferation, while India insists on a global approach that treats the nuclear powers on an equal basis with non-nuclear weapon countries. This report analyzes the nuclear capabilities of India and Pakistan and reviews several options for U.S. nonproliferation policy in South Asia.

Current questions for Congress and the Clinton Administration are:

1. Should the present U.S. nonproliferation policy towards India and Pakistan be continued?
2. What else might be done to dampen the nuclear aspirations of India and Pakistan? What incentives might be attractive?
3. Are the projected benefits from new nonproliferation measures likely to be worth their potential costs and risks?

## CONTENTS

NUCLEAR CAPABILITIES OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN .....	1
India .....	1
Nuclear Infrastructure .....	1
Nuclear Posture .....	1
Nonproliferation and Arms Control Commitments .....	2
Pakistan .....	2
Nuclear Infrastructure .....	2
Nuclear Posture .....	3
Nonproliferation and Arms Control Commitments .....	3
NUCLEAR DOCTRINE .....	4
U.S. NONPROLIFERATION POLICY TOWARD SOUTH ASIA:	
PAST AND PRESENT .....	5
Cutoff of Military and Economic Aid to Pakistan .....	6
The Glenn-Symington Amendments .....	6
The Pressler Amendment .....	6
Ending Nuclear Cooperation with India .....	7
OPTIONS .....	8
Managed Proliferation .....	8
Nuclear Restraint .....	9
Full-Scope Safeguards Regime .....	9
Continue the Status Quo .....	10
A Global Nonproliferation Strategy .....	10
POLITICAL LIMITS .....	11
ADDITIONAL READING .....	12
General Background .....	12
Managed Proliferation and Nuclear Restraint Options .....	12
Rollback and Global Nonproliferation Strategy Options .....	13

## **NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION STRATEGIES FOR SOUTH ASIA**

### **NUCLEAR CAPABILITIES OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN**

Both India and Pakistan admit to being capable of producing nuclear weapons, but each denies possessing a nuclear arsenal. Thus, their capabilities fall into a category between the five declared nuclear weapon states (United States, Russia, France, Great Britain, China) and nearly all other nations, which have foresworn nuclear weapons. Together with Israel and perhaps one or two others, the nations in this middle category are known as threshold states.

#### **India**

##### ***Nuclear Infrastructure***

India began a broad-based nuclear program in the late 1940s and accelerated it in the 1950s. It intensified its efforts following China's 1965 nuclear test and exploded a "peaceful" nuclear device (with a yield of less than 12 kilotons) in 1974. India has an extensive nuclear infrastructure that includes ten power reactors, five research reactors, uranium enrichment facilities and two plutonium separation (reprocessing) factories. India has plans to expand its nuclear power program, but financing for new nuclear power plants is reportedly in short supply.<sup>1</sup> Operating at full capacity, its existing reactors are capable of producing about 360 kilograms of plutonium per year, with a total reprocessing capacity of about 150 kilograms per year. Actual production and reprocessing has been much lower. Most published estimates put India's separated plutonium inventory at about 300 kilograms -- enough for approximately 50 nuclear weapons.

##### ***Nuclear Posture***

Indian officials confirm that India can build nuclear weapons in a short period of time, but deny possessing a nuclear arsenal. India is presumed to possess components for nuclear weapons including the actual fissile material "pits" or "cores" for weapons. Analysts conclude that India could build plutonium fission bombs, and possibly even thermonuclear weapons (hydrogen bombs). India could deliver nuclear weapons with various aircraft and with

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<sup>1</sup> "Lack of Capital Deters Russians from Building VVERs in India," *Nucleonics Week*, October 1, 1992; "India Eyes Joint Ventures with Nuclear Plant Vendors," *ibid*, August 27, 1992; "India may Seek Export for Surplus Heavy Water as Reactor Funds Cut," *ibid*, July 29, 1993.

short-range (Prithvi) and probably with intermediate-range (Agni) missiles it is developing.

### ***Nonproliferation and Arms Control Commitments***

India refuses to join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) on the grounds that the treaty discriminates between the five countries that are allowed to possess nuclear arsenals and all others that are locked into permanently inferior status as non-nuclear weapons states. India advocates replacing the NPT with a global disarmament treaty that would treat all countries equally. India favors a comprehensive nuclear test ban and is a party to the Limited Test Ban Treaty. In late 1993, India and the United States co-sponsored United Nations resolutions supporting a global test ban and a ban on the production of fissile materials for nuclear explosive devices or outside of safeguards. India opposes regional arms control measures that would treat India differently than the five declared weapons states, particularly China.

India is a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and allows IAEA safeguards on materials and facilities acquired from foreign suppliers, but not on others indigenously developed or associated with its weapons project. India plans to enter the market as an exporter of nuclear technology<sup>2</sup>; it is not a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, but does require safeguards on its nuclear exports. It does not, however, require full-scope safeguards as a condition of sale. (Full-scope safeguards apply to *all* nuclear activities in a recipient states, whereas limited safeguards apply only to a particular facility where an imported item is installed.)

India and Pakistan are implementing a bilateral agreement not to attack each others' nuclear facilities. The 1991 agreement provides for an exchange of lists of nuclear facilities. Although the agreement is essentially a confidence-building measure, such limited cooperation may be a first step toward more substantive arms control arrangements in the future. India has proposed expanding the agreement to ban attacks on population centers.

### **Pakistan**

#### ***Nuclear Infrastructure***

Pakistan has a modest nuclear program consisting of several research reactors and one power reactor purchased from Canada. It is building a large power reactor with Chinese assistance. Pakistan's nuclear weapon project uses enriched uranium from its Kahuta enrichment facility, which probably produces in the range of 23-38 kilograms of weapons grade uranium per year. Pakistan is also building reprocessing facilities, but these are not yet functioning. Experts estimate that Pakistan has produced between 130-216 kilograms of

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<sup>2</sup> "Capability of Exporting Critical Components Noted," *The Times of India*, April 27, 1993, and "India to Export Nuclear Reactor Components," *Deccan Chronicle*, April 27, 1993, both in JPRS-TND-93-022, July 12, 1993.

weapons-grade uranium, which would be enough for 6-13 fission bombs.<sup>3</sup> (The variation in the estimates reflect uncertainty about the enrichment levels of materials produced at the Kahuta uranium enrichment facility.)

### ***Nuclear Posture***

Pakistani officials have confirmed that Pakistan has produced "cores" for nuclear weapons, but maintain that the weapons production program has been "frozen" and deny possessing a nuclear arsenal.<sup>4</sup> Speculation about the weapon design reportedly provided to Pakistan by China suggests that Pakistan would probably build a solid sphere uranium fission bomb.<sup>5</sup> Pakistan could use transport aircraft and/or U.S.-supplied F-16 jets to deliver nuclear weapons, provided that certain modifications were made to the F-16s.<sup>6</sup> Pakistan is developing its own short-range missiles (HATF II) and has purchased M-11 medium-range missiles from China. These missiles could be nuclear-capable if Pakistan has developed sufficiently small and light warheads.

### ***Nonproliferation and Arms Control Commitments***

Pakistan has said that it would join the NPT when India does. Pakistan favors a regional approach to nonproliferation such as establishing a nuclear weapons free zone for South Asia. Pakistan has proposed convening five-power talks among India, Pakistan, China, the United States, and Russia to discuss nonproliferation in South Asia, but India has rejected this regional approach.

Pakistan is a member of the IAEA and allows inspections in some, but not all, nuclear facilities. The Kahuta enrichment plant is not under safeguards. Despite early fears that Pakistan would produce an "Islamic bomb" for friendly states, there is no public evidence of clandestine nuclear exports by Pakistan.

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<sup>3</sup> David Albright, Frans Berkhout, and William Walker, *World Inventory of Plutonium and Highly Enriched Uranium 1992* (Oxford: SIPRI/Oxford University Press, 1993), p. 166-167; Leonard Spector with Jacqueline Smith, *Nuclear Ambitions* (Boulder: Carnegie/Westview, 1990), Chapter 7.

<sup>4</sup> R. Jeffrey Smith, "Pakistan Official Affirms Capacity for Nuclear Device," *Washington Post*, February 7, 1992; Jon Wolfsthal and Lee Feinstein, "Pakistan Admits Nuclear Capability, U.S. Military Sales Revealed," *Arms Control Today*, March 1992, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> On the transfer by China of weapon design to Pakistan see Leslie Gelb, "Pakistan Links Peril, U.S.-China Nuclear Pact," *New York Times*, June 22, 1984.

<sup>6</sup> Gordon Oehler, Director of CIA Nonproliferation Center, Hearing before the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, February 24, 1993.



## NUCLEAR DOCTRINE

Despite estimates that both India and Pakistan could assemble and deliver nuclear weapons within as little as a few days, if not sooner, little is known about either side's nuclear doctrine. Strategic analysts from India and Pakistan (and a few in the United States) assert that the existence of undeclared, or "opaque," nuclear capabilities in South Asia can create a stable nuclear deterrent relationship. These analysts think that an overt nuclear arms race between the two countries can be avoided, and that military conflicts such as those over Kashmir do not pose unacceptable risks of nuclear escalation. To the contrary, in their view nuclear capabilities are believed to deter conventional as well as nuclear war. Pakistan may view nuclear weapons as a counter to India's conventional superiority. According to this view, nuclear deterrence in South Asia need not follow the U.S.-Soviet model, but can evolve to fit the unique circumstances of the region. In a nutshell, low-level, or "non-weaponized," nuclear deterrence between India and Pakistan is said to already exist without the need for nuclear testing or the necessity of having assured second strike capabilities to deter a disarming first strike.

It is uncertain whether nuclear planners in either country view nuclear weapons exclusively as retaliatory weapons, weapons of last resort, or have contingency plans for preemptive strikes or limited war. Similarly, little information is available about what types of targets -- military or civilian -- would be considered legitimate. The two countries have a bilateral agreement not to attack each other's nuclear installations.

The Director of Central Intelligence, James Woolsey, expressed a different view in testimony before the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee when he said "the arms race between India and Pakistan poses perhaps the most probable prospect for future use of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons." (Woolsey testimony before the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, February 24, 1993 and before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Subcommittee on International Security, International Organizations and Human Rights, July 28, 1993). This perspective was supported by media reports that U.S. intelligence officials concluded during the Kashmir crisis of spring 1990 that India and Pakistan were on the brink of a war that could have escalated to nuclear war. Military preparations in both countries reportedly supported this assessment. Consequently, many analysts take issue with the argument that nuclear weapons can contribute to peace and stability in South Asia. Instead, they argue that New Delhi and Islamabad could arrive at their own version of the Cuban Missile Crisis, but fail to avert disaster.

China complicates the deterrence scheme in South Asia. While Pakistan views its nuclear capability as a deterrent to India's superior conventional forces and more extensive nuclear capability, India is concerned not only about Pakistan, but also about China. Although India's relations with China have improved since the Sino-India border war of 1962, some analysts believe that China, not Pakistan, is the primary justification for India's nuclear capability. Pakistan and China maintain close relations that include significant nuclear

cooperation. China has reportedly supplied Pakistan with nuclear weapon design information, nuclear materials, nuclear reactors, nuclear-capable missiles, and participated in Pakistan's uranium enrichment program.<sup>7</sup> India maintains that a regional approach to nonproliferation would be unacceptable unless it treated China's nuclear weapons and those of all other nuclear powers on an equal basis.

## **U.S. NONPROLIFERATION POLICY TOWARD SOUTH ASIA: PAST AND PRESENT**

In the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 (NNPA, P.L. 95-242), Congress declared that "the proliferation of nuclear explosive devices or of the direct capability to manufacture or otherwise acquire such devices poses a grave threat to the security interests of the United States and to continued international progress toward world peace and development." [92 STAT. 120]. Accordingly, it has been U.S. policy to oppose the further spread of nuclear weapons, to encourage nations that have not joined the NPT to sign the treaty and open their nuclear activities to IAEA inspections, and to seek solutions to regional tensions such as those in South Asia. These objectives were confirmed in January 1993 by President Bush in an annual nonproliferation report to Congress required by section 601 of the NNPA, and were described in detail in a required report to Congress on proliferation in South Asia issued in May 1993. The report states the U.S. objective "is first to cap, then over time reduce, and finally eliminate the possession of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery."<sup>8</sup> The U.S. opposes the transfer of certain nuclear and nuclear-related technology to India or Pakistan, including certain advanced computers and missile technology. U.S. diplomacy has sought to reduce regional tensions

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<sup>7</sup> On Chinese nuclear exports see: Woolsey testimony before the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, February 24, 1993; Timothy V. McCarthy, *A Chronology of PRC Missile Trade and Developments* (Monterey: Monterey Institute of International Studies, 1992); R. Bates Gill, "The Challenge of Chinese Arms Proliferation: U.S. Policy for the 1990s," U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, August 1993; "Bending Rules," *Far East Economic Review*, May 16, 1991; Gary Milhollin and Gerard White, "A New China Syndrome: Beijing's Atomic Bazaar," *Washington Post*, May 12, 1991; Mark Hibbs, "Despite U.S. Alarm Over Algeria, Europeans Won't Blacklist China," *Nucleonics Week*, May 23, 1991; Hibbs, "Bonn Will Decline Teheran Bid To Resuscitate Bushehr Project," *ibid*, May 2, 1991; Hibbs and Ryan, "Official Says China Developing Ability to Supply Entire PWRs," and "Sensitive Iran Reactor Deal May Hinge on MFN for China," *ibid*, October 1, 1992.

<sup>8</sup> The White House, Report to the Congress on Progress Toward Regional Nonproliferation in South Asia, as required under section 620F(c) of the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs Appropriations Act for 1993, April 28, 1993.

through bilateral and multilateral discussions, including support for five-power talks.

The Clinton Administration in early 1994 renewed efforts to break the nonproliferation deadlock in South Asia with a proposal to offer new incentives for capping India's and Pakistan's nuclear programs. The proposal incorporates President Clinton's call for a global ban on the further production of fissile materials for weapons and includes a request that Congress allow a one-time exception to permit the delivery of some 38 F-16 fighters produced by Lockheed Corporation that were already paid for by Pakistan. It is still not clear what incentives might be offered to India, but the offer to Pakistan would be contingent on Islamabad agreeing to cap its production of enriched uranium and other steps. The proposal seeks to find a way around the impasse that has developed as a result of past efforts to halt nonproliferation in South Asia.

### **Cutoff of Military and Economic Aid to Pakistan**

The main U.S. response to Pakistan's continued progress toward acquiring nuclear weapons has been to condition U.S. economic and military aid on the status of Pakistan's nuclear program. The U.S. first terminated aid to Pakistan in 1979, but restored it in response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The cutoff was resumed in 1990. (See CRS Report 93-1036F, *Pakistan's Nuclear Activities: Legislation Related to the Cutoff of U.S. Aid.*)

### ***The Glenn-Symington Amendments***

In 1976 and 1977 Congress amended the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 to require the President to end economic and military assistance to countries that receive or supply unsafeguarded uranium enrichment or reprocessing equipment. President Carter invoked this law to cut off aid to Pakistan in 1979. The law also contained a waiver that enables the President to continue aid to Pakistan if the President determines that it is in the interest of the United States to do so, but only if he has reliable assurances that Pakistan was not developing nuclear weapons.

### ***The Pressler Amendment***

In 1985 Senator Pressler sponsored an amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act that required the President to certify that "Pakistan does not possess a nuclear explosive device and that the proposed United States assistance program will reduce significantly the risk that Pakistan will possess a nuclear explosive device..." [Sec. 902 of P.L. 99-83] as a condition for waiving the aid cutoff (required by Glenn-Symington). Presidents Reagan and Bush provided the certifications until 1990, when President Bush did not provide the certification, causing economic and military aid to be cut off. Despite the aid cutoff, the Department of State continued to issue licenses for commercial sales

of military parts to Pakistan because the State Department did not interpret the Pressler amendment to prohibit private commercial sales.<sup>9</sup>

The Clinton Administration proposed eliminating the Pressler Amendment as part of its effort to rewrite the Foreign Assistance Act, and more recently as part of its nonproliferation policy for South Asia. The proposal was apparently dropped in response to congressional resistance. Another more recent proposal would involve asking Congress to waive the Pressler amendment to allow the United States to deliver 38 F-16 aircraft to Pakistan as an incentive to accept limits on its nuclear development. The limits would require Pakistan to agree to allow the IAEA to verify that it is not producing weapons grade fissile materials and bilateral inspections to verify that F-16s have not been modified to carry nuclear weapons.

Supporters of the proposal argue that Washington should accept that U.S. policy failed to stop Pakistan (or India) from acquiring nuclear weapons and should now adopt new policies aimed at controlling the arms race in South Asia. Opponents argue that the proposal continues the practice of providing arms to Pakistan in exchange for hollow assurances of nuclear restraint, and would reward Pakistan for its defiance of nonproliferation norms. They argue that other potential proliferators could interpret the lifting of sanctions and delivery of fighter aircraft as a weakening of U.S. nonproliferation policy. Several Members of Congress, including Senators Glenn and Pressler, oppose the Clinton proposal. Others support it.

### **Ending Nuclear Cooperation with India**

One U.S. response to India's nuclear weapons program was to end nuclear cooperation between the two countries. The U.S. and India entered a thirty-year agreement for nuclear cooperation in October 1963. The agreement authorized General Electric to sell two power reactors and supply low-enriched nuclear fuel for the Tarapur reactors. The Nuclear Nonproliferation Act of 1978 required the United States to renegotiate all of its bilateral agreements for nuclear cooperation because the law required all non-nuclear weapon states to allow full-scope safeguards on all of their nuclear activities as a condition of continued nuclear cooperation. India refused to renegotiate the original agreement and does not allow safeguards on some of its nuclear operations, although it does allow some safeguards at the Tarapur nuclear station. The United States cut off the supply of nuclear fuel for Tarapur, but agreed to allow France to begin supplying fuel for Tarapur in 1983. However, France has since acceded to the NPT and adopted a full-scope safeguards policy that prohibits continued supply of nuclear fuel to India.

The United States still claims it has legal rights over the use of U.S.-origin nuclear fuel supplied under the original agreement, and that safeguards

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<sup>9</sup> Hearing before the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, "Interpreting the Pressler Amendment: Commercial Military Sales to Pakistan," July 30, 1992. See also the *Congressional Record*, March 19, 1992, S3950.

requirements at Tarapur did not expire when the agreement expired in October 1993. India claims that U.S. rights over the fuel and the requirement to allow safeguards at Tarapur ended when the agreement expired. After negotiations failed to resolve the issue in 1993, both countries agreed to defer the dispute for another year. However, India indicated that it may allow expanded IAEA safeguards on its two reprocessing plants.

If India cannot find another supplier of nuclear fuel for Tarapur, it may attempt to operate the reactors with mixed plutonium oxide fuel (MOX). India claims it could produce MOX using plutonium from its own unsafeguarded plutonium reprocessing plants without external assistance.<sup>10</sup> However, questions remain about the economic and technical viability of using MOX fuel in the Tarapur reactors. Moreover, the Tarapur reactors are thirty years old. India expects to operate them for another ten to fifteen years before decommissioning, but questions about nuclear safety and controversy over the fuel issue could affect the cost/benefit analysis of the reactors' utility. Tarapur provides about 10 percent of the electrical power for the surrounding region. A decision to use (unsafeguarded) plutonium as an energy resource would be controversial, despite the fact that a few countries such as Japan and perhaps Russia retain an interest in developing a plutonium fuel cycle. India could create a "closed" fuel cycle using plutonium separated from its own spent nuclear fuel, but a decision to do so would complicate discussions with the U.S. on nonproliferation issues.

Although there has been discussion in Congress about applying the Pressler amendment to India, any attempts to condition U.S. aid to India on its nonproliferation behavior are not likely to have much effect. United States aid to India is minimal, leaving Washington with very little leverage.

## OPTIONS

Proposals for breaking the nonproliferation deadlock in South Asia range from accepting India and Pakistan as nuclear weapons states to continuing the status quo, or some modified version thereof. Because of the different interests involved, finding middle ground on which to negotiate solutions has been extremely difficult. Nevertheless, several distinct options can be identified.

### Managed Proliferation

One extreme approach to proliferation in South Asia, sometimes referred to as "managed" proliferation, advocates accepting India and Pakistan as nuclear weapons states and providing them with technical assistance to improve the command, control, and safety of their nuclear capabilities to reduce the risks of accidental nuclear war. While such assistance might reduce the risk of

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<sup>10</sup> "India Mulling Options for Tarapur Fuel If France Cuts Supply After 1993," *Nuclear Fuel*, December 7, 1992; "Iyengar Says India Can Make Fuel for Tarapur as French Rebuff Rao," *Nucleonics Week*, October 8, 1992.

accidental nuclear war, it would also legitimize India's and Pakistan's status as nuclear weapon states. Many nonproliferation specialists object to this approach because it would replace the present U.S. policy of opposing the addition of new nuclear weapons states with a new policy of accepting new members in the nuclear weapons club. Such an approach could encourage other aspiring nuclear weapons states to demand similar treatment. The goal of stopping the spread of nuclear weapons would yield to a policy of preventing the use of nuclear weapons.

### **Nuclear Restraint**

One variation on the managed approach advocates creating a special category for India, Pakistan, and perhaps other threshold states. The new classification would cap their nuclear weapons programs to prevent further production, assembly, or deployment of nuclear weapons, but would not attempt to eliminate their nuclear weapons. In effect, nuclear restraint would attempt to formalize non-weaponized deterrence. A policy of nuclear restraint could include regional agreements not to build nuclear weapons and could be supplemented with global initiatives that would include the nuclear threshold states (India, Pakistan, Israel...) on an equal basis with the five declared nuclear weapon states. President Clinton's proposed ban on further production of fissile material for nuclear explosives, for example, could include India and Pakistan without requiring them to disclose past production or current fissile material inventories.

While this approach might be more acceptable to the threshold states, it would also legitimize their current nuclear stockpiles. Many questions remain about the verifiability of such nuclear restraint. One unintended consequence of this approach could be that instead of de-legitimizing the role of nuclear weapons in world politics, giving equal status to threshold states such as India and Pakistan could weaken the credibility of U.S. nonproliferation policy and reinforce the value of having even a low-level nuclear weapon capability. Other countries could then be tempted to defy the norm of nonproliferation.

### **Full-Scope Safeguards Regime**

A variation on nuclear restraint would be to establish full-scope safeguards on all nuclear facilities in both India and Pakistan. A similar arrangement with the IAEA has brought Argentina and Brazil, both former threshold states, gradually closer to ratifying the Latin America Nuclear-Weapons Free Zone Treaty (the Treaty of Tlatelolco). According to some proponents of this option, full-scope safeguards would not necessarily eliminate either country's future nuclear options or require either to join the NPT, but could enable both to restore economic and technological cooperation with the West. Neither country would retain nuclear weapon components, and its nuclear operations would be monitored by the IAEA to give timely warning of a diversion of nuclear materials. For either country to exercise a weapons option it would have to violate its safeguards agreement. New Delhi and Islamabad might wish to

augment IAEA safeguards with a bilateral and/or regional verification agreement.

Acceptance of full-scope safeguards could enable India to negotiate with the U.S. (or France) to supply fuel for Tarapur, and for Pakistan to be eligible for U.S. aid and arms transfers. Full-scope safeguards could enable the President to certify that Pakistan does not possess a nuclear device, although past violations of U.S. nonproliferation laws and policies would have to be forgiven. So far it appears unlikely that the incentives of nuclear cooperation and a restoration of U.S. assistance to Pakistan would be sufficient to persuade India or Pakistan to accept full-scope safeguards.

### **Continue the Status Quo**

Another option is to stay the course and continue to press New Delhi and Islamabad to end their nuclear weapons programs. This approach would continue support for a regional approach, including support for establishing a verified nuclear-weapon free zone, and could be coupled with support for additional confidence-building measures such as the existing agreement to exchange information and pledge not to attack nuclear facilities. The United States could provide technical support and/or intelligence information to support verification of agreements to end fissile material production or dispose of nuclear materials. Traditional nonproliferation standards would not be lowered to accommodate threshold nuclear states.

This approach would continue to search for solutions to underlying security problems -- such as the conflict over Kashmir -- that might reduce tensions surrounding the nuclear issue. The search for negotiated solutions to nonproliferation problems in South Asia is constrained by domestic political considerations in both countries which tend to narrow political options for dealing with the nuclear issue. The ultimate goal of the status quo approach would remain to cap and eventually roll back nuclear weapons programs in both countries. Rollback could include a variety of bilateral and international verification options, backed by offers of economic and technological incentives for progress. Significant progress, such as signing the NPT, could be rewarded with U.S. security assistance or other security assurances. This approach would avoid policies that would have the effect of giving legitimacy to India or Pakistan possessing nuclear weapons. It would, however, continue to complicate bilateral relations with both countries and offers little hope for breaking the deadlock on nonproliferation.

### **A Global Nonproliferation Strategy**

The status quo approach could be enhanced by efforts to strengthen the nonproliferation regime. The regime embodies the norms, treaties, laws, export controls, and policies aimed at stopping the spread of nuclear weapons. The regime has been relatively successful in preventing all but a few countries from attempting to acquire nuclear weapons. The NPT, which ends its twenty-five year initial term in April 1995, is the centerpiece of the regime. The United

States maintains that nonproliferation norms and the NPT benefit all nations, not just the weapons states. Moreover, deep reductions in post-Cold War nuclear arsenals should satisfy the expectations of non-nuclear weapon states for progress toward ending the nuclear arms race. Instead of altering the NPT regime to accommodate new weapons states, a global nonproliferation strategy would go further in addressing the concerns of NPT critics by reducing stockpiles of nuclear weapons and materials, but at the same time would strengthen the nonproliferation regime. India and Pakistan would be encouraged to join a global rollback strategy.

The Clinton Administration's policy to extend the moratorium on nuclear testing and enter negotiations on a global test ban treaty is widely viewed as strengthening the U.S. position on nonproliferation.<sup>11</sup> The test ban policy enhances U.S. diplomacy to extend the NPT in perpetuity and without conditions when it comes up for review by its members in April 1995. Other global nonproliferation efforts such as an end to the production of fissile materials for weapons (already U.S. policy), strengthening the inspection system of the IAEA, building the nonproliferation enforcement powers of the United Nations Security Council, timely implementation of START I and II by all of the former Soviet republics, controls on world stockpiles of plutonium, and progress toward establishing nuclear-weapon free zones could all complement a global nonproliferation strategy. As non-weapon states, India and Pakistan could participate in key components of the global strategy.

## **POLITICAL LIMITS**

Efforts to resolve nuclear nonproliferation issues in South Asia are generally viewed within a broad context of competing foreign and domestic policy objectives in each of the countries involved. These objectives include geostrategic, economic, and political considerations. Domestic political factors are important for Indian and Pakistani leaders, who wish to avoid perceptions of accommodating U.S. nonproliferation preferences which can be unpopular with domestic audiences. Nuclear programs have symbolic and political importance in both countries and are believed to have defense/deterrence value that cannot be achieved through any other means. Significant arms control or nonproliferation agreements could face considerable opposition in both countries.

Some in the United States also question the high priority given to nonproliferation policy and favor subordinating nonproliferation to other foreign policy interests. Nonproliferation is seen as an obstacle to improving U.S. relations with India and Pakistan. Others, including many Clinton Administration policy makers, view nonproliferation as a top priority for U.S.

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<sup>11</sup> White House Fact Sheet, Nonproliferation and Export Control Policy, September 27, 1993; The White House, Office of the Press Secretary, statement on the President's decision to extend the moratorium on nuclear testing, March 15, 1994.



and international security. United States initiatives face the challenge of persuading India and Pakistan to cap and roll back their nuclear programs without giving legitimacy to their covert possession of nuclear capabilities, and without overturning existing U.S. nonproliferation laws and policies.

## **ADDITIONAL READING**

### **General Background**

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