

Twenty Years of Transformation in South Asia

The Stability of Deterrence in South Asia

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GEORGE PERKOVICH: Welcome back. We're going to get started with the afternoon panel, which focuses primarily on nuclear issues. I should say I'm George Perkovich. I basically was supposed to be moderating earlier, at 11:30. I admit my guilt in that, but it was a miscommunication. So anyway, I'm not supposed to be moderating now. So to kind of show that two wrongs might make a right, actually, I am moderating this session because our colleague, Toby Dalton, went home with what appears to be the flu.

And so we're asking Iskander, our other colleague, who's a Stanton fellow here, to be on the panel instead, which is actually great, because Iskander is doing some very interesting work in particular on naval nuclear developments in India and Pakistan and the interactivity between those. And it's a topic on which not a lot of work has been done. And I think what he's doing is very interesting. And so you'll get to hear about that. And then I have a long-time friend to my left, which he should laugh about, Neil Joeck, who is here from Lawrence Livermore National Lab. He's worked on and off at Livermore for a great time, but also has served in administrations in the National Security Council, in policy planning at the State Department, and in the National Intelligence Council, so has a lot of experience analytically and in terms of also working on the policy side of things. And like I said, I think the first thing I read that Neil had written on South Asian nuclear issues was dated something like 1983. So he's been at this a long time.

So Neil's going to go first, followed by Iskander, and then I'll make some comments. And then we'll open up for discussion. So Neil.

[02:23]

NEIL JOECK: Thanks very much, George, and thank you all for attending today.

It used to be that economics was the dismal science, but we started off with a bang this morning on economics. Now I think nuclear weapons continue to be the dismal science, not to the extent it's a science at all. So at Livermore we try to counter that by the pretty picture you see before you. Nothing bad can come from such a bucolic setting. (Laughter.) But, of course, that's not Pakistan. That's what we're going to talk about.

So I need to do two things. I'll give you the outline. But as they say in the military, BLUF – bottom line up front. I think theater nuclear weapons fundamentally challenge current assumptions of plans about the future of conflict in South Asia. So what I'll talk about is the six bullet points.

War is still possible between India and Pakistan. If you disagree with that conclusion, you can go to sleep and you won't be wakened, because that is stipulated as part of my discussion. I think that's just the case. Past wars have been limited, so people think, in South Asia. And I'll say a little bit about that. I had a chance to speak here in Washington at the Stimson Center several months ago, where I laid this out in somewhat greater detail, so I'll be brief there.

[03:37]

I think the Cold War model of limited nuclear war does not really apply in South Asia. And I think unfortunately a lot of the analysis thinking about the prospect of nuclear use, of nuclear deterrence, in South Asia are built on that model. And I think it's not particularly apt.

The fourth point is Pakistan is developing tactical nuclear weapons based on their own tests and announcements. And I'll go into a little bit about what that may mean. I think the implication, as I say at the outset, is that Indian nuclear policies may need to be reevaluated. And I'm cautious in the presence of Ashley Tellis,

saying that some of the arguments that he makes in his book may need to be reevaluated. I do think the introduction of nuclear weapons at the battlefield level – and I should also add the caveat, tactical is really not a very good modifier for nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons are, depending on your perspective, one more weapon in the arsenal, and they may be used for trying to achieve tactical outcomes or for – but you have a range of tactics to achieve an overall strategy. A nuclear weapon may be one of those.

And then the last point I'd make is that the next war may not look like the past wars, and so let's not assume that it is.

[04:50]

So war is possible. Neither side wants a war. I'm not advocating it. I'm not saying this is something that we should pay attention to – that we should advocate by any means. But again, it is the dismal science, so I think we need to pay attention to it. I recognize that multiple differences between India and Pakistan continue - the Kashmir issues, the future of Afghanistan, terrorism, et cetera. Their past wars, conflict between them in 1999 and '01-'02, I think, have also taught dangerous lessons.

From Pakistan's point of view, they may conclude from 1999 – sorry, from 2001-2002 that coercive diplomacy was tried and failed. And I don't think, as you look carefully at that literature, that really is what happened at the time. I think there's an influence of third parties in both of these where I think the lesson may be negative; that is, from India's perspective, in '01-'02 an opportunity may have been missed as a consequence of third-party intervention. And we just have, I think, sort of a different set of concerns as we go forward.

So with respect to limited wars in South Asia, I think security analysts may assume that a future war would remain limited in terms of the canonical time-space resources and objectives. But I think the past wars between India and Pakistan are not necessarily good indicators that war can remain limited, for a host of reasons, but I'll try and be brief.

I think it's difficult to avoid battlefield initiative. I think we saw that both from the point of people in the battlefield in 1999 at Kargil, but also from an executive level in 1971. Opportunities arise. It's hard to resist them. I also think that 1999 is overstated, in a sense, as being limited. Certainly the battlefield was confined, but there was a good deal of what I call escalation readiness going on with respect to the movement of forces on the ground, at sea, and with respect to the nuclear programs.

[06:54]

Again, to repeat, '01-'02 may have taught some dangerous lessons. Coercive diplomacy failed - I don't think that was really the case – and opportunity was missed. There may be people in India who would like to redress that missed opportunity.

As I said, the Cold War model, in my judgment, doesn't really apply. It's instructive, but I think there are significant differences. There are no alliance complications between India and Pakistan. There isn't a territorial buffer zone. You don't have what sometimes is referred to as the overkill overhang with respect to their actual capabilities, center versus periphery restraint in the Cold War. We saw the central conflict between the U.S. and the Soviet Union somewhat restrained – somewhat deferred to peripheral battles where restraint was shown on the periphery. But there was wars fought on the periphery that deflected stress at the center, you might say.

With India and Pakistan, of course, you do have the past history, fairly recent. And Jack Gill's presentation before lunch spotlighted the relative improvement over the last decade, but nonetheless there is a past history of direct conflict. And as I noted, I think there's fundamental differences about the future of the neighborhood, you could say, that do not – have the effect of not removing those conflicts.

And there's also, to some extent, this past reliance on third-party intervention. And I do emphasize this, because I think, to some extent, there's an expectation that another war would come under the influence of third parties. But I'm not sure that that's also not overstated. There may be a negative lesson for both countries - for Pakistan in 1999, when many military officers felt that they had been stabbed in the back, the classic kind of complaint from military officers that the politicians had snatched victory – defeat from the jaws of victory when Nawaz Sharif went to Washington on July 5th of '99 and, from the perspective of some in the military, handed things over too soon; and from India's perspective in 2001, when, after the December 13th attack on the Lok Sabha, they had a month when they might have been able to respond in some fashion. But then on January 12th, at the urging of the U.S. and others, President Musharraf gave a speech that was subsequently used as sort of evidence that India could achieve its objectives through other means than conflict. And for some that was a missed opportunity that may be – that they may regret not being able to take advantage of, that they didn't take advantage of.

[09:40]

So tactical nuclear weapons – Pakistan announced that it tested a short-range missile suitable for nuclear-weapon delivery, the Hatf-IX or Nasr, with a 60-kilometer range. So without going into any details, I'll stipulate that Pakistan has made the decision to go the route of having – again, with understood caveats – using the term tactical – has decided to use tactical nuclear weapons.

Now, this is partially – at least the Pakistanis, I think, frequently argue that it's a response to Cold Start. By looking at the – and, you know, we can sort of back up and look at the progress of thinking back and forth between India and Pakistan to an extent. After 1999, General Malik in January of 2000 gave a speech where he said that India cannot afford to continue to allow Pakistan to use asymmetric warfare and needs to develop, as he puts it, space between escalation and low-intensity conflict for India to respond.

This was accentuated – this perspective was accentuated in 2001-2002 when the Indian army was still sort of under the yoke, you might say, of the Sundarji doctrine. And so in 2004 the army introduced the new concept of Cold Start; that is, to be able to have up to eight or 10 shallow penetrations across the international border rather than the massive movements that accompanied the Sundarji doctrine.

But as we look at this, I think if India were to launch Cold Start, to use Thomas Schelling's language, a conspicuous stopping place would thereby be removed. And the problem in thinking about nuclear use and nuclear deterrence is where would a new conspicuous stopping point appear? When do you pull back? And the presumptions are that limited – that the war would remain limited. But as I've said, I think that's open to some question.

[11:38]

But I would say that Cold Start per se is really only an excuse. From Pakistan's perspective, I think they had been relying on – again, to use Schelling's language – the threat that leaves something to chance; that is, that India would never – would be cautious about expanding a war across the international border, as they did in 1965, and as they refrained from doing in 1999, and that because of that threat that leaves something to chance, you don't cause

conspicuous stopping points. You refrain from what your initiative might lead you to do, and that India would thereby be restrained.

I think after Cold Start is introduced, Pakistan's perspective that India will show restraint starts to disappear. And what they need to do is think in terms not of confronting India with the possibility that an intervention across the international border would immediately result in a fairly wide-scale attack by Pakistan using nuclear weapons. I think Pakistan responded to that by trying to draw down the threshold that would prompt it to use nuclear weapons. And I think what we see now, with their introduction of planned and otherwise of tactical nuclear weapons to the battlefield, indicates that they certainly would like to deter India from inducting Cold Start or something like that. But in the event that it doesn't, they aren't going to rely on – they can no longer rely on that threat. And so what they need to do is to be able to think about how nuclear weapons might be used actually on the battlefield.

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And I think the implications, then, are largely for India. From India's perspective, they're faced with a new challenge. They have to evaluate whether or not this tactical or theater nuclear weapon threat is credible on Pakistan's side. That is, if a war were catalyzed for whatever reason – and again, I don't think either side wants to go to war, but they've both been faced with the threat of catalytic war in the past and may be again in the future – in the event that India decides to induct Cold Start, decides to move troops across the international border, decides to break that conspicuous stopping point, again, to use Schelling's language, how will Pakistan respond?

Moving on, from India's perspective, they may want to enhance the nuclear taboo. But the question is begged, to what extent does that apply on a new setting? From Pakistan's point of view, to the extent that a nuclear taboo favors India and makes it more difficult for India to respond – for Pakistan to respond to Indian conventional aggression, they may want to erode the nuclear taboo in some ways.

From India's point of view again, they need to sort of change the dialogue. What is the nature of the relation between the two sides as they talk about their conflict? What's allowable and what isn't? In effect, they're talking – they're in a bargaining relationship. Again, to use the nuclear deterrence theoretical literature, how do they bargain about outcomes without quite acknowledging that those outcomes are in prospect?

From India's point of view, then, if war were to break out, if India were to induct Cold Start, how does it deter first use by Pakistan? How does it convince Pakistan that it will remain limited, that it will not show battlefield initiative? And how does it get communicated to Pakistan that India's goals are limited? From India's perspective, what is limited may be, from Pakistan's point of view, something much more fundamental.

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There's a background argument that the weapons would be used by Pakistan only because it was – there was an existential threat posed. They would refrain from using nuclear weapons because they were threatened by India's nuclear strength, nuclear response. But from Pakistan's point of view, even a shallow incursion may look like an existential threat to the state. And therefore, threatening Pakistan with the use of nuclear weapons if they used nuclear weapons first, in effect, is like threatening to hang a man twice. They're already faced with the prospect that the state's being destroyed. Why would they therefore prevent – why would they therefore not use nuclear weapons?

So as you look at India's draft nuclear doctrine, I think the Indians have to ask themselves, is this a credible threat to Pakistan? If we imagine what the next war would look like - again, posit that it's catalyzed by a terrorist strike - obviously the best response for India is going to be a diplomatic one initially, because no one's going to benefit particularly from the war. But that may not be available. That may - things may be happening fast. There may be different pressures that make a military response more sensible.

India needs to think about what that response should be, whether or not this army doctrine of Cold Start is a good idea or a bad idea and whether or not there are other options using air capabilities or naval capabilities. Obviously you have sort of the huffing and puffing that goes on before you actually engage in war, so threats, condemnations, calls for restraint, and so on, naturally would be part of the landscape as both sides responded within a relatively short period of time to this catalytic terrorist strike.

[17:06]

But in the process, then, of the war developing, how do you signal that you are going to be restrained? How do you signal to the other side, and how do you ensure that that signal is received? We've seen past cases of attempts at signaling. And it's not at all clear, but from the Brass Tacks crisis in 1987, some people in India - in Pakistan make the case that Pakistan was trying to signal with the Kuldip Nayar interview with A.Q. Khan. I don't think that's the case, but it captures the problem, which is that you have to be careful about who your interlocutor is. If you want to send a signal, you have to make sure that the signal is sent promptly.

There was an interview that took place on January 30th of 1987. It was only delivered on March 1st. It was only published on March 1st. So was there a delay in actually conveying that? Was Kuldip Nayar an interlocutor that the Indian government trusted? There are a lot of things that need to be thought about. You don't probably want to do that after the bullets start flying. And then what are those limits? This is part of the bargaining process as well. And the key problem there is a limited war requires two to tango. And how do you convey to the other side that you will be limited, and how do you ensure that the enemy respects those limits? In conversations with Pakistani leaders, I think some of them have the feeling that if India were to attack at point A, Pakistan may choose to respond there or they may simply choose to counterattack at point B, which doesn't lead to restraint.

And I think a critical problem for India is deciding how to respond to nuclear use. And here it may be the case that responding to - that it may be easier to use weapons first. And when I talk about nuclear use, I'm talking about very low yield, not even on the scale of the bombs that were exploded over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but something that's one or two kilotons in the field with low - and pardon the term of art - collateral damage; that it would have effects on battlefield conditions, battlefield participants, but not on civilians, and there'd be very little radioactive debris as a consequence of this. So the consequences of the use of battlefield nuclear weapons would be quite limited in their effects.

How would India respond to that? Does it make sense for India to invoke its nuclear doctrine, which says that any nuclear attack will result in, in effect, massive retaliation by India against Pakistan? Is that a sensible doctrine to enact? And should it be reevaluated?

[19:30]

So by way of conclusion, then, I think tactical weapons have to be considered part of the battlefield at this point. The conditions for restraint need to be established. I think these are challenges for India, that the implications, again, lie heavily for India. They need to think about, well, what options, given this prospect for nuclear use in a battle, are they prepared to forgo? What provocations will they necessarily have to tolerate? At one

point former Defense Minister George Fernandes made a comment in conversation. He said every day of every year we face provocations. We don't respond to all of them. Well, what ones would you choose not to tolerate? How do you limit, then, the military response? And how does that get conveyed to Pakistan?

But in the end, from India's perspective, the implication of the Pakistani introduction of nuclear battlefield use begs the question, what does India do if Pakistan shoots first? Does the draft – does the nuclear doctrine provide the necessary guidance they need? I think structurally India needs to address who's involved in the conversation. That's a process question. The conceptual problem is more fundamental. How do you plan for a nuclear war? The better you do in terms of planning for it, the better opportunity you have for avoiding it when a crisis arises.

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So I conclude by saying we're left with more questions than answers, which is also a way of saying that if you ask me a question that I can't really answer, I can simply say we have more questions than answers.

Thank you very much. (Applause.)

MR. PERKOVICH: Thank you, Neil. That was great. That was a great set-up for what comes next.

And Iskander probably isn't going to have cheerier news to report, but go ahead.

ISKANDER REHMAN: Thank you. No, in fact, if what Neil just laid out sent a chill up your spine, I'm not going to be able to provide any measure of reassurance, I'm afraid.

I must also apologize for the absence of slides. I usually find it quite useful to have maps of all these exotic-sounding locales, but I didn't really have any time to prepare.

But what I am going to do is I'm going to briefly explain why nuclear interactions at sea are going to come to form an increasingly important component to the South Asian nuclear equation. And then I'm going to try and see if there are any instructive parallels that can be drawn from the Cold War and what implications this evolution is going to have for U.S. policy in the region.

So the study of nuclear interactions at sea provides an exciting opportunity to delve into a relatively under-explored side of the South Asian nuclear equation. Now, I say this because since 1998, when India and Pakistan both burst out of the nuclear closet and publicly revealed their formerly recessed capabilities to the world, there's been little real commentary on the impact that the introduction of sea-based delivery systems would have on the nuclear equation.

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Now, this can be attributed in part to the relatively recent nature of naval nuclearization. India only launched its first indigenously produced nuclear submarine, the INS Arihant, or destroyer of enemies, in 2009. And Pakistan only just formally officialized its ambitions for a functional nuclear triad via an inter-services public press release in May of last year.

Now, I should probably add a caveat, because when I say recent, I'm referring to the public debate, because India's nuclear submarine program was, in fact, initiated over three decades ago. And if you look back at statements

by Pakistani naval commanders and strategists, there have been references to the need for Pakistan to acquire a nuclear triad going back at least to the 1980s.

But even since 2009 and India's public unveiling of the Arihant, there's been scant commentary on its wider strategic significance. So the event was hailed as a symbolic and technological milestone, but there was no real recognition of the meaning this had on South Asian nuclear interactions. So I think it's important to note, first of all, that both nations have their own distinct set of motivations to pursue naval nuclearization. So it's important not to lump them together. And those motivations cannot be resumed through a simple action-reaction dynamic.

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India, for example, is motivated certainly in part by a desire for prestige and international recognition, but also by a very rational objective, which is to place its nuclear assets at a safer distance from a decapitation strike. And this is particularly important in light of China's growing militarization of the Tibetan plateau and the proliferation of Chinese ballistic missile silos in strategic high-altitude points along the border. In addition to this, there are mounting concerns in Delhi over the reach of Chinese air power, as well as over recent reports that indicate that China is developing a navalized version of its long-range land-attack cruise missiles.

Now, Pakistan, for its part, has its own strategic rationale for developing a naval nuclear capability, which is at least partly independent of a simple desire to mirror India's own advances. In fact, the study of Pakistan naval strategy since independence reveals that Pakistan has systematically shown a great aptitude for creative strategic thinking in terms of asymmetric naval balancing, whether it be via investing in small amounts of high-end naval technology or by focusing on submarine warfare. And similarly, Pakistan's naval commanders expressed their desire to acquire naval nuclear capability long before India publicly unveiled the Arihant, and at a time when it was uncertain that the project would ever actually see the light of day due to several bureaucratic and technological delays.

One can list several factors that have shaped Pakistan's thinking over the years about naval nuclear warfare, but for reasons of brevity, I won't list them now. But the point that bears the most mention, perhaps, is that through its threats to disperse nuclear assets on its surface ships or aboard its conventional submarines, Pakistan can inject strategic ambiguity and uncertainty. And in so doing, it can offset India's conventional naval advantage in the Indian Ocean, much in the same way it's managed to dilute India's conventional advantage on land. And in both cases, this has been achieved by a refusal to abide by no-first-use policy and by what Neil discussed earlier on, the flirtation with a tactical use of nuclear weapons.

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So to provide a concrete example, most analysts would now concur that Pakistan is developing a sea-based version of its Babur missile, which is a subsonic nuclear-capable missile which bears a strange resemblance to the U.S. Tomahawk, albeit with a much shorter range.

So how do these evolutions interfere with our traditional reading of sea-based nuclearization? Well, I think that a common reading of the movement toward sea-based deterrence is that, in fact, it's stabilizing, because it ensures the relatively sancturization of nations' deterrence, and it reduces first-strike incentives on both sides. And it also displaces the locus of nuclear competition from heavily populated state territories to the wide open waters.

But it's my contention that this optimistic vision doesn't really hold up to scrutiny when applied to regional nuclear dynamics and what some people call the second nuclear age. And in this case, one can argue that it's not so

much the process of naval nuclearization in itself that's inherently stabilizing or destabilizing, but rather the manner in which the actor chooses to pursue it. And Pakistan seems to have opted for a rather dangerous path, which combines dual-use systems, nuclear-tipped cruise missiles, cultivated doctrinal ambiguity, a fair degree of maritime brinkmanship. And India, for its part, has conducted a series of tests of short-range Dhanush missiles from offshore patrol vessels. So while, in India's case, it remains highly doubtful whether New Delhi will actually ever decide to station nuclear assets aboard surface vessels, certain statements by DRDO officials have caused a lot of concern in Pakistan.

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So I would argue that if both nations don't work towards better integrating sea-based nuclear assets in their strategic thinking and bilateral dialogue, there's a real risk of vertical or inadvertent escalation. And in terms of methodology, I think it's worth exploring the question of inadvertent escalation in the naval realm in a comparative perspective. And as Mark Twain once quipped, the past may not repeat itself, but it does sometimes rhyme. And the topic of inadvertent escalation at sea was explored in depth during the second half of the Cold War by theorists who warned how, within a heavily nuclearized environment, and under conditions of strategic uncertainty, offensive submarine operations or deployments could give birth to dangerously escalatory dynamics.

And what's interesting is that, much as in India and Pakistan today, this argument was countered at the time by a constituency who argued that the diversification and resulting dispersal of NATO's nuclear assets at sea strengthened their survivability and thus buttressed overall deterrence. For instance, Linton Brooks, who served on the Reagan administration's national security staff, wrote at the time that, I quote, "deterrence is enhanced through the deliberate importation of risk and uncertainty." Sea-based systems able to attack a wide spectrum of targets from a large number of platforms over a broad spectrum of attack azimuths complicate Soviet defense planning immeasurably and thus strengthen deterrence.

Now, without wishing to sound unduly provocative, one could well imagine such a statement being issued from Pakistan today. Depressingly, things may, in fact, be even more complex and unstable now, in large part because the South Asian maritime environment is so alarmingly unstructured. At least during the second half of the Cold War, so from 1972 onwards, the Soviets and the Americans enacted the Incidents at Sea agreement, which worked actively towards limiting critical misinterpretations in times of peace which could lead to conflict.

India and Pakistan have no such regimen in place, and Pakistan continues to rely on a policy of maritime brinkmanship in order to compensate for its inferiority. So only four months ago, for instance – or five months ago, rather – there was a report of a near-collision between a Pakistani frigate and an Indian frigate in the Gulf of Aden. And such instances are commonplace, and they sometimes have dramatic consequences. For example, in '99 a Pakistani maritime patrol aircraft was shot down by an Indian air force MiG-21 when it strayed into Indian airspace. Now, imagine the implications if, in the future, Pakistani frigates or maritime patrol aircraft are transporting nuclear weapons and such incidents reoccur.

[29:49]

And another question worth raising is whether the escalation dynamics of nuclear warfare in the maritime theater are less constrained than those that would attend similar operations on land. And a classical example is the tense situation which unfolded underwater during the Cuban missile crisis and which almost led to disaster. So we now know that each of the Soviet submarines deployed off Cuba was, in fact, armed with nuclear-tipped torpedoes, a fact which was not known by the U.S. Navy at the time. And in an attempt to force the Soviet submarines to surface, the U.S. fleet dropped depth charges. So these depth charges were not intended to hit the submarines, but they were rather to coerce them into revealing themselves. The Soviet submarine commanders, however, viewed

these actions under a different light, and one commander even ordered his men to assemble the nuclear torpedo to battle readiness.

So this incident highlights two disturbing dimensions of naval nuclear interactions – the perennial risks which are linked to misperception and ill-conceived or –designed signaling, on the one hand, and the various challenges that are linked to command and control on the other. When it comes to contemporary South Asia, even though Pakistan has threatened to use tactical nuclear weapons against advancing Indian tank formations on land, one could be forgiven for expressing some reservations over whether Pakistani commanders would be willing to self-maim themselves by allowing the detonation of nuclear weapons on their own soil. Out on the open waters, however, such a question remains more open.

[31:16]

And this ties in with another angle, which is the interaction between conventional and nuclear assets at sea and how this is going to impact on each country's strategies, doctrines and acquisitions. Technology, like geography, can blur the line in between defense and offense. And, for example, whereas before the question of submarine proliferation in South Asia could be viewed through a refreshingly conventional prism, everything is going to become a lot more complicated now that nuclear-armed and nuclear-powered assets have been thrown into the mix. So, for example, formerly conventional naval warfare capability, such as anti-ship warfare or anti-submarine capabilities, can now also be equated with counter-force capabilities, with all the destabilizing ramifications that that implies.

Finally, it's difficult for me to discuss these dynamics without discussing the role and perceptions of third parties, whose actions and perceived centrality in the case of China, for instance, have pointed in the past to the limits of viewing the Indo-Pakistani nuclear relationship in a solely dyadic light. And such an evolution also has clear implications for U.S. policy. For instance, in the event of a confrontation between India and Pakistan, the U.S., with its unparalleled capability in maritime domain awareness or anti-submarine warfare capability, may be able to provide India critical intelligence on the whereabouts of Pakistani nuclear assets at sea. The question is whether the United States would be willing to do so, and what implications would arise from either its refusal or its agreement to do so.

So after having outlined these very grim realities, let me conclude by asking how one could perhaps better encourage crisis stability at sea through practical and immediate measures. The Indian and Pakistani coast guards, after many incidents of intrusion within each other's perceived exclusive economic zones, have set up hotlines in order to work towards preventing future clashes. Ideally, such a system could also be extended to both countries' navies. Whether it would actually work is another question, but that would be a first step forward. And also in 2005, both India and Pakistan signed an agreement to notify each other in advance of ballistic missile tests. And in my view, this urgently needs to be extended to cruise missiles as well.

[33:21]

And with that, I'll conclude. And I look forward to your questions.

MR. PERKOVICH: Great. Thanks, Iskander. (Applause.)

I think what I'm going to do is – these were very good presentations and very rich, and what I'm going to do is maybe add a little bit to them, but it's also to conceptualize some of what we've been talking about a little bit

more abstractly and then set up a discussion with you all, and also about what can be done about these dangers that we're talking about.

I guess the first point I'd make, actually, is addressed to or refers to U.S. policy and the way that, in the U.S., including in Congress but also the president and others, talk about the nuclear challenge in South Asia, because I think what we've heard from Neil and from Iskander, which is exactly right, in my view, is the dynamism and the difficulty of managing the nuclear competition between India and Pakistan, the potential for conflict to begin and then escalate, the push now technologically to increase both capability but also the interactivity and the challenge of managing all that. And I think that's exactly right and that that is by far the most important national and international security issue and interest that we face there.

[35:04]

And yet U.S. policy, for, I think, understandable political reasons, still talks about nuclear terrorism and the security of nuclear materials in Pakistan as, like, the big thing that we have to stay focused on and why we're involved in the region and why we should care about Pakistan and so forth. And I think that focus, while it's very natural and understandable, it would be certainly a political disaster for any administration in which a nuclear weapon went off in Times Square or something. So you've got to work on that.

But a much higher-probability danger is the kind of conflict that we've talked about here escalating in South Asia and becoming the world's first nuclear war; a lot of Americans in the region, a lot of geopolitical implications. And that challenge basically, in the public discourse, especially in Congress, but including, you know, in the executive branch, generally doesn't get addressed nearly as much as the terrorism problem.

So I would make an argument – and these discussions kind of reinforce it – is that our real focus, our primary focus, should be on preserving deterrent stability in South Asia, which is another way to say preventing war, and that the challenge ought to be to educate our Congress, to educate the public to the extent that the public needs to care about any of this, that this is a profound U.S. national interest, preserving peace in that region; and so to not have to talk about everything in terms of nuclear terrorism and nuclear security, which is counterproductive in Pakistan to even achieving the objective that we would have there. And we can talk more about that.

And so I think that the talks here were very useful. I think Neil very explicitly, and Iskander, you know, implicitly, made clear that the challenge of deterrent stability between India and Pakistan is much more complicated and daunting than was the management of nuclear deterrence between the U.S. and the Soviet Union in the Cold War or then the challenge of the U.S. and Russia today or the U.S. and China. This is a much harder problem.

[37:29]

And let me give at least three kind of – again, kind of conceptual ways of seeing just how difficult that problem is. What we're talking about – and the last panel talked a bit about it too – is a challenge of deterring and/or managing violence that could escalate from sub-conventional to conventional to nuclear. All right, so there is a spectrum that starts, let's say, with another attack, something like the Mumbai attack or attack on the Indian Parliament – sub-conventional. It's five actors or a group of 10 conspirators. You know, a few score people get killed. That's not a war in the normal sense. That's not Soviet tanks coming through the Fulda Gap. That's not a thousand Chinese missiles raining on the U.S. fleet in the Taiwan Strait. It's something much smaller than that. But, for reasons that Neil alluded to, where India then needs to make a response or may make a response or Pakistan may think it will make a response to bring a conventional military force into play. So now you do have – now you're in a conventional war, to which Pakistan has said it will answer with nuclear weapons.

So you go from this attack with, like, 10 guys and some guns to a nuclear war. No one's ever had to manage that kind of spectrum before. There are no states with nuclear weapons that face that kind of challenge; hasn't happened historically. We can talk about that. But that's the challenge that we're talking about now in South Asia.

To make that challenge even harder, the assumption in deterrence that the actors are unitary and rational – and I want to focus on the unitary part – it means that when violence emanates from the state, it is assumed by the receiver that the signal – that that violence is signaling the intention and policy of the heads of state and that the state is, from an ideal type point of view, unitary in the sense that the messages that come out are the ones that are intended to be sent, and then when you send your signals back, they work their way back up to the ultimate decision-maker. And that's how deterrence is supposed to work.

[39:55]

But what we have seen historically, at least recently – although actually 1947 with Pakistan – is either the use of irregulars, which in itself is kind of indicative of the challenge to this metaphor of the unitary rational actor, or jihadis or whatever one wants to call them, who either are dressed up and portrayed to not be carrying a signal from the Pakistani state – in other words, we didn't do it, we don't control those guys, which is, in and of itself, a challenge to the model of deterrence, and the Pakistani state could either be lying or being deceptive about that. In other words, in fact, they did plan these operations. They did cultivate these guys, and these guys were sending a signal from the state. That would be bad enough.

But it's also just as bad as if, in fact, they didn't send them. And so the attack happens on India. The Pakistani state says we didn't do it. Indians and others say, well, you always say that, but we have evidence in the past, in fact, that you did. And they say, no, no, this time we really didn't do it. If you're India, you're sitting there going, OK, how are we supposed to respond to that? And our job is not only to deal with this conflict, but to deter future such actions. We have to whack them back.

But the problem is, if the Pakistanis this time really didn't do it, India's whacking them back is to Pakistan aggression. So now Pakistan's in the situation where they say, my God, we can't take this aggression. We didn't do anything. We have to retaliate, right? That's not how deterrence is supposed to work in the way that we conjure it up. It's all kind of make-believe anyway, at least historically. And again, we don't have any experience. There's never been a nuclear war. The U.S. used nuclear weapons, but against a state that didn't have nuclear weapons. So we've never had that kind of conflict between states with nuclear weapons.

[42:05]

But what I'm describing in the uncertainty about the kind of lines of authority and the unitariness of Pakistan is a profoundly challenging situation to manage nuclear deterrence. And when you add to it the spectrum issue, the breadth of the spectrum, it's super-difficult.

Let me now make it still more difficult. And I don't normally like to do this. I like to have solutions to things. But guess what. There's a triangle. So we've been talking about India and Pakistan, but China is a factor, not in the way that often – well, in a way that can be exaggerated. But India's definition of the capabilities it needs for nuclear deterrence are derived in large part from what it perceives in China. So India's got to figure out how to deter and, over time, to acquire a capability to compete with China. But, of course, what India does gets seen in Pakistan as the threat that Pakistan faces. So Pakistan says, oh, they're building up and they're acquiring all of this

material and so on, and the U.S. has made this deal possible, yada, yada, yada. And so we have to compete with that.

And then you go and you say, well, actually, you know, the Indians – I mean, part of this is about China and everything else. And the Pakistanis say, well, first of all, that's not true, because look at where all of their forces are deployed and everything else. But even if it were true, that's your problem, not our problem. We've got to keep up with them. So you have this triangle. And then the Indians say, correctly, China helped Pakistan with its nuclear weapons and with its missiles, and so on, so they're part of the problem – all true.

[43:45]

But then you go to China and talk about it, and the Chinese say, well, actually, we're developing capability because of what you guys and the Russians are doing, which is also true. So you have a triangle at the big level in the world between the U.S. – or among the U.S., Russia and China. It's driving China's capability requirements. And then also what China is doing is now keeping the U.S. Navy in business and so on. But that triangle is affecting then what's happening between China, India and Pakistan. Again, that dynamic doesn't happen anywhere else.

So we've got three major kind of structural complexities that don't exist anywhere else and haven't existed historically. And that's what the poor policymakers in India and Pakistan are trying to figure out how to manage. Now, we can talk about implications for U.S. policy going forward.

I would just close by saying, you know, that it is possible that – and I only say possible – that recent Indian leaders have hit on a response to this that goes against all of deterrence theory, and in a wonderful way may actually be effective. And I call it kind of the neo-Ghandian response. So Neil was talking about how India may have missed an opportunity in the 2001-2002 crisis when it mobilized and then it didn't actually come across and punish or attack Pakistan.

You could look at it a different way and say actually India's restraint in 2001 and 2002 and 2008, which goes against deterrence theory and what U.S. folks generally would have advised if it was the U.S. – now, we advised India to stay cool, but if it was us, we would have whacked somebody. (Laughter.) In fact, we would have gone 7,000 miles to whack somebody who didn't even do the attack. But that's a whole 'nother – (laughter) – that's another war. But we said to the Indians, OK, you know, be cool. But they did.

But the result of that is Pakistan lost in a lot of ways. And so when you go in Pakistan and you ask them how they experienced those, they wouldn't say that they won anything in 2001 and 2002. And certainly in 2008 they feel like they lost, because everyone basically thought Pakistan was a pariah, that it had acted outrageously, that they were barbarians. It was humiliating for a lot of people in Pakistan. And look what happened to the army, especially 2008, in terms of the public kind of standing of the army in the sense that the army represents all that's good in Pakistan.

[46:35]

And so in many ways you can chart Pakistan's steady descent, you know, from at least 2001 to 2013. It's hard to say that they would have been worse off if India had actually come across and engaged them militarily in any one of these times, which was, after all, kind of Ghandi's insight in his strategy of nonviolent resistance is ultimately the other guy ends up getting degraded, degrades himself. Its own people turn against them. The world turns against them, and much less blood is shed.

I'm not saying that this – I'm not trying to back this up. I'm not saying this is something the Indians have thought of consciously. I'm not saying even it's a good idea. But there's something potentially there when you're dealing with violence that is illegitimate, in a sense. It's terrorist violence, not conducted by uniformed soldiers. It doesn't conform to any laws of war. When that's what's coming at you, it may be possible that non-violent resistance, in fact, can be strategic in its effect.

Let me stop there. Let's open it up for discussion. (Applause.)

[47:56]

You all know the drill, so you raise your hand and then the mic – our colleagues bring the microphones and we do it like that – or not.

Yes, the young lady there.

Keep coming, Ali (sp). There you go.

Q: My name is Jennifer, and this question is for all of you.

Iskander, you alluded to a possible nuclear CBM, the expansion of the ballistic missile flight-test notification, to include cruise missile flight-test notifications. I'm just wondering if you have all followed the expert-level talks and if you can see any other possible CBMs coming out of that dialogue.

MR. PERKOVICH: Go ahead.

MR. REHMAN: So I was in India recently and I was discussing this issue with the Indians, on the one hand, and then the Pakistani defense attaché and naval adviser on the other. And both sides claimed that it is the other that does not want to include cruise missiles on the draft treaty. So it's unclear to me which side is right or wrong on this. My understanding is that it was the Pakistanis who rejected that offer in 2005, but I may be wrong.

As for following CBMs, I'm not sure. Maybe Neil would have something to add.

MR. JOECK: I apologize, Jennifer. I didn't hear all of the question. But just let me pick up a little bit on CBMs, which I think are problematic for India and Pakistan and require a certain amount of trust and confidence the other side will fulfill them. And I don't think there's much of either – of trust on either side. So I'm not particularly confident that even movement in that direction.

[49:44]

I would add that it has to be generated on the ground in India and Pakistan, that the experience of the U.S. through its track two activities, and otherwise with encouraging CBMs, has not been – has been desultory at best.

MR. REHMAN: I might just add that the Pakistani narrative is that the Indian side did not want to include cruise missiles in 2005 because they had just remained – because they had just gained headway with the development of the BrahMos, so they had a comparative advantage, but that since then, as Pakistan has developed its own cruise missile capabilities, India has been more interested in putting this back on the table. So –

MR. PERKOVICH: I would just add just briefly, another structural challenge, I think, in this kind of thing is that, for the most part, the people who would be negotiating confidence-building measures are from the foreign ministries. And I think if you really wanted to, over time, build confidence and figure out, you know, what would be useful, you would want folks from the militaries directly involved or the – I mean, there's a bunch of reasons, but also that the tradition and the history is so bitter, especially with the diplomatic corps, between the two countries that sending them to, like, make agreements is kind of a contradictory thing to do often. Somebody else needs to do it. And then they can implement them at this point.

Other questions? Yes, sir.

[51:41]

Q: Wolf Gross again.

The one discontinuity that I can see between India and Pakistan on the nuclear front is that India has declared no first use, which Pakistan has refused to do so far. And I wondered how this discontinuity, if that's what it is, affects the dialogue.

MR. JOECK: I'm not sure how it affects the dialogue, because I'm not sure there's much of a dialogue. But it is an interesting and not surprising contrast and discontinuity between the two sides. It's not in Pakistan's interest to have a no-first-use doctrine. It goes against their need for nuclear weapons. It is in India's interest to have a no first use, so long as Pakistan goes along with it at a certain point. And India, in its doctrine, it had modifications, but it says it will have a posture of no first use. Colon: Nuclear weapons will only be used in retaliation against a nuclear attack on Indian territory or on Indian forces anywhere. So they're pretty clear about that.

But again, from Pakistan's point of view – and I'll repeat myself a little bit – from their perspective, no first use is a bad idea. And the taboo on nuclear use is also irrelevant if they face a situation where Indian forces, in part or in whole, have overwhelmed Pakistan's defenses. And even though some Pakistani generals have said, in private conversation, that if India were to attack across the international border at point A, they might choose to respond somewhere else in conventional terms, the implication being that they think they can handle the problem in conventional terms.

But it's very dynamic. And as George said, it's not a unitary situation. So some people will be saying the defeat we're facing at point A is so significant that our marginal success at point B isn't preventing India from doing what it wants. The fact that we've counterattacked at point B has widened the war. It's now an international war. It's not limited within Kashmir, say. And we therefore face the prospect that one of the four red lines, the territorial red line that Khalid Kidwai enunciated, is about to be breached.

[54:11]

If it's breached, we know that – and it's perhaps fanciful on Pakistan's part – but we know that India is already taking advantage of the Baluch situation. And so we'll be facing suddenly insurrection in the western part of Pakistan. This is an existential threat right now. It is not a sensible policy at that point to use a large number of nuclear weapons. It's – to borrow from Albert Wohlstetter an old expression - perhaps not his – he committed suicide out of fear of death.

So nuclear weapons would then, I think, make sense to be used in order to threaten to escalate, but also to threaten further escalation and challenge the international community to step in, challenge India's own inadequate preparation, if preparations are not made for such an eventuality, to sort of put the shoe on the other foot, that it's now up to India to decide whether or not a policy, as they enunciated it again in the nuclear doctrine, nuclear weapons will only be used in retaliation against a nuclear attack. And then they go on to say nuclear retaliation to a first strike will be massive and designed to inflict unacceptable damage. A two-KT weapon in the Rajasthan desert that has the effect of killing perhaps several hundred Indian soldiers who have penetrated into Pakistan and destroying a couple of tanks, or even a tank brigade, is not - responding to that with, as the Indians now say, massive retaliation is simply not credible. So there's a lot behind the dynamic of India declaring no first use.

[55:58]

MR. REHMAN: I'd also add that there's such an existential paranoia within Pakistan that India, or the United States, for that matter, might preemptively seek to secure, destroy Pakistan's land-based nuclear assets. And there's not much belief in the validity of India's no-first-use policy either. What's quite interesting is the wording of the press release which accompanied the opening of the Naval Strategic Forces Command referred to the need for Pakistan to have a secure second-strike capability and to shelter Pakistan's nuclear assets from a first strike. So obviously there's a disconnect between India's no-first-use policy and what the Pakistanis think.

MR. PERKOVICH: Sarah.

Q: Sarah Chayes, Carnegie.

The three of you have described a situation that sounds anything but deterrence-type environment. It almost sounds closer to sort of shading into let's-expand-the-variety-of-our-arsenal kind of situation. So in that context, George, you've been, you know, talking quite a lot about stable deterrence as a way of looking at the India-Pakistan dynamic and, in fact, turning inside out some of the other issues that confront U.S. policy, for example, to do with Pakistan.

So I'm wondering if you could just help us understand what that would look like in such a non-deterrence environment and how U.S. policy could address this environment in such a way as to sort of look at the Indo-Pak dynamic within the context of stable deterrence in a non-deterrence type of context.

[57:45]

MR. PERKOVICH: Thanks, Sarah.

Well, I think - I think the two biggest challenges to deterrent stability are the - and they're big ones - are the first two things I mentioned, the connection of sub-conventional aggression or violence in the spectrum to then conventional and nuclear.

It's hard enough to manage kind of conventional and nuclear, but there's some ideas on how to do it. And the presumption of clarity in signaling and unitariness in signaling, once you get to uniformed troops' big military formations, that at least - you kind of get your head around it. It's still hard. It's the sub-conventional piece that's attached to that that makes this so hard. So to me that's the thing you have to focus on, and that is primarily a challenge within Pakistan. And it's related to the second one, the whole issue of unitariness in Pakistan.

And what I'm saying when I talk about that in Pakistan – and I think it's been misinterpreted in Pakistan – is not to say the whole issue – you know, that the civilians don't have a place in the chain of command and the military are out of control. That isn't the issue at all. The issue is what General Kayani himself has talked about – you know, kind of militancy, groups that are acting on Pakistani territory where the state doesn't, you know, have control or hasn't been able to exert control. It's that problem, basically, of rolling back terrorist actors, some of whom have been very convenient for the Pakistani intelligence services to have in the past. So they haven't been motivated to roll them back. Quite the contrary in many cases, they've used them as instruments.

[59:42]

But you would have to – if Pakistan were to see this as a problem that they want to actually – that they want deterrent stability, and this is an alarming prospect to them, what we're talking about, then the first thing to do would be to go at that sub-conventional issue, get control over the groups that would be committing terrorism in India, and not that you have to succeed, because everybody knows it would be extremely difficult.

[01:00:12]

From India's point of view, you -- they just have to have confidence that Pakistan as a matter of policy is now determined to remove those groups and won't use those groups. Because India itself knows it can't -- it doesn't succeed in managing terrorism within India. There's terrorism all the time in India, and the Indian state is trying to eradicate it. But the problem they have with Pakistan is they think Pakistan is playing both sides.

So that would be the most important thing to address in all of this, to get at the special difficulties of stable deterrence between India and Pakistan. It's the sub-conventional piece.

Then there are other things that you could then start working on, but ultimately you only have stable deterrence when the parties accept the territorial status quo. And this is what happened in the U.S.-Soviet experience, and you finally have to get to a point where each side goes, OK, I got these weapons; I'm going to use them if they come onto my territory or that of my allies because that's a threat -- like Neil said, a red line. And that can be clear.

[01:01:29]

Where it doesn't work is in a situation where one of the adversaries or both still wants something that the other guy has. So you say, no, no, that's my territory. Then it's not going to be stable and deterrence is very hard to work because you're always under the presumption that the one who's dissatisfied is going to be on offense. And that's also been the case over Kashmir, primarily.

So you've got to get to the point of dealing with the territorial status quo. And I think they were closer on that one, that after the tests in '98 there was more awareness in the Pakistani military and elsewhere that we've got to resolve the Kashmir issue, and they would backchannel on that -- which didn't address the broader issue of terrorism and Lashkar-e-Taiba and all that. But on the Kashmir issue there was a sense of right, after Kargil and the -- you know, that doesn't work; we have to stabilize that.

So that would be another kind of requirement to have a stable deterrent is an agreement on the territorial status quo. Let me leave it at that.

[01:02:36]

MR. JOECK: If I could just sort of supplement what George said, it's both territorial and ideological -- territorial from the point of view of Pakistan leadership; I think ideological from the perspective of terrorists who are supported by Pakistan and have a certain amount of autonomy to take actions that could catalyze a war.

But on the territorial side, Kashmir just continues to be an issue. I remember having a conversation with General Kidwai not very many years ago and made the comment that I thought Kargil was a mistake -- tactical success, strategic failure. And his comment was, no, it was important, it was strategic success, not judged in terms of who won on the battlefield but that it put Kashmir back on the -- back on the front burner.

So I think that continues to animate a lot of thinking in Pakistan -- not everyone's but a lot of people's thinking.

[01:03:26]

Going back to the original question from Sarah (sp) with respect to are we moving away from deterrence, and I think the answer is that we aren't but the prospect for deterrence failure is always with us. Pakistan is simply saying in response to your plans with Cold Start to find space between escalation and low-intensity conflict, we intend to deny you that space by lowering the threshold for nuclear use, and therefore by lowering the threshold for nuclear use -- meaning introducing them potentially at the battlefield level -- that it is intended to deter.

It's not in Pakistan's interest to engage in a war where they feel obligated to use nuclear weapons. It's in their interest to deter India from taking that first step of crossing one of the four red lines, which throws it into India's basket in the sense that they have to decide how much they're going to tolerate, how much provocation will they tolerate and are they in a certain sense always, always going to be subject to victimization by terrorists supported by Pakistan, or can they work something out in advance? I don't think it's impossible to work something out in advance.

India's response to Mumbai has basically been legalistic and judicial, saying to Pakistan, we'll provide you the evidence and you now need to prosecute the perpetrators. That's not working particularly well but at least it's a way you can imagine solving the problem before the fact rather than waiting until after the fact so that you have a mechanism to work things through so that India can say to its public and to itself, we are being provoked, we are being attacked, but we have a mechanism to resolve that. We will press Pakistan to use its own legal system, which Pakistan doesn't deny having. It's not particularly effective and it's protective of certain persons and so on.

But nonetheless, India needs something to be able to convince itself that it does not need to take military action. That's something that I presume they're thinking about, I presume they're talking about, but I don't see it with respect to the follow-on steps, which are connected with the nuclear doctrine, which I think is entirely incredible and not a useful way to prevent Pakistan from taking steps that India doesn't want Pakistan to take.

[01:05:53]

MR. PERKOVICH: I think -- I do -- one other thought -- sorry. But to pick up on what Neil said, which is on the Kashmir issue, which I -- and I understand that even if you resolve Kashmir, the most militant people in Pakistan -- they've got a long list of other problems, so it won't solve it. And you can hear them, you know. I mean, it starts with water and it goes -- you know, it goes down.

But there is a risk -- and this is on the Indian side -- which is General Kidwai's comment about Kargil. Well, it put Kashmir back on the agenda. So then the response when the violence is up is that India says, we're not going to negotiate under threat, and so -- we don't negotiate, we don't have diplomacy when we're being threatened.

But then when things are quiet you don't negotiate because, well, why should we negotiate? Everything's fine. (Laughter.) Which is like the Israelis and the Palestinians. So the Israelis won't, you know, negotiate as long as there's terrorism and so on, but then there hasn't been and then you don't negotiate because there isn't a problem -- you've built the wall; it's fine.

So, you know, there's a need for India to be more kind of committed to trying to resolve the -- in particular, the Kashmir issue than it has been. And one understands the domestic political challenges of that, but over time it's probably not in India's interest to let it go unaddressed.

Chris?

[01:07:15]

Q: Hi. I'm going to -- can I just throw a wrench or something into this -- (inaudible) [01:07:21]?

MR. : Well, you -- it would be surprising if you didn't.

MR. : We'll throw it back at you, Chris.

Q: No, no. Actually that would be awesome -- the wrench Olympics.

So, no, I've been thinking a lot about this Kashmir thing and I'm of the belief that this continued pandering to Pakistan's notion that it has any defensible equities is part of the problem. Its claims are flawed on all counts. It was never entitled to Kashmir, right? Pakistan howls and screams about Junagadh and Hyderabad because the preferences of those sovereigns were rejected, yet it is rejecting the sovereign decision of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. There is a legal instrument of accession. It was India that brought this to the United Nations, not Pakistan. In fact they were -- they dillydallied and in fact they weren't even all that thrilled when the Indians brought it to the United Nations in the first instance.

[01:08:05]

So I actually think maybe what we should do is actually stop thinking about this as a bilateral conflict. It isn't. Pakistan has no equities in the Kashmir issue. It treats its own Kashmiris like crap, and whatever moral position it has has been undermined by six decades of sending in Islamist nut jobs to kill innocent people, right? So am I missing something?

So I just -- we should really break this down into there is -- and it's really a Rawalpindi-Delhi problem, and that part of this should just simply be rejected as illegitimate. It should not be rewarded in any way, shape or form. It's -- in fact it's retarded to continue pandering to this nonsense.

On the other hand, there is a Delhi-Srinagar problem, and this speaks to the issue about India never missing an opportunity to miss an opportunity. If India were to treat those folks as their own citizens -- i.e., not, you know, every once in a while find them in mass graves -- it would make it much more difficult for Pakistan to continue harping in the wind, which it does in international fora.

So I'd like to just put out there that we stop thinking about this as an international dispute. Pakistan has no legitimate claim to this, IMHO.

[01:09:11]

MR. PERKOVICH: Well, I'm glad you used -- I think it's the Abba Eban line about India never missing an opportunity to miss an opportunity -- he was referring to the PLO -- because I think a lot of what you said was basically what, you know, for example, the kind of settler parties in Israel would say about Palestinians.

Q: But if there was a two-state -- no, no. That isn't true. In Galilee that's quite different. I don't --

MR. PERKOVICH: I'm not talking about the -- my whole point isn't about the legality of it. My whole point is that these are political realities. They get built up over time, and so when we want to refer to the legalities or if one might want to do that with the Senkaku Islands now and go back to, like, a legal issue -- it's almost beside the point in a sense because now there's so much political mobility, so much blood has been shed, that you can't then -- especially the U.S. can't then come in and say, well, you know what, we've been looking at the books and it turns out, you know, you're wrong, you should just be quiet. It doesn't --

[01:10:13]

Q: But you can't because -- this is the sinisterness of that. I'm going to push on this. I know I shouldn't have a drink. (Laughter.) But Pakistan bases its claim to Kashmir on nonsensical legal arguments. It's not like the Israel-Palestine issue where there was supposed to be two states. There was never in partition any requirement that said Kashmir was to go to Pakistan.

Second of all, it continues, with the exception of a very small reprieve in 2004, to harp upon this plebiscite. Well, if you're going to harp on the plebiscite, let's go back and look at the terms under which that plebiscite was to occur. The first was that Pakistan was to demilitarize. Upon that happening in a satisfactory way --

MR. PERKOVICH: Both sides.

Q: -- then the second was -- no, this was -- these were sequential. First Pakistan is to demilitarize. Second step, after that happened to the satisfaction of someone appointed Star Chamber of the U.N., the Indians were to reciprocate so that there's only a minimal number of force there, that was to also be set by this star chamber of the U.N. And then third -- the third and final component was in fact this ostensible plebiscite.

[01:11:17]

So if Pakistan is going to continue to harp on this nonsense, it violated and continued to violate the first necessary -- the insufficient condition for this plebiscite. So this exactly works for Pakistan. Their legal argument is nonsense. It's a canard.

MR. PERKOVICH: Great. (Laughter.) I mean, so what? I mean, so it --

Q: Why doesn't the U.S. just, for example, stop entertaining the LOC as an LOC? Call it a border.

MR. JOECK: Well, if I could just weigh in, I think the only thing missing here is you concluding by saying, am I not right, dude? (Laughter.) Reference to "The Big Lebowski."

Q: (Inaudible.)

MR. JOECK: And, dude, you're not right -- (laughter) -- simply because it is internationalized to the extent that it was referred by India to the United Nations and United Nations resolutions were passed. And so if they rescind those resolutions, I think then that provides some quasi-legal grounding for the U.S. to take that step. Otherwise I think it's not as simple as all that, although I tend to agree with you and the somewhat outrageous claims -- or more behavior by Pakistan than the claims. I mean, I think the claims aren't entirely without merit.

If you allow them the argument that the act of accession was signed under duress, and I think, you know, that's a point of historical debate -- I don't know the literature that deeply, but I know Pakistan claims that it was signed under duress and therefore it is illegitimate as a claim for India to have --

Q: The Durant Line isn't legal either.

[01:12:40]

MR. JOECK: That's --

Q: (Off mic.)

MR. JOECK: Right. (Laughter.) But they're talking about the LOC, and that -- so that remains a problem that I don't think is easily -- as easily resolved as you would suggest.

MR. PERKOVICH: Yes, in the back?

Q: Jordan -- (inaudible) -- I want to move the discussion back a little bit. There was a comment that Cold Start is part of the -- part of the reason for developing that is to increase the number of options available in the case for India.

If India were to suffer another attack like what happened in 2008, are there responses that they could take directly against the sub-state or paramilitary terrorist actors that wouldn't provoke a strong response from the Pakistani state? Or how would Pakistan respond to a more surgical, if you will, response or retaliation from India?

[01:13:35]

MR. JOECK: I think one could imagine airstrikes against camps on the Pakistan side of the LOC as an example. I think you could imagine, although it's quite a bit more provocative, an attack against Muridke. Gurmeet Kanwal has argued that the Indians need to be able to conduct covert operations against places like Muridke. So there are other actions one can imagine that India could take rather than the -- invoking Cold Start.

Whether or not Pakistan would respond to -- just say an airstrike against a camp that presumably by that time would have been vacated, but nonetheless an attack, my sense is that that would not cause Pakistan to respond proportionally, nor would it prompt Pakistan to respond with ground maneuvers across the international border. I think you would then get into something like a tit-for-tat. And so I think it's for India to decide, and perhaps they already have decided that the next best step after another provocative act is to take something like an airstrike in order to reduce the likelihood that a war -- an open war would break out.

[01:14:52]

MR. PERKOVICH: I agree with that. I would be surprised if that's not the direction in which kind of Indian thinking evolves. Yeah.

The gentleman next to you, and then -- did somebody over here have -- no?

[01:15:04]

Q: Thank you very much. This is a very interesting presentation from all of you. My name is Akshad (sp) -- (inaudible) -- I am a student at Johns Hopkins SAIS.

My question to all of you is that how can we just disregard this common denominator between these two countries? It's the religion. Religion is actually missing out of the -- you know, our political negotiation dialogues. And no matter how secular a country as Americans we are, but even our president elections can be decided in the name of religion of the president. So how can we just ignore the fact the religious leaders on both the sides are actually influencing terrorist activities, political dynamics and as well as mass sentiments?

[01:15:48]

MR. JOECK: Well, I think -- I think that's fair to introduce that element. It's what I was alluding to in response to Sarah Chase's (sp) question with respect to the ideological element in the conflict between India and Pakistan where -- whether you call them jihadists or militants or terrorists or what have you, many of them are inspired by their own particular interpretation, both of the origins of the state of Pakistan as well as the mandate for Islam in South Asia. And so they may well be driven by their interpretation of religion to try to foment conflict that in their view would logically result in the integration -- the full integration of Pakistan with Kashmir and all parts of Kashmir being incorporated into the Pakistani state.

So I think that's very much there, but I don't think it's as much an element in the thinking -- the strategic analysis that goes on either on Pakistan's side or on India's side.

MR. PERKOVICH: I think -- I'm going to be careful because I -- yeah, because I don't want to say anything -- (laughter) -- on the subject of religion.

But it seems to me that the -- that among the only things that one can do about the problem that you rightly identify is focus on the separation of violence from religion. And so on that one doesn't then have to make comments on religion in general or particular religions or whatever, but rather that in any civilized, modern state, the state has to have a monopoly on the legitimate use of violence, and therefore separate out the religious organization and preachings of whatever religion from the possession of guns or the use of guns by their followers, and that that would probably be a mode of discourse for less-righteous people like myself that would get you somewhere, but it's also kind of got a basis in most countries' laws and the international system and so on.

And so I would focus on the violent part rather than the religion part. Yes?

[01:18:22]

Q: I think if we're talking about deterrence then we have to talk more about all the world powers. And I've heard that in many scenarios that you've pointed out the third party and the catalyst factor have come into play. So whether you see China into these pictures, because obviously China is in the triangle within U.S.-China-India, and also India and Pakistan and China, and also the rest of the world. If you see that China and North Korea, Iran and Pakistan and their nuclear capability all together comparing to U.S. and our allies, how does that work out? So what one advice you'd give to our future Defense secretary, possible Senator Hagel, and then Senator Kerry, the newly appointed State Department secretary?

[01:19:19]

MR. PERKOVICH: Let me -- I'll respond and then you guys can respond because I don't want to forget. And I like this question.

Well, I think there are a couple levels. So at the level of capability, it's -- it has been true, you know, that China helped Pakistan develop capabilities, so kind of as a supplier they've been problematic.

With Iran it was early on and then it was, I think, stopped, at least from what the open literature says -- stopped very early on in the '90s.

And then with North Korea, I think that when North Korea tests, when fingers start pointing as to who helped them, it's not going to be China. It will have been Pakistan and then probably some scientists from another country that is next to North Korea that has nuclear weapons but isn't China. (Laughter.)

[01:20:10]

And so at the level of capabilities I think China is there, but at the level of kind of politics and policy, China has always been very restraining when it comes to Pakistan. So whenever there has been a crisis or a war, Pakistani leadership immediately jumps on a plane and goes to China and says basically, you know, help us out, back us up, and the Chinese always tell them, no, you screwed up, go back and cool it. And because their overriding interest is stability, they don't want a war to the south. They don't like these militant groups in Pakistan either. So at the level of kind of war-causing or stimulating, it seems to me China is very conservative.

And now one can dream and say, well, the U.S. ought to be able to work more with China than Pakistan, and I think that is an objective worth pursuing. I wouldn't hold my breath because I think there are other suspicions that get there, but I think we share an interest. I don't know if you guys agree with that, but --

[01:21:12]

MR. JOECK: I don't think we quite share the same interests, and I think India's response to China taking any role as an intermediary, as a third party to help quell a crisis would be looked on with substantial suspicion. I mean, from India's perspective the worst proliferator in the world is not Pakistan but rather China, who, according to the recent book by Feroz Hassan Khan was quite open in having transferred about 50 kilograms of HEU and the weapon design for Chic-4 to Pakistan. That book tries to make it seem as though it was just handed to one part of Pakistan, which may be in doubt, but in any case.

So Pakistan has benefited from China's intervention. I wouldn't quite agree with George that China has never -- that always scolds Pakistan to behave itself. We have to go back a little bit further. China was behaving as if it would do something to help Pakistan in '65 and '71. China I think proved to be a feckless ally in the sense that it did nothing in both those cases, but it also didn't try and arrest Pakistan -- arrest Pakistan's activities particularly in either conflict.

So I think there has to be a certain element of being an honest broker, and so -- and both sides have to accept at least, you know, not entirely honest but honest to the extent that you do have an interest in the success of both countries, and I think the U.S. has that position. It's not the only third party -- the United Nations is a potential third party as far as a sort of auditory appeal would go, but in any case I don't think China fills that role particularly well. Nor has it sort of volunteered to do it. It seems quite content to stand back.

[01:22:53]

MR. PERKOVICH: I was talking about vis-a-vis Pakistan, not as a mediator between the two of them, but yeah.

MR. REHMAN: I view China's influence has been a little bit more toxic and that strategy has been somewhat unsustainable in the long term. China's trying to play an increasingly dangerous game. It doesn't want to see a conflict erupt in between India and Pakistan, but at the same time it wants to continue to bog India down on its western flank. And what's interesting is that traditionally Sino-Pakistani military cooperation focused on the nuclear aspects on land and missile warfare, and now it encompasses all spectrums. So the Pakistani air force, increasingly the Pakistani navy -- and this is part of a deliberate policy to tie India down on its western maritime flank.

But in the long term it's got to reflect on its policy and it's got to think of whether this is constructive, whether Pakistan is a reliable partner and whether it's just not making the whole situation worse for itself.

[01:24:05]

MR. PERKOVICH: We've got -- well, we've got some time. Questions? We can take a break, too, so it's up to you guys.

Q: (Off mic.)

MR. PERKOVICH: Oh, so she was asking what would we advise Senator Hagel and Senator Kerry.

I don't think that -- well, you guys should -- I mean, my sense is you wouldn't need to advise them to kind of stay away because I think they'll be inclined to stay away because they have enough problems but that they won't be able to ignore progress on it. And indeed Senator Kerry has had a great interest in Pakistan and has been a major actor and I would say a constructive actor there.

So my sense is, A, he doesn't need my advice, and B, he will be an actor. And my guess would be that Senator Hagel, if he's confirmed, will pretty much stay out of this picture. But I don't know.

[01:25:06]

MR. JOECK: Well, George is the only one at the table who has been a former speechwriter for the vice president of the United States, so I'm certainly not going to challenge his judgments about what might be said to the new secretary of State or Defense.

MR. PERKOVICH: Good intelligence guy. That was good. (Laughter.)

MR. REHMAN: I don't think I had anything to add. I would just advise them to get a few good nights' sleep now while they still can. (Laughter.)

MR. PERKOVICH: All right. Great.

MR. REHMAN: And not necessarily to believe everything they're told, to remain wary.

MR. PERKOVICH: One more. Anybody? Yes?

[01:25:40]

Q: Hi. My name is Bethany and I have a question about -- referring to what you said before in response to the other question about how in a potential -- after a potential other future terrorist attack India might consider very specific retaliatory airstrikes against a terrorist camp, for example, which seems -- you know, one can make the argument that that seems like, you know, the way to go, the way to make all parties happy, assuage domestic anger in India. I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about what would make India not choose that route as trying to specifically go after, you know, a retaliatory terrorist-focused attack after a potential -- the next Mumbai. What would make them instead choose something more like Cold Start?

MR. PERKOVICH: I mean, my initial reaction is it's a capabilities issue. So if you need manned aircraft to fly over Pakistani airspace to do it, then the risk that your pilots are going to be shot down or captured would be a big factor, whereas if you could do it in a standoff way where you didn't run a risk of that, the threshold would be much, much higher.

And then, I mean, I think the usual calculations -- are there -- are there civilian -- are there people, non-terrorists, non-combatants nearby so that there's a chance that you would actually commit -- kill a lot of what would be seen as innocent people, and, you know, could that be a deterrent -- a self-deterrent.

So my guess is it would be more along those operational lines than in principle crossing over a threshold of saying now we're going to use force. Because anything that we're talking about here is going to seem a lot less provocative than moving ground forces onto Pakistani territory. But I -- these guys have thought about it more.

[01:27:32]

MR. JOECK: I would just add that since you contrasted it with why would they then choose to take an airstrike rather than ground attack a la Cold Start, and I think to some extent it would depend on the severity of the attack. And if we go back to December of 2001 and imagine that that had been a successful attack and that the terrorists had gotten inside the parliament and then slaughtered 10, 20, 30, 100 parliamentarians willy-nilly, and then --

MR. PERKOVICH: Except the Left Party. If it was the Left Party's then it wouldn't have -- (laughter) --

MR. JOECK: Assuming that they were, you know, --

MR. PERKOVICH: Evenly distributed.

MR. JOECK: -- evenly distributed -- there was a bipartisan terrorist attack -- (laughter) -- the severity of that attack I think -- so it would depend on the severity of the attack that would dictate how India might choose to respond, that there are some things that they -- are way more than a pinprick.

I had the sense back in May of 2002 with the Kalachak (sp) incident that that was going to break the Indian back in the sense that they would then respond much more vigorously, because in a certain sense this was terrorists murdering the families of the soldiers who were ready to attack, and the political leadership said, well, even though your wives and your children have been slaughtered, we're not going to let you take any actions in response. That struck me as, you know, a very hard decision to make.

But in any case, it leads to the point I'm trying to make, which is the severity of the attack I think might dictate whether or not they concluded their attack was simply not commensurate, not proportional to the insult that they just suffered.

[01:28:59]

MR. REHMAN: There's a certain method to Pakistan's madness in the sense that from the Pakistani perspective it definitely works to their benefit to have an ambiguous nuclear posture. And for India, it's a military planner's strategic nightmare because Pakistan's red lines for nuclear use are elastic and they keep shifting, and it's very difficult for Indian military planners to be able to find what Clausewitz famously called the center of gravity of a conflict.

And so one of the former alternatives was a naval blockade of Karachi and economic warfare or corrosive naval maneuvering outside Karachi, which is what India did during the Kargil war. But now that

may be more difficult to put into place because of the nuclearization of the naval realm and also because Pakistan's own capabilities and anti-access and area denial are increasing with Chinese assistance.

So some of the options that India had may no longer be as easily attainable.

[01:30:06]

MR. PERKOVICH: Great. Let me thank Neil and Iskander. Let me thank all of you.

Let me ask Frederic are we taking a break or do we go --

MR. GRARE : We are taking a short break and then we will resume in 10 minutes.

MR. GRARE: Petite break. So at 20 minutes of four, OK? Thank you all. (Applause.)

(END)