

Cooperative Security Framework for **SOUTH ASIA**



COOPERATIVE SECURITY
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COOPERATIVE SECURITY FRAMEWORK FOR SOUTH ASIA

Editor

Nihar Nayak



INSTITUTE FOR DEFENCE STUDIES & ANALYSES
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List of Abbreviations

ADMM	ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting
AIG	American International Group
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANSF	Afghan National Security Forces
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ARF	ASEAN Regional Forum
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AU	African Union
BIMSTEC	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
BPO	Business Process Outsourcing
BRAC	Bangladesh Rehabilitation Assistance Committee
CAIT	Climate Analysis Indicators Tool
CAM	Confidence Avoidance Measures
CBM	Confidence Building Measures
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
COP	Conference of Parties
CPN	Communist Party of Nepal
DDR	Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration
DIAG	Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
DOE	Department of Energy
EAS	East Asia Summit
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
EU	European Union
EUWFD	EU Water Framework Directive
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation

FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
Fed	Federal Reserve System
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GAO	US Government Accountability Office
GCC	Gulf Cooperation Council
GCM	General Circulation Models
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GLOF	Glacial Lake Outburst Flood
GNP	Gross National Product
GW	Ground Water
HBV	Hydrologiska Byråns Vattenbalansavdelning
HDI	Human Development Index
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IEA	International Energy Agency
IHR	India Himalayan Region
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INCCA	Indian Network for Climate Change Assessment
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPKF	Indian Peace-Keeping Force
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence
ISRO	Indian Space Research Organisation
IT	Information Technology
IWT	Indus Water Treaty
KIHI	Key Informant Household Interviews
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MDA	Maritime Domain Awareness
MDP	Maldivian Democratic Party
MFN	Most Favoured Nation
MIT	Massachusetts Institute of Technology

MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOC	Maritime Operations Centre
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NEC	National Environment Commission, Bhutan
NEETS	Not in education, employment, or training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSC	National Security Council
NSIDC	National Snow and Ice Data Center
Nu	The Bhutanese Ngultrum (BTN)
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PM	Particulate Matter
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RAF	Royal Air Force
RCA	Regional Cooperation Agreements
RCC	Rescue Coordination Centres
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation
RGOB	Royal Government of Bhutan
RMA	Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan
ROE	Rules of Engagement
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SAC	Space Application Centre
SAFTA	South Asian Free Trade Area
SAPTA	SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement
SAWFD	South Asian Water Framework Directive
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
TB	Tuberculosis
TCARD	Technical Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development
TeK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge
TTP	Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Laws of the Sea
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
US EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
US	United States
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WRI	World Resources Institute
WTO	World Trade Organisation
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
ZOFPAN	Zone of Freedom, Peace and Neutrality

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Foreword

The concept of security has undergone substantial changes in the post-cold war period. Its scope has expanded to include issues like climate change, terrorism, disaster management, pandemics, etc. Most of these issues have transnational and cross-boundary implications which require cooperation by states at various levels to address these concerns. While traditional security issues have made it difficult for states to come together, there is a growing realization among states today that they have to cooperate among themselves to meet these new challenges, more widely known as non-traditional security (NTS) challenges. It is being envisaged by scholars and analysts in various countries that based on such common threat perceptions from non-traditional sources, a cooperative security architecture can be evolved in different regions which will contribute to peace and prosperity in the world.

A cursory look at the regional security environment in South Asia reveals that intra-state non-traditional security threats have assumed serious proportions in the post-cold war period. However, mutual suspicion and mistrust continue to characterise bilateral relations among states and retard the process of regional cooperation and integration. In recent years, the countries in the region have made attempts to generate consensus on common NTS issues like terrorism, natural disasters and environmental change. As a regional organization, SAARC, often dismissed as a talk-shop, has laid the foundation of a common platform which has enabled regular interaction at various levels on issues of critical importance, having their effect on regional security. It offers some promise for the emergence of a cooperative security architecture in South Asia in future. However, concerted efforts in this direction must begin through debates and discussions at various levels among security analysts, scholars, academics and media personnel to create an environment of trust and understanding for the states to take it up as an alternative for action at the regional level.

The present volume brought out by Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) encompasses diverse perspectives on the theme by contributors from all the SAARC countries. The contributions offer useful suggestions on how to make a security architecture possible in South Asia, despite the numerous challenges. The consensus document in the volume offers some concrete recommendations, which if further thought-through and implemented, will go

a long way in building such a cooperative security architecture and ensuring peace and prosperity in the region. I congratulate Dr. Nihar Nayak for bringing out such a timely publication and hope that this volume will initiate further discussion on the theme.

New Delhi
October 2012

Arvind Gupta
Director General, IDSA

Introduction

In a globalised world, countries are facing enormous and multifaceted challenges. Incidents occurring in a particular state or region of the world have trans-national and trans-regional ramifications. As a result, no single country can face the challenges effectively without the support or cooperation of others. What makes the situation even more daunting is the expanding scope of security, and the interconnection between traditional and non-traditional security (NTS) concerns. The NTS issues can lead to traditional security problems or vice-versa. This complex security situation around the world has compelled many countries in different regions of the world (for example, Europe and Southeast Asia) to adopt a cooperative security framework (CSF) to fight common challenges together. Presently, these two regional forums are considered as successful CSF models. Although SAARC has been formed with similar objectives, it is rated as a loosely formed regional forum with limited mandate. The potential of SAARC to be used as a platform for CSF in South Asia has been questioned by many scholars and analysts in the region and beyond.

While the concept of collective security and collective self-defence evolved during the cold war era with the objective of mitigating traditional security concerns of the states, concepts like common security, comprehensive security, and human security, mostly came to the fore in the post-cold war period by bringing traditional and non-traditional security issues together in international politics. Cooperative security as it is understood puts emphasis on dialogue, confidence building measures, interdependence and cooperation both at intra- and inter-regional levels. Cooperation between countries is the first step towards forming a comprehensive security framework. This will de-secureitize the insecurities between the states within a region and help them work in a united manner to meet common challenges.

Since the end of the cold war, some debates and discussions have taken place within South Asia on this theme. Available literature focusing on the security challenges argues that the notion of cooperative security in South Asia has not taken roots due to the following factors: absence of an external aggressor or common enemy, peculiar geographical situation, historical baggage, fear of gradual Indianisation of the sub-continent, lack of trust amongst the countries in the region, perpetual enmity between India and Pakistan and last, but not

least, the non-alignment movement in the 1950s. Much of the literature also argues for the evolution of a comprehensive security system, which could provide a mechanism for identification of issues and challenges in the region. They do not talk about the need for any institutional mechanism for ensuring cooperative security in the region.

While the cold war contributed and sharpened the process of regional cooperation in Europe and Southeast Asia, it fomented instability in the South Asian region. In fact, major powers during the cold war period had tried to create antagonism between two principal rivals—Pakistan and India—in the region, and entered into military cooperation agreements with both the countries. However, the intense involvement of major powers in Europe and Southeast Asia had diverted international attention from this region. More importantly, under the impact of cold war rivalry, some external powers tried to project India as a common enemy in the region due to its friendly relations with the USSR. India, in its own way, took a principled stance along with some third world countries not to join the two major power blocs (led by the USA and the former USSR) and established the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). India used the NAM as a ‘safety valve’ vis-a-vis regional alignments against it by both intra- and extra-regional forces. Secondly, external forces found it difficult to bring the small countries in South Asia together because of their dependence on India. In fact, both the US and the former USSR sought to have a strong presence in South Asia to contain each other. During the cold war, no country in South Asia adhered to communism strongly or had any kind of alliance with the former USSR. As a result, the US did not get a chance to create any counter-united front’ against communism in South Asia as it did in case of Western Europe and Southeast Asia. Both these regions were strongly supported by the US against communism.

However, the cold war did lead to a sense of dependency on external forces among the small countries in South Asia, who feared Indian preponderance. Instead of working together and developing a regional outlook, some of the India’s neighbours chose to rely on external powers to augment their security. Efforts to tackle issues of common concern in a collective and cooperative manner were held hostage to mutual mistrust which also led sometimes to inter-state conflicts. External forces took advantage of that. This policy also suited some authoritarian regimes in Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and, to some extent, in Sri Lanka.

Apart from these factors, broadly, the geo-strategic-political arrangement of the region played a key role in delaying the entire process of regional cooperation. It would be pertinent to make a comparative analysis of the geo-strategic-political arrangements of the EU and ASEAN here. In case of the EU, the USSR was perceived as a common threat by the West European countries.

Geographically, the EU countries were mostly sharing borders with each other and the former USSR along with its satellite states in Eastern Europe was located in the immediate neighbourhood. That led to a sense of unity among the West European countries, which the US found easy to mobilize, against communism. Out of this emerged a cooperative security framework in the EU which reinvented itself as a comprehensive security forum after the cold war.

Similarly, in the case of ASEAN, it was initially formed (1967) to protect the region against communism—especially China and USSR. The five primary members of the ASEAN—Indonesia, Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand—came together against regional partners of the USSR like Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos. Even by the early 1970s, the USSR continued to be treated as a common enemy after establishment of diplomatic relations between the US and China. Being small in size, these countries felt it wise to stay together for better bargaining power vis-à-vis big powers and the rise of China in the region after the cold war partially reinforced the need to project a united front to manage Chinese dominance.

Interestingly, the geo-strategic-political dynamics in South Asian region is different from both the EU and ASEAN. Geographically, South Asian countries are scattered around India. Only India has either direct land borders or maritime borders with its neighbours. There is an asymmetric relationship between India and its small neighbours. But India has never been considered as a common enemy in the region to bring other countries together in any security-cooperation framework. Nevertheless, when the concept of SAARC emerged in the mid-1980s, India did suspect that SAARC could be an attempt by its neighbours to bandwagon against it. Therefore, India was quite lukewarm to the initiative. On the other hand, even after SAARC was established and India joined it hesitantly, given the historical baggage, small South Asian countries felt that SAARC might pose a threat to their sovereignty and independence due to India's domination. They viewed (and continue to view) India both as a friend and an interventionist power. Such mutual suspicion has sapped SAARC's potential to emerge as an effective regional organisation, and as critics argue, turned SAARC into a talk-shop.

There are two schools of thought over the future structure and shape of the cooperative security framework in South Asia. The status-quoist school holds that SAARC could be the right platform towards this endeavour. They argue that certain useful steps have already been taken in this direction. For instance, during the SAARC 2004 summit a resolution was passed on terrorism recommending collective action. Recently, a SAARC disaster management centre has been set up in Delhi and there is an increase in the meetings of the council ministers of SAARC countries on thematic issues. Progress on SAFTA and the changing nature of India-Pakistan relations, partially reinforced by India-Pakistan

dialogues held on the sidelines of various SAARC summits, suggest that SAARC could make substantial progress as a cooperative security platform in future.

However, revisionists argue that SAARC is inherently incapable of substituting for a much-needed common cooperative security framework in South Asia. It does not deal with the hard security issues and has focused only on non-traditional security issues. Therefore, the Charter needs to be amended to make it possible for SAARC countries to discuss important security issues in a cooperative manner. However, this could reduce SAARC to a forum for inconclusive discussions primarily because countries in the region continue to have zero-sum approach to security vis-à-vis India, which is clearly attested by the fact that the small countries continue to cultivate external forces to counter-balance India's influence (perceived as domineering) on them and circumscribe India's role in the region. Most importantly, the debate on the failure of CSF in South Asia is mostly centered on the problems between India and Pakistan and other issues are usually neglected. Given the intractability of India-Pakistan differences, other regional initiatives like BIMSTEC, minus Pakistan, may succeed in bringing regional countries together in a cooperative framework, some would argue. However, bimstec has also not been much of a success so far.

Of late, there has been some realisation about the need to evolve a cooperative security framework in South Asia with the emergence of common NTS challenges in the region. For example, terrorism has surfaced as a common challenge for all countries in the region. Pakistan, which was hesitating to act against terror, has itself become a victim of it and displayed its willingness to be part of a common regional effort to fight terror under SAARC. Secondly, radical political changes have taken place in South Asia after the cold war. Almost all countries have adopted democratic structures and are making efforts to check the influence of non-democratic forces in their societies. Two major internal security challenges, i.e., the LTTE and Maoist insurgency in Nepal, have been, more or less, resolved. Except Pakistan and Afghanistan, other conflict theatres in South Asia are relatively under control. The Maoists of Nepal, who were earlier branded as terrorists by India, have emerged as a legitimate political force in that country which considers India as a development partner. In return, India is willing to work with any legitimate force in Nepal for regional peace, stability and development.

Thirdly, there is a realisation in India that its inclusive development would be difficult to achieve without the support and cooperation of its neighbours and they should be partners in its economic growth. Economic relations between South Asian countries, including between India and Pakistan, have improved. India is inviting its neighbours to participate in its growing economy and benefit from it. It has expressed its willingness to engage Pakistan despite subversive activities with known cross-border linkages. Fourthly, after years of mistrust,

wars, proxy-wars and preventive diplomacy against each other, the countries of the region have realised the adverse impact of that. Last, but not least, the impact of climate change (flash floods, tsunamis, drought, sub-continental cyclone, rising of sea levels in the Indian Ocean) has become so severe that the countries in the region are now working towards a common platform to mitigate that. The recent floods in Pakistan and at India-Nepal border are some examples of climate change in the region and each country needs support of others to manage and mitigate these problems.

Above all, terrorism has emerged as a perennial challenge to individual liberty and state authority. The entire region is affected by the virus of ideological extremism and terrorism. Due to a lack of coordination among South Asian countries, this problem remains unmanageable. Some rudimentary steps have been taken within the SAARC to work together on this issue; however, a lot more needs to be done to move from recognition of terror as a common threat to actual cooperation among the states to contain it. There is an urgent need for a workable cooperative security framework, which could enable regional cooperation on an expanding range of security issues.

As the countries of the region are undergoing positive political transformation, the region might be at the crossroads of a major change. There is a dominant view in the region in favour of a cooperative security framework and in this regard India has to take initiative. There are many suggestions and recommendations by scholars on what shape the cooperative security framework would take in South Asia. There is optimism amongst the scholars that despite various fault-lines, the region has the potential to evolve a cooperative security architecture.

Against this backdrop, the book puts together useful analyses of the problems inhibiting the process of regional security cooperation and suggestions to overcome them by selected scholars from the region at a Track-II level. The contributors to this volume have tried to find answers to the following questions: What is the status of debate on cooperative security framework in South Asia and what are the various concepts related to it? What are the enabling factors for the emergence of a cooperative security framework in South Asia? Given the history of conflict and cooperation in South Asia, is it practical to expect that South Asian states can evolve a cooperative security framework in the region? What role can SAARC play to enable an effective dialogue on cooperative security in South Asia? What are the existing models of cooperative security in different regions of the world? What model would be appropriate for South Asia?

The book is divided into four parts. The book begins with a focus on the contemporary conceptual debates on the CSF and its relevance in the South Asian context. The chapter by S.D. Muni focuses on building a strategic architecture in South Asia. He argues that the region has multiple limitations

which inhibit collective efforts to build a “regional security architecture”. Unless the SAARC Charter is changed, he argues, it could only account for a part of the envisioned security architecture. There is also an imbalance in military and resource capabilities among states in the region. Therefore, the structure should be multi-dimensional with a preference for peaceful and cooperative resolution of conflicts in the region.

Shahid Javed Burki deals with population issues and economic integration of the region. He begins with a discussion of the economic crisis in the West and the steps being taken to deal with the deep economic malaise that has hit various countries. His chapter provides a broad overview of the economic and political situation at the global level and argues that world’s most populous countries – China, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh—have been presented with a set of unique opportunities for cooperation amongst themselves at various levels, which can have significant consequences for the pace and scope of the development of the Asian region.

Farooq Sobhan in his thought-provoking analysis stresses upon various existing models of cooperative security and analyses various prospects of evolving a similar structure in South Asia. He observes that India’s emergence as a major global power combined with the security challenges, both traditional and nontraditional, emerging in the region has led to the realisation, at the highest political level, that an effective security framework is now necessary to ensure the safety and security of South Asia. He suggests the outlines of such a body, while recommending a range of initiatives to be taken by the states to ensure its effectiveness.

Smruti S. Pattanaik and Nihar Nayak seek to argue why there is a need to evolve a regional security architecture, and offer some ideas about what could be the structure and shape of an effective regional consultative mechanism. Mahwish Hafeez argues that in the South Asian region the idea of cooperative security could not take roots due to a number of factors like mutual distrust, preponderance of India, civil wars and political instability, and deals with various dimensions of any possible future cooperative structure in the region. She argues that for initiating a regional cooperative security framework, it is imperative for countries in the region to develop a sense of a common future and to realize that unilateral attempts to increase their security may be doomed to failure because one state’s actions would inevitably prompt reactions by another, degrading the security of both.

Part two of the book is devoted to various country perspectives on cooperative security. Mohammad Daoud Sultanzy focuses on the problems and prospects of regional cooperation to deal with the security crisis in Afghanistan. Presenting a very pessimistic view on the future of Afghanistan, he argues that the political leadership of Afghanistan and the intentional community need to recognize the

“much-needed” aspiration of the people. A regional security approach towards the situation in Afghanistan will require continued assistance from external sources to stabilize itself to bring various countries together and adopt a new vision to meet the pressing challenges in a cooperative manner.

W.I. Siriweera and Sanath De Silva highlight the concerns of Sri Lanka over security threats in South Asia. The authors examine the historical and present dimensions of India-Sri Lanka relations which lead to present situation of corporative security paradigm between the two. While this can offer some lessons for regional cooperation in security related issues, they admit that historical legacies play a key role in determining bilateral relationships and inhibit the process of regional integration. Explaining the vulnerability of small counties in the region, Ahmed Shaheed offers a Maldivian perspective on maritime security cooperation in South Asia. He analyses the impulses that drive Maldivian interests in maritime security cooperation, and identifies the interplay between bilateral and multilateral frameworks for cooperation.

Rajan Bhattarai argues that the region has been facing growing religious fundamentalism, ethnic conflicts, environmental degradation, refugee crisis, social crimes and terrorism, and the minds of the ruling elites are still dominated by the state-centric security views. In addition, the asymmetric relations between India and other South Asian countries has been one of the main obstacles in developing and strengthening security cooperation in the region. Therefore, the region needs to develop better coordination in areas related to sharing of intelligence information about groups engaged in cross-national terrorism and promote regular defence dialogues at various levels.

Part three of the book deals with non-traditional security issues. In the absence of a common enemy the NTS threats could be treated as common challenges before the South Asian countries, which could bring them together to address these issues. Dushni Weerakoon deals with regional economic integration and observes that the economic outlook for countries across the region over the next few years diverges quite substantively. India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are expected to perform well, growing at an average of 7-8 per cent, while Pakistan and Nepal are expected to do poorly. Even as some South Asian countries will be outpacing others, inter-country inequities will be accompanied by intra-country disparities as well. These trends have obvious implications for broader issues of human security and conflict in the region, Weerakoon concludes.

Shaista Tabassum focuses on the various facets of the water cooperation between India and Pakistan. She argues that despite success of the Indus Water Treaty (IWT), at present the Indus Basin System is facing many other challenges which are constantly overshadowed because of serious disputes on water distribution rights and the treaty application. Some of these new challenges are

ground water abstraction and declining reserves of underground water, the environmental changes that are occurring in the river basins, high level of pollution in river water, and many other associated problems.

Chhimi Dorji dwells on the impact of climate change on Bhutan. He argues that Bhutan, being the least developed, mountainous and landlocked country in the region, is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. In this regard, the Bhutanese government has strategised to ensure the “The Middle Path” of development towards sustainability since the early 1990s. The Bhutanese model could offer some lessons for other countries in the region.

Saifullah Ahmadzai’s chapter offers a comprehensive discussion on a host of non-traditional security issues and challenges confronting Afghanistan today, which complicates the security situation there and in the region. He argues that weak states are more vulnerable to non-traditional security threats either due to meagre resources, or incompetent governance, and pose a critical challenge for regional security.

P.K. Gautam’s chapter offers a theoretical framework for regional cooperation and then examines the initiatives undertaken so far with regard to the environment and climate change. He analyzes why progress is not up to the desired levels. Finally, the chapter looks at issues that need to be addressed by governments for regional cooperation through institutional mechanisms.

Medha Bisht puts in perspective the debate and understanding on water as a security tool in international politics. Contextualizing it in the South Asian region, she assesses the ‘strategic weight’ that water carries for potential cooperation. She also identifies conditions under which the cooperative trends can be further perpetuated. She observes that cooperation on water issues are mostly confined to the bilateral level because of geographical location and relations between upper and lower riparian countries. The strategic weight of water can put pressure on the South Asian countries for a cooperative security framework, she argues.

Part four brings together the future strategies needed to achieve a CSF in the South Asian region. It comprises a Consensus Document, prepared on the basis of the discussions, for future action aimed at building a cooperative strategic architecture in South Asia.

I am deeply indebted to colleagues at the Institute, who supported me at various stages of preparation of this book. First and foremost, I owe my sincere gratitude to Dr. Arvind Gupta, Director General, IDSA, for his constant encouragement and support to bring out this volume. It was under his leadership and the guidance of Prof. S. D. Muni that the concept was developed. I would also like to express my sincere thanks to Brigadier Rumel Dahiya for extending support for bringing this volume out on time. The book would not have seen the light of day without constant support from Dr. Ashok K. Behuria,

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Nihar Nayak



PART-I

Towards a Cooperative Security Framework for South Asia: Conceptual Issues

1

Strategic Architecture in South Asia: Some Conceptual Parameters

S.D. Muni

Theorizing on strategic architecture is a typical academic and scholarly preoccupation. This exercise is driven by considerations of security: not necessarily and not entirely by building military capabilities or collective alliance structures such as those evolved during the cold war, but through a preference for peaceful and cooperative resolution of conflicts in a given region. In Asia, the expanding (sub) organisations of ASEAN drew attention towards the possibility of becoming a strategic architecture if multiple sets of these (sub) organisations could be woven into a compact, mutually coordinated framework for effective and timely actions and initiatives for the good of the region. Those who have courageously taken a plunge into the task of conceptualizing this phenomenon in Asia include Muthiah Alagappa, Amitav Acharya, and Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver.¹ The overall emphasis has been on building institutions based on norms and values that could be sustained for a long time in the face of a diversity of emerging and unexpected challenges.

The real task of building regional security institutions akin or amenable to a compact architecture lies with political leaders and statesmen. They are not conceptually or theoretically oriented and their priorities are specific to their respectively perceived national interests. These need to be harmonized and made compatible with those of their regional neighbours and major stakeholders. As such, strategic architectures evolve without a specific blueprint. Original ideas and initiatives take form and shape that were often initially unintended. Recall the formation of SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation): it neither followed prior academic blueprints nor adhered to the original initiative, put forth by the then President of Bangladesh, General Zia-ur-Rahman, in his

letter of January 1980 to his South Asian counterparts. Similarly, ASEAN, which was launched as an anti-communist grouping, did not hesitate to join hands with China in supporting the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia against the Vietnamese intervention in 1979-80. Subsequently, after the end of the cold war, ASEAN's anti-communist barrier against membership was gracefully dropped. The EAS (East Asia Summit) was given a structure quite different from Malaysia's original idea of an "East Asia caucus." With focus on ASEAN, EAS, and APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation), the Obama administration's new strategic policy initiative of an "Asia-Pacific Pivot", launched in November 2011, seeks to streamline the regional strategic architecture. One wonders how, and if at all, the "pivot" strategy will impact the existing organisational structures in the region because the strategy will take another decade to unfold. The dimension of the proposed strategic architecture is only one of its aspects; the others being, reinforcing traditional military alliances, building new strategic partnerships, and redeploying US military strength in the Asia-Pacific region.² It is therefore prudent to think of strategic architectures as evolving, changing, and being variable in their institutional and operational aspects, as against being static structures.

Is South Asia Amenable to Cooperative Security?

One can endlessly debate the regionality of South Asia. There are scholars and analysts who have asserted that the very concept of South Asia was externally imposed and was strategically motivated. One of the reasons behind this questioning is the changing face of the region. For instance, before 1947, when the Indian subcontinent was decolonized, South Asia could be seen as encompassing even Iran, Tibet and Myanmar. Then in 1947 Pakistan was separated from India; in 1951 came the absorption of Tibet by China; and subsequently in 1971 Bangladesh emerged as a sovereign independent state. The political profile of Sikkim also underwent transformation in 1974. When SAARC was established as a regional institution in 1985, Afghanistan was not included, but now Afghanistan is a part of this regional body. Iran and Myanmar are also associated with it as "Observers," with the potential to become full members, giving SAARC a different geographical definition and, thus, to South Asia. And yet, it may be practical to accept the SAARC definition of South Asia and leave the basic question of defining the region at that. In discussing strategic architecture, the territorial connectivity of the existing SAARC region cannot be questioned. The credibility and viability of South Asia being a regional "security community" has come to be widely accepted.³

Some analysts though have questioned this, also saying that the countries of the region have no common threat perceptions and have followed diverse security policies, often in conflict with each other. The prevailing differences, cleavages, conflicts and tensions in the region, particularly between India and

Pakistan as also between Pakistan and Afghanistan, are underlined to portray strategic disharmony in the South Asian region. But such arguments grossly ignore and undermine the huge commonalities and contiguities that characterize history and culture, climate, and environment—economic and geo-strategic—as also the political aspects of South Asia. The undue importance accorded to, and the persisting legacies of the post-colonial recasting of the region's sovereign identities, need not be given a larger-than-life role in shaping the future of the region. The time has come to set aside, in the interest of coping with the emerging challenges, the security concerns that arose out of this legacy and were reinforced—even pampered—by the crudities of the cold war.

The strength of the contiguities and commonalities in South Asia has begun to be boldly reflected in the slowly but surely rising voices even in Pakistan that bemoan the fallacies of partition and challenge the wisdom of nursing hatred and conflict with India by the established stakeholders and vested interests. It has also been reflected in the public acknowledgement by the leaders of South Asia, ranging from Indira Gandhi of India to Chandrika Kumaratunga of Sri Lanka and General Pervez Musharraf and Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan, that poverty is the biggest common threat to South Asia. It is also widely recognised that the threats posed to every South Asian country by internal conflicts, insurgencies and ethnic explosions, terrorism and natural disasters (floods, earthquakes, tsunamis and rising sea levels) are such that no single country can meet them on its own. Mutual help and cooperation is a must in the region if these military and human security concerns have to be taken care of.⁴

The geo-strategic composition and location of South Asia is such that it is vulnerable to a common external threat on traditional lines. The thrust of this geo-strategic imperative was evident in India's moves to build common Himalayan defences in the aftermath of the rise of Communist China and its military assertion in Tibet in the late 1940s and early 1950s. In 1962, when China surprised India with a massive military onslaught, Pakistan also got proposed (under US pressure/influence) to seek common defence with India. In 1971, when Bangladesh was a nascent entity, not only the Bangladeshi freedom fighters but also Nepal and Bhutan were prepared to pool their concerns with India against the possibility of a Chinese intervention in support of the Pakistani military regime. Again, in the early 1980s, the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan was viewed by India as a matter that concerned its own security. India was then willing to join hands with Pakistan in ensuring the security and stability of South Asia if the US avoided casting the Soviet intervention in the cold war straitjacket. Now again, when the US and NATO forces are preparing to leave Afghanistan, the likely rise of the Taliban and its adverse implications for regional security are haunting both India and Pakistan, though they may have their respective strategies for dealing with that prospect. There may also be lessons for the South Asian countries in the caution and circumspection with which

the South-East and East Asian countries, including Myanmar, are looking at an economically rising and militarily assertive China.

Comprehensive and Multidimensional Architecture

Any strategic architecture in South Asia will need to be multidimensional in order to be responsive to both the traditional and human security needs. It will have to be equipped to deal with the internal challenges of conflicts and insurgencies, interstate conflicts and possible external security threats. It cannot also afford to neglect human security and non-traditional aspects, including those arising out of terrorism, ethnic conflicts and energy or resource and food security. It may be conceptually clumsy to lump together all the traditional and non-traditional security concerns, generally encompassed by the concept of “comprehensive security” that the South Asian states confront, but cooperation in non-traditional security areas helps improve the overall security atmosphere in the region and reinforces the efforts and initiatives towards cooperation in hardcore security areas as well. It is argued that while security has to be viewed in its diverse dimensions, the concept must remain rooted in the political realm.⁵

There is no structure in South Asia to address hardcore security concerns within the framework of cooperative security. Hardcore security matters are generally seen to be the preserve of the national domain, underlined by the specific capabilities and strategies of a given state. South Asian states have pursued diverse strategies in this respect, that have included bilateral defence-oriented treaties and agreements with immediate neighbours, like India did with Nepal and Bhutan, and with Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. The wisdom and viability of such arrangements have been questioned from time to time. India had to revise its Treaty of 1949 with Bhutan, and Nepal is insisting on revision of the 1950 Treaty in this respect. Despite the treaty having mutual defence cooperation built into it, India had to work hard, for nearly seven years (1997–2003) on Bhutan to secure its participation in launching operations against the insurgents in India’s north-east, who were using Bhutanese territory as sanctuary. India’s treaty with Bangladesh, signed for twenty-five years in 1972, expired in 1997. The treaty with Sri Lanka, signed in July 1987, is more on paper than applied in practice. Sri Lanka was willing to conclude a defence cooperation agreement with India in 2004-5 to help it meet the LTTE challenge, but pressures from Tamils in India’s south forced India to back out at the last moment. Another strategy has been to join externally sponsored military blocs—as Pakistan did in the context of the cold war. This however did not help Pakistan preserve its territorial integrity, when its eastern half seceded from it to emerge as Bangladesh in 1971. Later, Pakistan was designated as the most favoured non-NATO ally of the US to deal with the challenge of “global terrorism” in Afghanistan, but both sides have found that relationship most frustrating.⁶ Yet another strategy in South Asia has been to secure an international security cover through the

United Nations—as was done by the Maldives after experiencing a coup attempt in 1988.

SAARC was institutionalized in 1985 and is being looked upon as a regional instrument for development cooperation. It has incorporated many of the human security concerns in its agenda, including counterterrorism, food and energy security, poverty alleviation, curbing of human trafficking, and mutual help against natural disasters such as floods, tsunami and earthquakes. But progress in these areas has been far below expectations. Failure has been particularly conspicuous in the field of counterterrorism, even after revamping of arrangements in this respect in the aftermath of the events of 11 September 2001, largely because some of the South Asian states have been consciously using cross-border terrorism against their immediate neighbours as a part of their national strategy. SAARC played no role in India's counterinsurgency joint operations with Myanmar in 1995 and Bhutan in 2003. It was also of marginal relevance in Sri Lanka's fight against Tamil insurgency.

The prospect of SAARC emerging as an all-encompassing strategic structure for South Asia is dim. With careful streamlining, SAARC has considerable potential to play a role in human and non-traditional security sectors. But SAARC was neither envisaged nor equipped to play any role in the hardcore security areas; not even in resolving or moderating bilateral disputes and conflicts in the region: its Charter specifically bars "bilateral and contentious issues" being brought onto its table. Some SAARC members have tried to circumvent this conditionality through indirect means such as encouraging structured political discussions in the SAARC forum (at least during the Summit retreats), but the bigger members of the grouping continue to have reservations. Owing to its thrust and potential in the field of human security, SAARC can and will be a part of South Asia's strategic architecture, but it cannot be the strategic architecture for the region. There is a lesson to be learnt from ASEAN in this respect. When ASEAN became active after the first seven years of slumber, it moved into strategic aspects of the regional challenges through its Treaty of Peace and Amity, Zone of Freedom, Peace and Neutrality (ZOFPAN) and resolute pressure on Vietnam against its intervention in Cambodia (1979); but many of the bilateral issues of conflict among the members could not be addressed, nor could it cope with the emerging regional security challenges, especially in the context of China's rise. ASEAN's realisation of constraints in real hardcore security matters led it to establish the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) first and then even institutionalize the Meetings of the Defence Ministers of ASEAN (ADMM+8) and other regional security stakeholders. SAARC need not exactly emulate ASEAN, but the South Asian countries may have to build structures that deal with varied and diverse aspects of security.

Regional Capabilities and the Role of Extra-regional Powers

South Asia's regional capability to deal both with its hardcore and non-traditional/human security challenges is substantial if the capabilities of all its constituent states can be pooled and coordinated for common purpose. The problem here is not only of defining the common purpose, particularly in the context of external threats and terrorism, but also of pooling and coordinating the diverse capabilities. There is a huge imbalance both in military capabilities and economic resources between India and the rest of its neighbours in South Asia. India can and periodically does provide security support to several of its neighbours, with the exception of Pakistan, not only in times of external threats but also internal conflicts and challenges. India's treaties with Nepal and Bhutan are based on this premise. So was the agreement of July 1987 with Sri Lanka under which India sent its Peace-Keeping Force (IPKF) to subdue the LTTE's challenge. India also saved the Gayoom regime in the Maldives from the coup attempt in 1988 by mobilizing its military assets in the region. India is a major financial contributor in SAARC projects and is a significant source of developmental assistance to its smaller neighbours. Since 2001, marking a notable shift in its policy, India has been inviting all its neighbours to benefit from its buoyant growth rate and the concomitant opportunities for the region's prosperity. The neighbours often plead for concessions and generosity from India in matters of trade, investments, technological support, developmental grants and soft loans for a diversity of projects in the economic and social sectors.

The unbalanced capabilities, with India predominating, logically point towards a hierarchical order in building the South Asian strategic architecture. This however is neither possible nor desirable. A hierarchical order would imply that India undertakes larger obligations and exercises greater authority in ensuring regional development and security. While India's neighbours expect the former, they would stoutly resist the latter. There exists a considerable trust deficit between India and its neighbours, who have a variety of suspicions and fears emanating from the lop-sided power structure of the region (in favour of India) and encouraged and nursed by other factors. These include history, their own political evolution, persistent unresolved conflicts and disputes with India, the role of extra-regional powers, and India's own follies and lapses in dealing with its neighbours. Neither has India been able to carry conviction with its South Asian neighbours that its aspirations for primacy in the region are natural, objective and benign, nor have they been able to accept that India can and should be a creative leader of regional affairs in South Asia. The doctrine of non-reciprocity on India's part in dealing with its neighbours, enunciated by former Prime Minister I.K. Gujral, sought to address this critical regional fault-line in South Asia.

The strategic architecture in South Asia will have to be cast in a cooperative security mould wherein capabilities and obligations will necessarily be unequal

(with India accepting greater responsibilities) but decision-making and exercise of authority will unquestionably be equal. The principle of unanimity in decision-making in SAARC, which almost gives a veto to all its members, ensures that neither the smaller countries of the region can be dominated by the larger ones nor the larger ones marginalized by the collectivity of the smaller ones. Every possible institution and arrangement envisaged under the South Asian strategic architecture will have to imbibe this principle.

North America is a clear example of regional balance in that US supremacy in the region is unquestionably established. The former Soviet Union was similarly predominant in Eastern Europe and Soviet Central Asia. South Asia is clearly an internally unbalanced region in that the regional power does not have unquestioned dominance. In such a situation, extra-regional major powers will have a propensity to get involved in the region, depending on the degree of their stakes and interests. It would also be prudent on the part of South Asia to get all such external powers involved in its strategic architecture since they have the potential both to jeopardize peace and stability in the region or to ensure and provide for it. This will be in conformity with the global tendency towards making regional architectures (developmental or strategic) open and inclusive. The EAS provides a clear example. The initial reservations to India's membership in this important regional grouping were given up and even the US was subsequently accommodated on this consideration. There are none the less continuing exceptions to this phenomenon. Examples are the resistance to the United States' membership in the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) or the uneasiness which BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) may experience if China were to seek entry into it.

For any security/strategic arrangement in South Asia, China and the US are inevitable stakeholders: until at least the time when the South Asian countries have a firm intra-regional consensus that they can deal with regional security problems on their own. A number of South Asian countries—Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka—primarily driven by their desire to have a credible balance against India's comparatively huge capabilities, have even advocated treating China as a South Asian country. This is overstretching a political proposition. China is principally an East Asian power and it is only the distant periphery of China that touches South Asia and Central Asia. It is true that China has made remarkable advances in physically integrating this periphery with the mainland, but deep roots of history and culture as also the imperatives of the geo-strategic ground reality cannot be undone by physical infrastructure, military power or lure of prosperity. A rising and assertive China would surely want to have a finger in the strategic pie of South and Central Asian regions, but may not want to be identified as a South Asian or a Central Asian entity. Following the ASEAN example, SAARC also opened itself in 2007 to "Observers"

from outside the region by accepting the US, China and other stakeholders spreading from Iran to Japan and Australia in the development and stability of South Asia. However, it is still not clear what role and obligations are assigned to these “Observers.” Such uncertainty in security matters may not be very desirable. The countries of the region have to be on guard that the outsiders serve the need of the region rather than play with the region and harm its interests while promoting their own priorities.

Summing up

It is time for the South Asian leaders to lay the foundation and start the brick-work for a credible strategic architecture that can meet the emerging needs of traditional and human security for the people of the region. Such architecture should be open, inclusive and resilient, as India’s National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon has pointed out. In his words, “We need to build structures that are inclusive and flexible enough to avoid the inadequacies of international organisations. Logically speaking, they would need to counter the nature of threats we face.”⁷⁷ The structures and arrangements should be adequately equipped to deal with the different aspects of traditional and non-traditional security needs of the region, if need be through differentiated and well-specified levels of institutional tiers and participating members and non-members (“Observers”). These differentiated institutional tiers can be geared and monitored through a core body, as is done in South-East Asia through the ASEAN summit. The South Asian strategic architecture has to be capable of addressing not only the prevailing security and developmental concerns but also those which are unfolding and impinging on the region as security spill-over from the neighbouring regions like Central Asia, South-East Asia and Asia-Pacific.



Notes

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2

New Opportunities for Populous Asia

Shahid Javed Burki

The main argument developed in this chapter is that the world's most populous countries—three of which are in South Asia—have been presented with a set of unique opportunities that can have significant consequences for the pace and scope of the development of the Asian region. In fact, the three large South Asian countries—India, Pakistan and Bangladesh—should work with the fourth populous country, i.e., China—in the Asian mainland to follow a strategy, which would help them to take advantage of the rapidly changing global economy. This article covers three areas. It begins with a discussion of the economic failure of the West—a term that includes not only Western Europe and North America but also Japan—in understanding of and dealing with the deep economic malaise that has hit these societies. This broad overview of the economic and political situation in the early 2000s lays the ground for the second area. If the crises that have hit the West cannot be contained, they will have a global impact. They will also have significant consequences for what used to be loosely described as the East which generally meant what Fareed Zakaria has called “the Rest.”¹ The third area of investigation will suggest how one part of the “Rest” could mobilize itself to take advantage of the West's voluntary (the result of the possible redefining the role of the state) and involuntary (caused by demographic changes) transformation. There will be greater attention to demography in this work than is usual for writings on economics.

There will be particular focus on the populous countries of Asia. Four nations in this area—Bangladesh, China, India and Pakistan—have a combined population of close to 2.8 billion people. This is about two-fifths of the total world population of 6.8 billion in 2009.² While the size of the population matters, what matters even more is its age. The median age of the combined population of these countries is only 27 years, which means that 1.4 billion

people are below that age in these countries. Such a young population can become a burden or could be turned into an asset. The South Asian youth, for instance, could be mobilized to produce the services and products the West will need if it is unable to produce them in the required quantities. This could add to the South Asian national incomes as the remarkable development of the Indian IT sector has already demonstrated. Approaching economic development from this perspective would place focus on using population as a major economic resource. This approach is not always taken by economists.

Including China and India in this study is obvious. They are the world's only billion-plus population countries. They are also the world's most rapidly growing economies. They already account for 18 per cent of the world output measured in purchasing power parity terms. China in particular and India to a lesser extent have invested heavily in developing new technologies that will underpin the growth of the future world economy. Both countries have reached the stage in their development when slight tweaks in their growth strategies are needed to maintain the momentum. China and India need to bring in their youth as participants in and beneficiaries of the growth process. The West's transformation provides an opportunity to make that possible.

Including Pakistan—at this time the weakest economy in South Asia—and Bangladesh—while not a weak economy, the country still remains politically unsettled—needs a word of explanation. Not only is Pakistan performing poorly in economic terms, but has also been convulsed by a near civil war that has pitted several different groups against one another. The Islamists are fighting the state. Different sects of Islam are battling one another, often attacking each other's mosques to kill as many people as possible belonging to the other side. There is an on-going ethnic war in Karachi, the country's largest city and its industrial and financial centre. Pakistan now is regarded as the epicentre of global terrorism. In this context, it cannot be regarded as part of the solution.

But Pakistan could become a part of the solution if the right set of policies is adopted by its neighbours. It is the only large country that shares borders with both China and India. It occupies a unique geo-political space. It is the place through which trade could easily flow between the two mega states of Asia. It could provide China, landlocked on three sides, with access to the sea. It has the land routes China and India could use to access the energy and mineral-rich countries of Central Asia. Pakistan is the country where the Arab world meets the world of Central and South Asian Islam and where Sunnis and Shias have lived in relative peace for centuries. In fact, Pakistan is the world's second largest Shia country after Iran.

Including Pakistan in political and economic arrangement—formal or informal, but preferably the former—with China, India and Bangladesh could help to bring stability to the country and deny the stateless actors a place from

which they could operate to disturb other parts of the world. Making Pakistan formally a part of an alliance with the other large Asian states could also help in securing its nuclear weapons. A joint nuclear strategy would be enormously helpful in bringing peace to the region.

Incorporating Bangladesh in this group makes geographic sense. Bangladesh splits eastern India into two parts, making communications difficult with the states east of Bangladesh—an area that has been restive for decades. India has interest in cultivating Dhaka for this and other reasons, in particular to counter the growing influence of China. Furthermore, relations between the two countries have been uneasy at times, even though New Delhi played a decisive role in the creation of Bangladesh. China also has an interest in Bangladesh; once again looking for access to the sea. To gain it, however, it will have to jump over a bit of Indian territory. For that a regional arrangement is a prerequisite.

What are the options available to the policymakers in these four countries for them to take advantage of the rapid and unexpected changes in the structures of the Western economies and in the redefinition in them of the role of the state? Well thought out and properly executed policies will produce a number of positive changes in response to the transformation of the West. There is a paralysis in the making of public policy in the West. President Barack Obama's popularity has plummeted as has that of David Cameron, the British prime minister. Japan has changed six prime ministers in five years. This is in part because the events that have contributed to the current economic turmoil in this part of the world are without historical precedence, partly because the affected countries are going through societal pressures resulting from equally unprecedented demographic changes, and partly because there is currently a lack of world leadership that can bring together fractured societies or produce adequate public policy responses to the crises that are building up.

A Different Kind of Recession

It used to be the case that an economic recession produced a brief pause in the direction in which affected economies were proceeding. Once the downturn was over, the economies went back to the state they had reached before the recession took hold. The development of Keynesianism, that helped the West to deal with the Great Depression, made policymakers confident that they had acquired the tools to contain the impact of economic downturns. Correctly applied, fiscal and monetary policies would minimize the damage to the economy and contain the impact on the working population. There is now consensus among economists that the Great Recession of 2008-09 was not an ordinary downturn; it has lasted longer than most recessions in the post-World War period and the recovery, such as it was, has been much slower. In fact, there is a fear that this may turn out to be a double dip downturn, given the continuing

problem in Europe and the reluctance of the consumers in the United States to spend and the corporations to invest. Instead of being a “V” shaped event—a sharp downturn followed by a sharp recovery—it may turn out to be a “W” shaped occurrence—a downturn followed by a mild recovery, followed again by a downturn and then a mild recovery once again. Or could it be a “U” event, a sharp decline in economic activity, followed by a prolonged period of tepid recovery, followed again by a sharp recovery? Why has this recession differed from those that preceded it? Why is history not repeating itself?

Several analysts have concluded that this recession occurred when the Western economies were going through some deep structural changes. These were much debated questions and it will be a while before a consensus gets to be developed—if it develops at all—among the analysts who are looking at this event from the perspective of different disciplines. Some economists attributed the Great Recession not to an ordinary business cycle adjustment but something that was unique to the time when it happened. Underlying the changes that caused this particular upheaval were political decisions, not inevitable economic developments. Raghuram G. Rajan, who once served the International Monetary Fund as its Chief Economist, drew an analogy from geology to explain what occurred in 2008-09.³ He attributed the great downturn to fault lines along the tectonic plates of the global economy. However, unlike the tectonic plates, the economic fault lines were not always there; they were put there by the political forces that were concerned about growing inequality in the American society. The American political system, always averse to using fiscal policy as a distributive tool—to tax the rich in order to provide for the poor—used housing as a tool for improving the economic lot of the lower income groups. Various administrations encouraged semi-public institutions such as Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to subsidize home purchases by those who really could not afford to service the debts they were assuming. The acquisitions of these debts were made palatable by structuring them in a way that their real cost was hidden. Since this development occurred over time, the fissures they caused in the global economic system were hidden, deeper and more widespread than most realized. And they proved to be potentially more destructive than other more obvious culprits, like greedy bankers, sleepy regulators, and irresponsible borrowers. Since the fault lines that shook the world were deep, it will take time to repair them. This will involve costs that the political systems in the West may not have the stomach to bear.

Other explanations were provided for the failure of the West in developing adequate responses to the unexpected events that produced the Great Recession. Nassim Taleb, in an influential book published as the United States was about to lead the rest of the world into the Great Recession, suggested that often big changes are produced by events that have low probability of occurring. He called them the “black swan” moments since there was only a very small probability

of seeing a bird of that colour.⁴ Given the low probability of their occurrence, policy makers are generally not well equipped to deal with them. The collapse of the Lehman Brothers in September 2008—this occurred because the policymakers having rescued Bear Stearns, an investment bank, and AIG, the insurance giant, refused to extend the same treatment to this financial institution. Treating the Lehman collapse as a “black swan” moment, Andrew Ross Sorkin’s book, *Too Big to Fail*, provided a minute-by-minute analysis of the death of the giant investment bank and identified the flaws that crippled the world financial system. It provided potential remedies but also warned that unless policymakers push through reforms that may be painful for many of their constituencies, the world may plunge into another period of great turmoil.⁵

Analysts have cried hoarse over the whys and wherefores of the Great recession. What is striking about these efforts, however, is the near absence of the deep demographic change as a determining factor in the recession. Most of the West is going through a period of sharp and unprecedented drops in the rates of human fertility. Previous declines in population size were usually caused by wars, disease and pestilence. The one the West is faced with now is the result of changes in human behaviour as more and more women enter the work force. This has brought them some sense of autonomy and independence which will be compromised if they have large families. Western women are delaying the age of marriage to the point where reproduction becomes difficult—one reason why fertility clinics have become important components of the health care industry—and further contributes to fertility decline. These trends are hard to reverse and will have to be dealt with as parts of permanent change. In most of the West, the population pyramid has been inverted with the proportion of the old now larger than that of the young. This change will have important consequences for the structure of the Western workforce. It could also prove to be a very positive development for the populous countries of the Asian mainland.

Downsizing the Western State

Two conflicting views about public policy were debated in America and in several countries of Europe in the aftermath of the Great Recession. One was aimed at reducing the size of the Western state; the other to keep it large and have it focus on the deprived and the underprivileged as well as prepare the Western economies for the challenges that lie in the future. Most revolutions in the past were aimed at wresting the control of the state from those who possessed it by those who were excluded from it. The first of these, on the other hand, aimed to achieve the opposite. The governing elite wanted the state to step back and create the space in which private enterprise could step in. The private sectors should now do what the state has always done.

The push towards downsizing the state was not new; it was first made during what came to be called the Reagan-Thatcher revolution. The American president had won office by famously declaring that the state was not the solution, but the problem. The problem was earlier identified by President Jimmy Carter who said that a deep state of malaise had afflicted the American society. That comment is said to have cost Carter the presidency to Ronald Reagan, who replaced the word “malaise” with the phrase “morning in America”. Reagan was predisposed towards cheerfulness rather than deep reflection. But Reagan’s pragmatism saved him from himself. As Fareed Zakaria wrote in a newsmagazine article, the outcome of the Reagan revolution “reflected the American public’s basic preferences. They want big government but lower taxes.”⁶ During his eight years in office (1981-89), government spending averaged 22.4 per cent of GDP, well above the 1971-2009 average. But taxes came down. By the time he left office, taxes were 18 per cent of GDP, down from about 20 per cent. Only one-half of his rhetoric, therefore, was translated into action—he reduced the tax burden but increased the size of the government. The Tea Party movement came from nowhere to convulse the American political system. It wanted to complete the other half of the revolution launched by Reagan in the 1980s. Its members were “motivated by the core belief that government has grown much too big and expensive, undermining the Constitution and individual liberty and invariably does more harm than good.”⁷ Not unexpectedly, the search for a different kind of government won favor with *The Wall Street Journal*. In an editorial lauding the role late Steve Jobs had played in turning Apple into one of the most innovative firms in American history, the newspaper wrote in an editorial that “America has always managed to escape its economic difficulties and to create new industries, because it has provided the likes of Mr. Jobs with the freedom to pursue their dreams and the rewards for doing so. Their invention and drive [cannot] be discovered by a loan committee at the Department of Energy or planners at the Pentagon. They are the result of human ingenuity and passion which are too often stultified by government rules and controls.”⁸

Revolutions in the past were country or society-specific. The French Revolution was confined mostly to Paris, the American Revolution to the 13 colonies in North America. Although Marxism spread beyond several national borders, it was ultimately confined to a limited geographic space. Both revolutions—the one aimed at limiting the state’s role to a few, well-defined functions, the other to take care of those the society and the economy are leaving behind—quickly spread to many parts of the world. The philosophy of governance promoted by the Tea Party jumped across the Atlantic and went to Britain. Under the Conservatives who replaced the Labour Party, Britain adopted the approach that the Tea Party wanted in the United States. But there was a reaction to the austerity plan that the Conservatives under David Cameron, the new prime minister, adopted as a part of their approach to governing. As Thomas

Friedman, who coined the phrase ‘the world is flat’,⁹ wrote in a newspaper article: “...this same globalisation/I.T. revolution enables the globalisation of anger, with all of these demonstrations now inspiring each other. Some Israeli protesters carried a sign: ‘Walk like an Egyptian’. While these social protests—and their flash-mob criminal mutations rise in London—are not caused by new technologies per se, they are fuelled by them.”¹⁰

There’s a sharp difference of opinion on the causes of the London riots of July 2011. David Cameron, the country’s prime minister, believed that they were caused by those misfits within the society who were there for the thrills or the loot they offered. However, according to Dominique Moisi, founder of the French Institute for International Relations, “the riots in Britain do appear less socially and economically motivated than was the case in France [in 2005]. Even so, both cases show you can only ask for sacrifices from your citizens if they feel that these efforts are going to be equally shared. If not, beware the social explosions that will surely follow.”¹¹ In other words, Cameron’s austerity programme had a great deal to do with the convulsion that took place. Explaining the riots was more than an academic exercise. It will inform public policy responses by the leaders dealing with these situations.

This brings us back to demography. The pressure for changing the size and role of the state came at a time when both America and Europe—in particular Europe—were in the process of absorbing within their economic systems an unprecedented demographic transformation. The old in these countries now account for a larger share of the population than the young. As the populations grow older, those no longer in the working-age group are demanding services they do not have the means to pay. Only the state can deliver the needed help. If the Tea Partiers succeed, they will reduce the size of the government but this change cannot last for long since the old have the votes to make sure that the state continues to provide for their care. What the West seems headed towards is a deepening divide in the political culture. Sound public policymaking became difficult in those circumstances.

Besides, a smaller government cannot deliver innovation and technological and management competence that must become the base of the new economies in the Old World. As Fareed Zakaria put it, ‘some of these best practices used to be American. The world once looked at the US with awe as Americans built the inter-state highway system, created the best public education in the world, put a man on the moon and invested in the frontiers of knowledge. That is not the way the world sees America today.’¹² What the world was seeing now was a dysfunctional political system and a dispirited citizenry. Even the Chinese, who were highly dependent on the American market for their exports and the American financial system for depositing their savings, are demanding action from Washington. They wanted Washington to control its fiscal deficit otherwise

they fear the dollar could depreciate, reducing the value of the large monetary assets they hold in the United States.

A rational approach of dealing with the demographic dilemma the West faces would have been to mobilise the energies of the youth—albeit with a declining share of the total population—to work for the economy and the society. Only a strong and motivated state could have done that. But the political right was making the state move in the other direction. It was abandoning the youth. Numbers tell the story. Youth unemployment in the European Union was just over 20 per cent in 2011; in Britain it increased from 14 per cent in the first quarter of 2008 to 20 per cent in the first quarter of 2011. In Spain 45.7 per cent of the young were unemployed. The disgruntled coined a phrase for themselves with the acronym NEETS—which stands for ‘not in education employment or training’. In the summer of 2011, the NEETS came out in the streets of London and other British cities to communicate their message of despair to the political elite. David Cameron, the country’s patrician politician, drew the wrong message. The riots were not contained because his programme of austerity was cutting—and thus demoralising—the police force and other systems of support the society requires. But he attributed the protests, instead, to the parts of the society that were ‘sick’ (his word) not in despair. As David Cohen of *The New York Times* wrote, “the anxiety grows when governments are slashing benefits and pushing back retirement ages in attempts to deal with spiralling deficits. A working gerontocracy hardly helps the young. Brits from Tottenham to Teeside have watched the most patrician cabinet since Macmillan cutting everything from libraries to youth counselling services. There is a ‘No Future Revolt’.”¹³

In the summer of 2011, Germany appeared to be the only European country that had figured out part of what needed to be done. It was helped by remembering history when disgruntled youth, destroyed by the way the victors of the First World War, took their revenge on the German economy, and reacted politically and nastily. The youth took their revenge and put the Nazis in power. According to Roger Cohen cited above, “perhaps the society dealing best with these dilemmas is Germany. It has invested in a highly educated work force. It has matched workers’ skills to jobs. It has continued to make precision machinery others can’t make. It has fostered cooperation between industrialists and the government in defence of German jobs. The youth unemployment rate is under 10 per cent.”¹⁴

The West’s Weak Policy Response

For months before the United States arrived at the deadline of 2 August 2011 established by its Treasury Department when it would run out of money to pay the debt the country owed to both domestic and foreign creditors, two highly

divided political camps offered different solutions. The Democrats led by President Barack Obama—from behind rather than from the front, as one of his staff was quoted as saying by *The New Yorker*¹⁵—proposed slashing government spending by more than \$ 4 trillion over a period of ten years, from 2011 to 2021. Most of the proposed cuts would become effective later in the period, thus saving the economy from a fiscal shock while it was still in the process of recovering from the Great Recession. At the same time, taxes on the rich would be effectively but marginally increased. Most of the anticipated increase in tax revenues would come from closing the loopholes in the tax code used by the relatively rich. The Republicans, on the other hand, did not want any increase in tax revenues and wanted immediate cuts in government expenditure. Their programme would have affected the services and programmes on which the less well-to-do depended. The Republican plan would have also sharply reduced government's support of education, research and innovation on the ground that these activities were better left to private enterprise. Ultimately, a compromise was reached which avoided default by the United States but led to downgrade of the country's credit rating from AAA to AA+ by Standard & Poor's. The unseemly political wrangling and the downgrade spooked the financial markets and drove down consumer confidence. This further weakened the already weak recovery from the Great Recession. On 26 August, the US Department of Commerce further lowered the estimated GDP growth in the second quarter to 1 per cent on an annualized basis from the previous estimate of 1.2 per cent.

America's turn away from the type of government that provided the New Deal during the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt (1933-45) and the Great Society programmes during the time of Lyndon Johnson (1963-69) in favour of something small and less intrusive will have profound implications for the rest of the world, a subject that will be taken up later in this article.

With the political stalemate in the United States on the role and content of fiscal policy, the United States was left with only one option to save the economy from moving towards another dip-making the Great Recession of 2008-09 a "W" event. That option was on the monetary side of the policy equation. There were choices available to the Federal Reserve System (Fed), the country's central bank, to use its power over the level of interest rates and on the supply of money. By moving in this direction the central bank could have placed a floor under economic activity and saved the economy from plunging towards another dip. The Fed is less politically constrained than the executive and legislative branches of the government. It need not be affected by comments such as those made by Governor Rick Perry of Texas upon entering the US presidential race that any easing of money supply should be considered a treasonous act on the part of Ben Bernanke, the Fed chairman. "We would treat him pretty ugly down in

Texas” he declared. What could the Fed do to prevent the US slipping into the recession once again?

The answer came from Bernanke more than a decade ago in a 2000 paper written by him to list the options available to the policymakers after they had driven down the short term interest rates to near zero. This was done by Japan more than a decade ago and was the policy option adopted by the Bernanke Fed in dealing with the Great Recession. He suggested then that the Bank of Japan could get the economy moving again by opting for a number of unconventional policies. These could include: purchase of long-term debt in order to push down interest rates which would encourage investment by businesses and home purchase by households; to announce that short-term interest rates would remain near zero while setting a target of 3 to 4 per cent for inflation in order to discourage hoarding of cash by businesses and individuals; and to achieve a substantial depreciation of the currency in order to encourage exports. He accused the Japanese authorities from suffering from “self induced paralysis.”¹⁶

However, none of these options were mentioned by Bernanke in his address at Jackson Hole at the annual meeting of the central bankers in August 2011 in the American state of Wyoming. Why did the Fed chairman not use his own recipe? Paul Krugman provided an answer in his column for the *The New York Times*. “The larger answer, however, is outside political pressure. Last year, the Fed actually did institute a policy of buying long-term debt, generally known as ‘quantitative easing’. But it faced a political backlash out of all proportion to its modest effect on the economy culminating in Mr. Perry’s declaration.”¹⁷ As Frank Bruni, a columnist also writing for *The New York Times* wrote, reflecting the national mood in the summer of 2011 “‘down’ was the dominant syllable, a suffix and a prefix both.” President Obama announced a drawdown of troops in Afghanistan, economists talked ceaselessly of the ‘downturn’; there was also the *downgrade* courtesy of Standard & Poor’s. “...this summer crystallized a growing sense that our country’s can-do spirit was being replaced by a make-do resignation, and that our best days might be behind us.”¹⁸

The Response from the Populous Countries of the Asian Mainland

Only time will tell whether the two revolutions in the West—one seeking the downsizing of the western state, the other wanting its expansion to deal with the many problems the societies face in this part of the world will neutralise each other and not produce a lasting change. But what they will not be able to deal with is the demographic transition that has opened up opportunities for the people-abundant countries in Asia. The West’s turn away from letting the state play an important role in shaping the structure of its economy and society will have important consequences for the entire world. Some of these will be negative, some positive. They will be positive at least for those countries whose

leaders are able to look into the future not only to meet the challenges it will bring but also make use of the opportunities that may be on offer. That is the main theme of this chapter: how the four most populous countries of the Asian mainland can benefit from the enormous changes that are underway in the West. The opportunities that are opening up for these countries will need the adoption by them of public policies that, after correctly reading the future, produce responses that are the best for their citizens. There are times in human history when those who have been put in charge of public policymaking can take their societies in one of two possible directions. They can read the environment in which they are operating, see opportunities in it for their people, and adopt policies and practices to realise them. Or, like the proverbial deer in the headlights, the fast-moving events with which they must deal with paralyse them and they let the moment pass.

The great ideological divide in most of the countries of the West has resulted in the rise of leaders who, by redefining the role of the state, will have their countries lose the centuries-old momentum that has taken their societies to unimaginable heights. But they seem quite willing to climb down from these heights, perhaps not realizing that that is what happens when policymakers lack vision. The space they seem happy to vacate can be occupied by the populous countries of Asia. But to do so will also need leadership and vision on the part of these countries. These nations have a demographic advantage that economists have only lately begun to recognize. Their populations are not only large; they are also very young. If the states get properly organised they can become large exporters of goods and services that use knowledge rather than brawn and which the nations in the West will not be able to produce since the public sector that must help to achieve that is being scaled down.

Some of the public policy choices could—perhaps should—be made in the context of the four large countries of mainland Asia. They will of course have to be tailored to meet their own needs and circumstances even while walking the tightrope of regional bonhomie. China will need to work out how it will continue to make the transition to an open market while continuing to limit the openness of the political system. It will also have to determine the role it will need to play in shaping the global economy now that it has become the world's second largest economy and may, by 2015, overtake the United States. China has also begun to project its growing economic strength into a military presence in its immediate neighbourhood. In July 2011, it launched its first aircraft carrier which will be used as training vessel for the operation of others that will follow and become part of its expanding naval fleet.

The Indian economic history offers a good example of how state policy can take the economy in an entirely different and unexpected direction. The country is in the process of leapfrogging by crossing over from low-skill activities to

those that demand highly developed skills. Much of its impressive performance of recent years is the result not so much of strategic design as of a series of happy circumstance. In the 1950s, Jawaharlal Nehru, the country's first prime minister, had the state invest in several institutes of science and technology. These institutions produced more graduates than the slow growing Indian economy could absorb. With the less constrained immigration policies in North America in place at that time, thousands of highly trained Indians moved to the United States and Canada. There they rose in the ranks of several important corporations that specialized in new technologies. When the Y2K scare made the corporate world nervous and the old programmes had to be rewritten in the languages that were still in use in India, this work was outsourced to the firms in the country. The rest is history. In other words it was the state—the one under Nehru—that lit the spark that produced the remarkable transformation and modernisation of the Indian economy. The same kind of spark needs to be lit now and only the state can do the job. But as will be discussed later the state in India and other South Asian countries is weakening.

India, after a remarkable, two decades long, record of uninterrupted high rate of economic growth, is losing some of its momentum. Large segments of its population remain unaffected by the economy's rapid growth. In the middle of 2011, the country was convulsed by the popular reaction to several incidents of large-scale corruption on the part of some senior elected officials, some members of the bureaucracy, and by some officers of the military. Being a vibrant democracy it will have to find a way out of the resentment that has built up within a short period of time. The resort to the street by the supporters of Anna Hazare, an anti-corruption activist, is part of the Indian political tradition. Hazare and his followers wanted the Indian parliament to pass legislation establishing a credible institution to ensure that all public officials are accountable for their actions. While the parliament was prepared to go in that direction, it was not ready to include the prime minister and the judiciary in the mandate of the proposed agency. Hazare proceeded to fast, the movement gained traction in the country, and the government and parliament relented. After 13 days, the activist on 27 August broke his fast following the adoption by Parliament of a non-binding resolution that incorporated most of his demands. Those who turned to mass agitation to achieve political objectives were certain to have been influenced by the street-led uprising in the Arab world. But the tactics may undermine the working of Indian democracy, a position taken by Manmohan Singh, the country's prime minister to explain the brief incarceration of Hazare.

Bangladesh, one of the hundred million-plus population countries on Asia Mainland, has surprised most analysts with the steady progress it has made since it gained independence from Pakistan in December 1971. Then Henry Kissinger, the US Secretary of State, famously called the country "an international basket case", with its survival dependent on the largesse provided by the West. However,

events showed that not only did it not need the unending support of foreign governments to keep its economy afloat, it developed one of the more dynamic garments industries in the world. When the government was still in the process of being organised following the end of the bitter civil war fought with West Pakistan, some of its citizens stepped forward to establish non-government organisations to provide services to the very impoverished people. Two of these NGOs, the BRAC and the Grameen Bank, not only helped the country to deal with the pangs of birth but went on to play important roles in other parts of the developing world. Grameen Bank and its founder Muhammad Yunus were awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006.

Bangladesh's economic success has not translated into political stability. It has lived through a number of coups by the military with long periods of rule by the men in uniform. It is now a two-party system, both led by women who occupy their respective positions because of the men in their lives who had, at one time, governed the state. Sheikh Hasina, who held prime minister's position twice in Bangladesh's forty year history is the daughter of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the country's founder. He was assassinated in 1975 only three years after the country's birth. She is bitterly opposed by Khaleda Zia, the wife of the country's first military president, who was assassinated in 1980 while in office.

Pakistan, the fourth country in this group has the weakest economy, a highly troubled society, and an unsettled political system. Some have said—including Hillary Clinton, the United States Secretary of State—that the country is faced with an existential threat. The World Bank's 2011 *World Development Report* includes the country among what it labels as fragile states.¹⁹ It is in the strategic interest of both China and India to ensure that the country does not stumble so badly that it succumbs to and eventually falls into the hands of some of the extremist forces that are operating in the country. A fracturing—even a greatly unstable—Pakistan will not be good for its neighbourhood, certainly not for China and India.

Some of the responses by mainland Asia to the developing situation in the West should influence bilateral relationships—Pakistan working with China, China working with India, and India working with Pakistan, and Bangladesh working with India and China. Some of this is already happening. Snubbed by the United States, Pakistan has turned to China for economic assistance, military support and simply some encouragement in what Islamabad considers to be a very unfriendly world. Islamabad and Beijing were already engaged in preparing for the celebration of the 50th year of their mutual recognition when relations with the United States soured. Since then the two countries have further strengthened what both call an “all weather friendship”. While Beijing is reluctant to get very involved in Pakistan's growing rift with the United States, it is prepared

to give signals to the world that it does support Islamabad in many ways. One example of this is the launch of a Pakistani satellite by a Chinese rocket on 11 August 2011. Pakistan was happy to reciprocate in many different ways. There were reports in the Western press that Islamabad had allowed the Chinese to examine the tail of the helicopter that crashed when the Navy Seals captured Osama bin Laden. The Black Hawk helicopter used the “stealth” technology on which the Chinese were also working.²⁰

Both Beijing and New Delhi continue to watch other with some suspicion: India remains disturbed that China holds some of the territories it considers its own and has not withdrawn its claim to the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, and Beijing is unhappy that New Delhi has given refuge to the Dalai Lama. Despite this, however, the two countries have learnt to work with one another. This is particularly the case in bilateral trade which has grown rapidly and now amounts to over \$40 billion and rising. Not only does the value of the goods that flow between the two countries add up to an impressive amount, the amount is also increasing rapidly.

After almost three years of the freezing of higher level contacts between India and Pakistan, the relations between the two states have begun to thaw. Hina Rabbani Khar, Pakistan’s new foreign minister on 27 July 2011 created a great deal of excitement in India by her persona. She also seemed to have succeeded in relaunching the stalled dialogue. According to Rajshree Jetly, writing for the Institute of South Asian Studies, “this time terrorism was not allowed to become a stumbling block. New Delhi and Islamabad remained committed to carry on with the talk, which came just two weeks after the triple bomb blasts in Mumbai on 13 July 2011. India resisted from jumping to conclusions or indulging in a blame game until investigations of the July 2011 attacks were completed. In a similar vein, Pakistan also resisted from making any remarks on India’s alleged role in aiding the insurgency in Baluchistan.”²¹ A few days after this visit, the Indian commerce minister invited his Pakistani counterpart for talks on trade. The two met in September and agreed to work on improving trading relations.

The decision on 2 November 2011 by the Pakistani cabinet to grant the “most favored nation” status to India in matters pertaining to trade is a tectonic shift in the country’s relations with its large neighbour. India had awarded the MFN status to Pakistan in 1996 soon after joining the WTO. Pakistan was also obliged to give to all members of WTO—and that included India—the same status. But Islamabad refused in the mistaken belief that it could use it as a lever to get concessions from New Delhi on Kashmir. As most economists have argued, improving trade and economic relations with India would bring greater benefits to Pakistan, the smaller of the two economies, than to India. If trade were to be used as a lever, India has greater power than its neighbour, Pakistan.

The Pakistani decision concerning the grant of MFN status was received with enthusiasm by the Indian leadership. Anand Sharma, India's commerce minister, hailed it as part of a "paradigm shift" and said that New Delhi "deeply appreciated" the move. It will be beneficial for both countries, he said. Pakistan's initiative has the support of its powerful military which had continued to look at India with suspicion. The military's approval was implied by Firdos Ashiq Awan, Pakistan's information minister in announcing the cabinet's decision. "This was decision was taken in the national interest and all stakeholders, including our defence institutions were on board," she told the press.

The business community on both sides of the border applauded the move. Many believed there would be almost immediate benefits in terms of reducing the transaction costs of doing business between the two countries. The Federation of Indian Export Organisations estimated that trade between the two nations could double from current levels of about \$2.7 billion a year simply by the rerouting of goods currently sent via Dubai, and through some other channels. But according to one newspaper report, "the Confederation of Indian Industry cautioned that road blocks such as stringent visa rules, non-tariff barriers and communication problems still need to be dismantled and more trade routes opened up"²² for full benefits to be realised.

There is now distinct warming of relations between Bangladesh with India. The latter has provided the former with a large soft loan; the two settled their boundaries during the visit of India's Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Dhaka in September 2011. Bangladesh also seems ready to grant transit rights to India that would connect that country's western states with those in the east. Ever since the partition of British India in 1947 and the creation of India and Pakistan as independent but rival states and even after Pakistan's 1971 split and the creation of Bangladesh, India was denied access to the eastern states. It had to use the narrow strip of land appropriately called the "chicken's neck" as the connection between the two parts. Iftekhar Chowdhury, Bangladesh's former foreign minister, described the evolving relationship between the two countries in these words: "If India has a disproportionate responsibility to improve ties, Bangladesh has its own share, for as the Bengali saying goes, it takes two to clap hands."²³

Not only should these four countries work into their domestic strategies the opportunities being created by the changes in the West—changes that will result from the demographic transition taking place and the possible redefinition of the role of state—they should also further their bilateral relations between one another. And they should work together to devise a strategy that will take advantage of the transformation of the West. Such an approach may lead to informal contacts to pursue common interests. This book, however, will suggest a more formal arrangement may be needed that would rely on turning into assets the great advantages these four countries have in building their future.

This should be done by taking cognizance of the on-going transformation in the West.

Conclusion

There are many political forces in the West—mostly in the Anglo-Saxon world—that are posing serious questions about the role of the state. How big should it be; what should be its functions; how much space should it surrender to the private sector? Should some of the functions the federal government in the United States has acquired be the responsibility of the state governments? Did the American founders, while writing the constitution of the country, wish to keep the government close to the people? If that is the case, shouldn't the federal government step back and allow the states to perform the functions that are legitimately and constitutionally theirs?

Similar questions are being asked in Britain but in a somewhat abstract form in the absence of a written constitution. In light of all this there is a serious effort in many parts of the West to push the state back from some of the space it now occupies. If that were to happen—and there is a strong probability that it will—this new and considerably limited role of the state in many western societies will create opportunities for the populous countries of South Asia. At first glance, the link between the possible decline of the state and the opportunities it might create for South Asia is not immediately obvious but such a link can be made to exist if the countries in the region work together and come up with a new strategy of growth. This is where demography enters the picture.

There is a profound asymmetry in the way demographic situations are developing in the West and in the populous countries of South Asia. The rate of human fertility has declined sharply in most of the countries in the West. The result of this is that a number of countries are now seeing the size of their populations declining while those in South Asia will continue to increase for several decades. The South Asian populations will remain young for several more decades while those in the West, due to low fertility rate, are expected to age rapidly. The demographic change in the West will have two consequences. One, it will not have young people in the numbers needed by the economies where knowledge rather than material inputs are the main contributors to growth. In most Western countries, the structure of the economy is dominated by the service sector and within the service sector by knowledge intensive activities. As Alan Greenspan once put it, most products produced and consumed by the West are becoming lighter; they do not need as much material to fabricate but require a great deal of knowledge. And knowledge is weightless. This means that the workforce needed for these types of economies must be very well trained in modern skills. This also means that the state and the companies must invest large amounts in research development. It is interesting that the largest acquisition

of company done by Google until now is Motorola Mobile that has on its books a large number of patents which will become the basis of the transformation of Google from a search engine to the manufacturer of sophisticated devices powered by new operating systems and proprietary applications.

If the past is any guide, the work force needed by the new economy in the West will be developed only if the state invests heavily in higher education. It is not a coincidence that the major centers of IT in the United States developed around the universities that needed great deal of state support. California's Silicon Valley drew upon Stanford and Berkeley; Boston's Route 128 depended on MIT and Harvard; and North Carolina's Research Triangle had the support of Duke and Chapel Hill. These institutions were either run by the state or received significant amount of funding from the government. Some of the major developments of the last few decades, including the development of the internet become possible with the heavy involvement of the state.

Government support for research, development and skill development would be placed in jeopardy if the political forces such as the Tea Party movement in the United States carry the day. This would seriously compromise the ability of the United States and other Western countries likely to be affected by this move towards small governments to deliver the services and products the citizens of these countries need and will demand. This is where the populous countries of South Asia enter the picture. If they can organize their own governments to produce the manpower needed by the new economies, they should be able to fill the gap and become major suppliers to the West. However, before they are able to do this they will need to have an effective state that can prepare the citizenry to take up this challenge and realize its opportunity. Unfortunately, most South Asian states, for several different reasons, are seeing the weakening of the state. This is not occurring because of the success of a political move that, for ideological reasons, does not want a powerful state. It is happening because the state in South Asia is not able to meet the political, social and economic challenges of the times.

There is now palpable unhappiness on the part of the citizenry in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan with the working of the state. In Bangladesh, the state has been weakened by the enormous rivalry between two political groups that have been fighting it out to control the state. This quarrel became so grim in 2007, that the president, under the pressure of the military, entrusted the country to the care of an interim government of technocrats that steadied the ship of the state. However, after a two-year interregnum, the political parties are at each other's throats one again. In India, there is popular disgust at the incidents of major corruption committed by senior public officials, both elected and non-elected. The victory scored by the activist Anna Hazare has further weakened the weak government headed by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. In Pakistan,

the civilian government has not proved equal to the task of handling the various problems the country faces. It has failed to stabilize the economy, overcome terrorism, and improve relations between the federal government and the provinces.

This chapter suggests an arrangement among four countries of the Asian mainland that have large populations which can be put to use to benefit from the enormous structural changes taking place in the West. The analysis, therefore, is stretched beyond South Asia and includes China, currently the world's largest country in terms of the size of its population. The obvious conclusion to be drawn from this is that while the West is presenting an extraordinary opportunity to turn the young populations in Asia, including those in China, into enormous economic assets, the states in the area will have to improve their own performance first. Weak states will not be up to the challenge.



Notes

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3

Cooperative Security Framework in South Asia: A Bangladeshi Perspective

Farooq Sobhan

The end of the Cold War and the subsequent transformation of the global distribution of power from a bi-polar to a multi-polar structure had profound ramifications on the perception of security, and resulted in “regionalism” receiving a renewed impetus as a means of sustaining peace and stability. Despite the prominence of the United Nations in peacekeeping activities and the continued ability of the great powers to intervene around the globe, the post-Cold War period was marked by a decline in the regulation of regional conflicts by superpowers. This was supplanted by increased responsibility for countries to manage their own conflicts, thus creating the scope for greater regional cooperation.¹

Globalisation has reduced the importance of the nation state, borders have become irrelevant; internal and external threats have in many cases merged and become indistinguishable. Supranational bodies espousing the concepts of interdependence and collective security are becoming increasingly important in shaping the geo-political matrix of the 21st century. There is an increasing trend towards securing countries beyond their national boundaries in recognition of the concept that non-traditional threats (NTS) cannot be dealt with in isolation and that the security problems of one nation can have an adverse impact both on bilateral relations between states as well as on the region as a whole.

Regional Cooperation Agreements (RCA), many of which have existed prior to the end of the Cold War, experienced remarkable transformations in their roles during the 1990s. Globalisation and the threat posed by non-traditional security concerns and terrorism vis-à-vis traditional security, have greatly altered the role of NATO, EU, and OSCE and resulted in the formation of relatively

new RCAs, such as the African Union (AU). RCAs have generally produced vastly dissimilar results. Some, such as the EU, OSCE, AU and NATO have witnessed a remarkable expansion in responding to security issues and problems; the degree of collaboration on tackling traditional and non-traditional security issues has increased quite visibly. Other RCAs such as the ASEAN and the GCC, while making significant progress towards facilitating dialogue and trust building measures on security concerns of common interest, have either failed to resolve regional disputes and integrate key regional states or failed to practically apply progress made through the dialogues and agreements in tackling non-traditional security risks.²

South Asia is home to some of the poorest people in the world, being only second to Sub-Saharan Africa in terms of relative poverty.³ All South Asian countries have emerged from colonialism only in the last century. Poverty and underdevelopment are endemic throughout the region. Ethnic, religious and territorial conflicts have contributed to the geopolitical volatility leading to sporadic inter and intra-state conflicts. Exacerbation of the existing economic, political and social problems is the critical threat posed by NTS issues. Despite sharing a common history, cultural and religious similarities, South Asia remains one of the least integrated regions in the world. In the past, neither the critical regional issues of human security nor the examples set by robust regionalism in South East Asia were enough to overcome decades of mistrust and launch this region towards a cooperative security agreement.⁴

SAARC was envisioned initially as an organisation that would facilitate peace, economic integration and prosperity in the region. In the past, any initiative within the framework of SAARC to discuss cooperation on issues of traditional and non-traditional security threats was not possible since it was argued that discussion of such issues was outside the terms of reference of SAARC. However, in recent years, most notably at the last four SAARC summits, the subject of combating terrorism within South Asia has been given the highest priority. The need for joint action on food, water, environmental, human and energy security have also been highlighted in SAARC declarations, at both the summit and ministerial levels. Both traditional and non-traditional security issues are now being addressed by several SAARC member states within the framework of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and also within SAARC itself.

The confluence of positive trends in regionalism and prevalence of NTS threats has resulted in the growing acceptance within the region of the need for a comprehensive security framework in South Asia. Although the initiatives by SAARC are encouraging, the lack of a security framework akin to the ARF or AU makes it very difficult to translate its recommendations into actionable programmes. An end to regional conflicts is a prerequisite to regionalism and thus the draft cooperative security framework envisioned in this paper includes

confidence building measures as a key initiative. The impediments to the creation of such a framework are daunting but can be overcome through innovation and compromise, in the light of the severity of the threats faced by the region. Although much can be learned from regional cooperative bodies in other parts of the world, the historical, geopolitical and cultural uniqueness of South Asia must be taken into consideration in designing a security framework in the region.

This chapter aims to envision a cooperative security framework for South Asia by undertaking an analysis of the range of traditional and non-traditional threats prevalent in the region, past and current initiatives by SAARC to respond to these threats or challenges and an overview of the components of the proposed framework. A concise analysis of the shortcomings and successes of similar initiatives in other parts of the world is undertaken to evaluate their applicability in the South Asian context. The historical, geopolitical and cultural uniqueness of South Asia must be taken into consideration when emulating characteristics of regional frameworks from incongruous socio-political regions, as even the most robust medium of multilateral cooperation will be ineffective when applied without accounting for regional disparities. As a thorough understanding of ground realities is a prerequisite to the formation of a pragmatic security framework, the preliminary section of this report undertakes a holistic interpretation of the prevailing economic, political and social dynamics in South Asia, as well as the range of traditional and non-traditional threats impacting on human security.

In order to envision a regional security framework in South Asia, the effectiveness of SAARC as a regional organisation in the context of history, constraints and contemporary challenges, particularly in the field of security, is examined. Accounting for the magnitude of security threats in South Asia and the ineffectiveness of national security apparatuses, this paper conceptualizes the constituents of a cohesive and holistic security framework. Since incorporating the proposed framework within SAARC would require amendments to the SAARC Charter, the regional security framework envisioned in this paper is conceptualized as an entity or mechanism, independent of SAARC. In the future, plausible pathways could be examined to incorporate the framework within SAARC, following necessary amendments to the SAARC Charter and its organisational structure. Although a pragmatic evaluation of the manifold constraints to a cooperative security framework reveals severe deterrents, this paper concludes that contemporary initiatives by South Asian countries to engage each other multilaterally have led to the realisation, at the highest political level, that an effective security framework has now become necessary to ensure the safety and security of South Asia.

An Overview of South Asia

The South Asian region, comprising Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka has about 23 per cent of the world's population and 15 per cent of the world's arable land, but receives less than 1 per cent of global foreign investment and tourism revenues, and accounts for only 2 per cent of global GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and 1.2 per cent of world trade. Furthermore, South Asia is still home to about 410 million of the 720 million poor living in the Asia-Pacific region despite the rapid economic growth in India and, to a lesser extent, other countries in the region. Of the 1.4 billion people in South Asia, 42 per cent or 488 million live on less than a dollar a day.⁵ In addition, key indicators suggest that social development still remains relatively low when compared to other Asian regions.⁶ In terms of human development, all the above countries, with the exception of Sri Lanka, rank low. The United Nations Development Project's (UNDP) Human Development Report of 2010 states that of the 169 countries for which the Human Development Index (HDI) was calculated, the selected countries were ranked as follows: Bangladesh 129, India 119, Nepal 138, Pakistan 125 and Sri Lanka, 91.⁷

Compounding the formidable economic and social challenges facing South Asia are numerous traditional and non-traditional security threats. Yet, while South Asian countries confront both military and human security dilemmas, national budgets tend to favour military spending. Excessive spending on defence continues to have an adverse impact on the capacity of the countries in the region to provide adequate resources to spend on human security and NTS programmes. South Asia's ratio of military expenditure as a percentage of GDP is one of the highest in the world. According to a 2009 report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), during 1998-2008, emphasis on defence budgets resulted in a 41 per cent increase in military spending in the region—from \$21.9 billion in 1999 to \$30.9 billion in 2008.⁸ This rate of increase is the highest in the world. In 2009, India spent 2.7 per cent of its GDP on defence; Pakistan, 3 per cent; Bangladesh, 1.1 per cent; Sri Lanka 3.5 per cent and Nepal 1.5 per cent.⁹ The aggregated regional defence spending by these South Asian countries was 11.8 per cent of GDP in 2009. If South Asian countries continue to spend excessively on military security, as most presently do, this will inevitably undermine their capacity to support programmes that address issues related to human security. This is one of the principal reasons why the level of poverty continues to remain so high in South Asia.

Furthermore, far from mitigating security threats, the substantial diversion of resources has helped make South Asia one of the major flashpoints in the world, with domestic compulsions and threat perceptions further fueling the existing arms race between India and Pakistan. India has been the world's largest importer of armaments, aircraft and other defence equipment over the last five

years¹⁰ and its defence spending for 2010 was \$41 billion.¹¹ Pakistan's arms imports increased by 128 per cent from the previous five year period and total military defence expenditure for 2010 amounted to \$5 billion.¹² Threat perceptions in the region are also influenced by concerns, both within the region and internationally, about the lack of adequate safeguard measures to prevent nuclear weapons from falling into the hands of terrorists, or even an accidental use of nuclear weapons or a false alarm provoking a nuclear conflict between India and Pakistan.¹³

Security Threats in South Asia and Responses by SAARC

South Asia is plagued, perhaps more than ever before, by multiple security threats. In many cases, traditional security threats have been aggravated by NTS threats, though it is only in recent years that policymakers have begun thinking of the challenges facing their countries and the region as a whole as NTS issues. Further aggravating the security of the region are the adverse economic and political ramifications of transnational terrorism and transnational crime. Countries in South Asia are beginning to comprehend the inadequacy of national security apparatuses in countering traditional and non-traditional risks and this is reflected by the tentative steps taken by SAARC to envision multilateral solutions.

Since its inception more than two decades ago, the viability of SAARC as an effective medium of cooperation in South Asia has often come under scrutiny. Some of the criticism of SAARC, mainly on the low trade volume between member-states, despite being conceived as a vehicle for economic cooperation, as well as the unwillingness to deliberate on contentious but critical issues of regional security, is well founded. Despite this, while the slow rate of progress in addressing a range of urgent issues has hampered timely mitigation, recent initiatives have espoused positive trends in inter-state security cooperation.

The effectiveness of SAARC as a cooperative body must be measured in terms of its ability to successfully respond to critical security threats facing the region. This section discusses traditional security risks and five key NTS challenges that are critically important to South Asia, followed by an analysis of the insidious proliferation of transnational crime and transnational terrorism in the region. An assessment of each security threat is followed by an evaluation of the limitations of the contemporary security initiatives undertaken by SAARC and conceptualizing an effective response to each of these critical threats through the establishment of a cooperative security framework.

Traditional Security: The dominant strategic impediment to robust regionalism in South Asia has been attributed to the animosity between the two nuclear-armed states in the region, Pakistan and India, over the disputed region of Kashmir. Further hampering multilateral ties are regional power imbalances in the region, overt nationalism and ethnic heterogeneity which have led to mistrust

and suspicion. As a result, security concerns of individual states have been met with seeking assistance from countries outside the region, rather than through a regional initiative.¹⁴

Traditional Security under SAARC: On the issue of sovereignty and conflict resolution, the SAARC Charter of Democracy states the desire of “promoting peace, stability... particularly respect for the principles of sovereign equality, territorial integrity, national independence, non-use of force and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and peaceful settlement of all disputes”. Despite this, SAARC has not played a role in conflict resolution between India and Pakistan on the Kashmir issue and the various insurgencies that have plagued almost every country in the subcontinent. This can be attributed to the fact that discussion of such issues was considered as outside the terms of reference of the SAARC Charter.

Thus a cooperative security framework that is independent of SAARC could serve as a facilitating body to facilitate confidence building, preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution. Confidence building and conflict resolution thus make up the preliminary and fundamental aspect of the proposed security framework, as the viability of collaboration on NTS and other security issues is contingent on the maintenance of peace and stability through a regional body responsible for international arbitration. Thus the preliminary component of the framework would firstly incorporate confidence building measures, facilitate the resolution of territorial, maritime and internal disputes through dialogue and advocacy and undertake preventive diplomacy. A concerted effort by all state, private and external actors is required for South Asian nations to overcome decades of mistrust and try and resolve some of the long standing self-destructive conflicts.

Food and Water Security: Substantial increases in food prices are forcing governments and development agencies in South Asia to reassess the policies for agriculture, food security, and international trade that they have pursued over the past three decades. In South Asia, food costs constitute the major portion of the average household’s expenditure. If food prices continue to rise without a matching increase in salaries and incomes of people at the bottom of the economic ladder, it is estimated that approximately 100 million people could be pushed back into poverty, generating a host of political, social, economic, and environmental challenges.¹⁵ A well-coordinated approach is clearly required to tackle the problem of food security at both the national and the regional level.

Along with the issues related to food, access to safe drinking water and sharing of water resources between the countries in South Asia have become matters of critical importance. In many South Asian cities, water services are inadequate and do not meet minimum standards for safe drinking water. Nearly

63 per cent of the region's population has no access to sanitation facilities, while 11 per cent of the population does not have access to safe drinking water. Most South Asian countries are also plagued by water pollution and declining water quality and groundwater levels. The pollution caused by widespread construction and infrastructure projects is not confined to individual countries but affects the entire region.

Food and Water Security under SAARC: At the fifteenth SAARC summit, held in Colombo in August 2008, the summit declaration called for an "Extraordinary Meeting of the Agriculture Ministers of the Member States" in view of the "emerging global situation of reduced food availability and worldwide rise in food prices."¹⁶ The heads of states/governments emphasized the need for drafting the SAARC Agriculture Perspective 2020. The summit declaration also highlighted the importance of identifying and implementing common short to medium-term regional strategies and collaborative projects. The Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) has recently approved a technical cooperation project under SAARC, paving the way for implementation of the project titled "Regional Strategy and Regional Programme for Food Security." These projects would aim to increase food production and investment in agriculture research and agro-based industries; prevention of soil degradation; development and sharing of agricultural technologies; sharing of best practices in procurement and distribution; and management of risks related to climate change and disease.¹⁷ In addition, the heads of states/governments directed that the SAARC Food Bank be urgently operationalized. The summit declaration further stressed the need to mobilize resources and find mechanisms to deal with emerging challenges relating to food security in order to capitalize on available opportunities and address risks.

The decisive step taken by SAARC to deliberate on burgeoning food security threats is a positive step towards multilateral cooperation. However, although papers such as the "Water Resources Management for Agriculture in SAARC Countries" have been debated by the Technical Committee on Agriculture and Rural Development (TCARD), the contentious issue of sharing of water resources has been excluded from SAARC deliberations. Although the 'Agriculture Perspective 2020' articulated the long-term regional challenges in production augmentation, natural resource management, bio-safety and bio-security and food safety, SAARC has not yet managed to undertake definitive steps in response to the recognised food and water security issues. Conceptualizing water and food security within an agricultural cooperative scheme such as the TCARD may not give it the impetus and ranges of collaboration that is required to envision and operationalize responses to these pressing issues. The regional security issues of food and water resources can be holistically addressed within a cooperative security framework, which would include inputs by Foreign and Water Ministries

and NGOs in addition to Agricultural Ministries. Within the framework, strategic regional initiatives could be taken on securing resources, increasing production, implementing and maintaining a food bank and vetting all FAO and TCARD suggestions on food and water resources.

Health Security: Warnings about the threat of the next global pandemic, reflected in the World Economic Forum's 2006 report on global risks, have increasingly gained traction in policy circles.¹⁸ Adding to this threat is the re-emergence of new strains of older diseases such as tuberculosis (TB) and cholera that are increasingly resistant to medical treatment.

As reported by Syed Rifaat Hussain, the proliferation of AIDS, the "fourth ranking cause of death in the world," has the potential to "destroy social and economic development and break down social and governance structures." Furthermore, "the impact of the epidemic aggravates the vulnerabilities of the weakest groups in society, including women, children and the poor." Approximately 5.1 million people in India, 74,000 people in Pakistan and 61,000 people in Nepal have been infected, making South Asia "home to the second highest number of people living with HIV/AIDS, around 13 per cent of the world total". The US National Intelligence Council estimated in 2008 that India's HIV/AIDS patients would increase "from 5.1 million to 20 million by 2010."¹⁹ Since India shares a porous border with its neighbors, cross-border movement of infected patients poses severe threats to Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka.

Furthermore, the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security Studies in Asia (NTS-Asia) argues that "the unprecedented scale of movement of people and goods, along with other 'disease multipliers' such as the misuse or over-use of antibiotics, rapid urbanisation in 'mega-cities' with poor sanitation and weak health care infrastructures, exacerbates the possibility of a global pandemic and threatens to overwhelm the health care capacities of many of Asia's states."²⁰ NTS-Asia adds that responding to such a challenge requires collective action among member states, otherwise it will remain difficult for single states, given the conflict of interests among relevant actors. The countries in the region should work together to attain a regional consensus and mobilize collective action for combating infectious diseases.

Health Security under SAARC: The SAARC Regional Strategy on HIV and AIDS, the ministerial meetings of the Health Ministers and the SAARC Tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS Centre are important initiatives taken by SAARC to tackle the growing threat of STDs and pandemics in the region. Although the strategies and deliberations are vital, not much has progressed to the operational stage. Consensus on strategies to effectively tackle regional health issues can only be achieved by viewing health security as a regional security issue.

Thus health security must be included in the proposed regional security framework to facilitate collaboration not just between the Health Ministries, but also the Home Ministries, health practitioners and security experts. The operational responsibilities of the health security division with the framework could include the facilitation of collaborative research on health issues, maintain a warning system in regard to pandemics, and implement multilateral medical initiatives in regions adversely affected by the outbreak of health crises.

Environmental Security Disaster Management and Climate Change: Hussain reports that “South Asia is among the world’s most vulnerable regions to both natural and man-made disasters... Over the last 25 years, disasters have killed nearly half a million people in South Asia” and “inflicted colossal financial damages worth US \$59 [billion].”²¹ The *South Asian Disaster Report 2005* warned that the “region has become a neighborhood of disasters.”²² The *South Asia Disaster Report 2008* states that “South Asia recorded 128 natural disaster events between 2006 and 2008. Ninety-three percent of these were of hydro-meteorological origin. Eighty-six incidences of flooding were reported, with nearly 8000 lives lost. India had by far the highest number of disaster events, but flooding in Bangladesh claimed the most lives.”²³ The importance of environmental security is not confined to man-made and natural disasters but also is reflected in issues of environmental degradation and sustainability. As Hussain suggests, South Asia as a region is characterized by extremely high environmental stress resulting from floods, scarcity of water, high urban population density, energy shortages, deforestation, and air pollution.²⁴ The International Symposium on Climate Change and Food Security in 2008 portrayed the significance of this regional threat by stating that “Climate change has multi-dimensional effects on agro-systems in South Asia including increases in temperature, decline in fresh water availability, sea level rise, glacial melting in the Himalayas, frequency and magnitude of natural disasters and shifting of cropping zones.”²⁵ According to the fourth assessment by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2007), future projections on climate change indicate that South Asia will experience increasing temperatures in the 21st century,²⁶ leading to adverse effects on ecology, which in turn will exacerbate threats to human security. The livelihoods of subsistence farmers and fishermen in South Asia are endangered due to soil degradation, droughts, desertification, drying up of rivers and increases in salinity of fresh water resources. River erosion and increases in the severity of storms and flooding will cause large scale urban migration, creating upward pressure on housing, infrastructure and employment and may be a cause for conflict.²⁷ Climate change is thus expected to exacerbate the existing vulnerabilities in South Asia, leading to the further depletion of scarce food and water resources, augmenting migration and increasing the number of internally displaced people.

Environmental Security, Disaster Management and Climate Change under SAARC: Despite the launching of the South Asian Environment Outlook, the ranges of the environmental security threats in South Asia are not being properly mitigated through SAARC.

Environmental security would thus be an inherent component of a regional security framework. The environmental security component of the framework would execute the vetting of reports such as the South Asia Environment Outlook 2009 and apply their recommendations, undertake multilateral capacity building initiatives, collaborative exercises for rescue personnel, undertake adequate measures to protect natural resources and negate the impact of climate change. In addition to the collaboration of government agencies, non-state actors, think tanks and environmental experts should also be encouraged to participate in deliberations on mitigating environmental threats.

Irregular Migration and Human Trafficking: Regional migration has risen to the top of the security agenda in South Asia, due in part to concerns that irregular migration flows could result in extremist elements entering into a country in a clandestine way and then engage in acts of terrorism or organised crime resulting in undermining the security of the country which has been exposed to the unregulated entry of persons into the country. Concerns relating to migration although in most cases are played up and exaggerated to serve the interest of some political parties, especially prior to elections, given the impact of migration patterns on national security interests and interstate political relations, this important development within South Asia, has become a highly emotive issue and will need to be addressed. Some may even argue that migration management has become a critical issue in South Asia. It should also be stressed that throughout South Asia two types of migration are taking place—across borders and within individual countries. Regional migration in South Asia is generally caused by human rights violations, economic deprivation and poverty, ethnic and communal conflicts, civil or internal wars, scarcity of water and climate change. Migration is frequently linked with other security challenges, such as armed violence, drugs, human trafficking, and proliferation of organised crime, in electioneering, ethnic struggles, and political rivalries. Human trafficking has emerged as a major security concern due to the porous South Asian borders and women and girls are trafficked to India, Pakistan, and Middle Eastern countries, with India, as Hussain reports, emerging as a major source, transit corridor, and host country for trafficked populations owing to its size and central location.²⁸ Interlinked with the issue of illegal migration and human trafficking is the exploitation of women and children through forced prostitution and sex slavery contributing to the spread of HIV and STDs in the region.

Irregular Migration and Human Trafficking under SAARC: SAARC has not yet taken decisive steps to address the pressing issue of irregular migration and

human trafficking. Indeed, one criticism of the SAARC Convention is that it emphasizes the human rights abuses associated with trafficking but does not adequately address the causes of human trafficking. Therefore, to supplement the Convention, a comprehensive regional action plan needs to be incorporated within a regional security framework with the proper institutional mechanisms and financial resources to combat trafficking and more effectively manage other forms of migration. It should be noted that migration not only affects the host country but also adversely affects the migrants themselves. By addressing the issue of migration through a cooperative security framework, a greater level of cooperation between the border security forces of different countries and related government agencies could be achieved. Collaboration on border security, the prosecution of smugglers and repatriation of smuggled people could be one of the key issues addressed under the framework. Participation of NGOs in track two dialogues that focus on migration issues would also be beneficial.

Energy Security: Access to efficient and clean energy has become a critical issue for the functioning of economies. Not only are South Asian economies growing rapidly, but the demand for energy is also growing at an unprecedented rate. The uneven distribution of energy supplies among South Asian countries has generated significant vulnerabilities for their economies. Threats to energy security in South Asia are predominantly caused by lack of political will among several energy-producing countries to share resources with neighbouring countries, as well as by the lack of regional cooperation in distributing energy. This threat has worsened due to the manipulation of energy supplies, inadequate supply and generation infrastructure, and accidents and natural disasters. Apart from regional issues, rising costs of fossil fuels (specifically, oil and gas) and environmental hazards caused by coal-generated power plants will be a source of energy insecurity in the foreseeable future.

In most South Asian countries, poor planning in the energy sector has caused considerable human suffering and significantly hindered the entire region's economic growth prospects. For example, in Bangladesh, much of the population does not have access to adequate electricity for even bare minimum consumption in household activities. In fact, the crisis of energy supplies is now threatening to reverse Bangladesh's economic growth in the near future, if measures are not taken immediately to increase the supply of power.²⁹ To optimize the region's economic potential, each South Asian state needs to explore the possibilities for regional energy cooperation and design long-term plans to secure its domestic requirements, taking into consideration the many opportunities for regional energy cooperation.

Energy Security under SAARC: Although every South Asian country is developing national strategies to increase energy security, there is a growing realisation that this issue must be addressed in a regional context. Such an

approach would facilitate a more comprehensive, cost-effective, and sustainable set of solutions to confront the challenges of energy security. The meetings of the SAARC Energy ministers have not yielded the necessary level of cooperation in energy as required. Assessing energy issues within a regional security framework could engender collaboration on proper utilisation of existing resources, negate environmental degradation through mining, espouse joint collaboration on renewable energy resources and facilitate the distribution of electricity in regions facing acute shortage. In addition to the Ministries of Energy, consultations with key stakeholders of the energy industry may facilitate effective regional energy cooperation.

Transnational Crime and Terrorism: The regional security of South Asia cannot be evaluated without accounting for and examining regional responses to the threat posed by transnational terrorism and transnational crime. The bulk of transnational criminal activities in South Asia consists of smuggling and human trafficking. Smuggling is rampant across the porous borders between India and Bangladesh with cattle, rice and all forms of consumer goods being transferred illegally across the borders. Despite the negative economic impact of smuggling of consumer goods, the most nefarious form of smuggling is in arms and drugs. Organized criminal groups have been reported to smuggle banned prescription drugs like Phensidyl and Yabaa across Myanmar, India and Bangladesh. A media report stated that Myanmar, which neighbours India and Bangladesh, is expected to grow as a global source of heroin and methamphetamines in the years ahead, which poses significant border infiltration concerns for Bangladesh and India.³⁰ The exploitation of poor local people as drug mules, the corruption of border security and the social costs of drug consumption compound to create a significant human security concern.

The '10 trucks Arms Haul', the common name attributed to the seizure of a large shipment of arms from China to North-East India through Bangladesh, accentuated the magnitude of risks posed in the absence of stringent border controls. The trafficking of women and children from across the subcontinent for prostitution and sex slavery has increasingly gained prominence and warrants immediate law enforcement attention. The 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament and the November 2008 carnage at Mumbai are examples of the ability of transnational terrorist organisations to instigate volatility and insecurity in an entire region by igniting confrontation between two of the largest military powers. Evidence exists of collaboration between terrorist groups from regional countries, as well as extremists seeking safe havens or expanding their bases by residing in neighboring states.

Transnational Crime and Terrorism under SAARC: The involvement of transnational criminal groups in narcotics production, trafficking and consumption and the destabilizing effect on the sociopolitical matrix of the

region has led SAARC to undertake initiatives such as the Coordination Group of Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Drug Offences Monitoring Desk and the SAARC Convention on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. These conventions and ratifications are extremely encouraging and a decisive multilateral stance against transnational crime was espoused at the Fourteenth SAARC Summit, where the heads of states/governments “agreed to work on the modalities to implement the provisions of the existing SAARC Conventions to combat terrorism, narcotics and psychotropic substances, trafficking in women and children and other transnational crime.”³¹

The mechanisms for information sharing, cooperation in law enforcement and consensus on combating the proliferation of narcotics are valuable existing multilateral initiatives which must now be taken a step further by conceptualizing the war against transnational crime within a regional security framework. The framework would lay the foundations for further interstate collaboration, particularly between local law enforcement authorities of bordering cities where smuggling is rampant, the setting up of integrated border check posts, sharing of surveillance and monitoring technology and fostering regional public and private participation on raising awareness on drug abuse. The ratification of the SAARC Regional Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism in 1988 and the establishment of the SAARC Terrorist Offences Monitoring Desk in 1995 have not yielded the desired cooperation on countering terrorism. However, in recent years, most notably at the last four SAARC summits, the subject of combating terrorism within South Asia has been given the highest priority. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh have all been the subject of terrorist attacks, with strong evidence of transnational links.

Countries which have been accused of aiding and abetting terror attacks in neighbouring states have themselves been the victim of terrorism and, as such, the regional security framework must include specific protocols and multilateral engagements on combating transnational terrorism. Active information sharing between intelligence agencies, cooperation in maritime and land border security, a regional body on money laundering and terrorist financing are some measures that could be incorporated under the proposed framework.

The Concept of Cooperative Security

The concept of cooperative security is based on the notion that “security with rather than security against one’s adversary is the only possible method of interaction in an interdependent world.”³² The aims of cooperative security are to create conditions conducive to cooperation, replace negative conflict with positive competition and gradually reduce the level of hostility by promoting trust and confidence.³³ Cooperative security is a concept which has been derived from Collective, Common and Comprehensive Security. Cooperative security

consists of three components: preventative measures that are essential to peace building, restoring peace and enforcing peace.³⁴

The notion of cooperative security is based on reassurance and engagement rather than deterrence and containment. Therefore, cooperative security is based on inclusiveness and aims to engage members and non-members within a larger framework of cooperation. The objectives of cooperative security are not directed against a specific threat but aim to mitigate shared security concerns.³⁵

One of the fundamental steps in achieving cooperative security is the formation of a holistic security framework which would espouse security cooperation between politically diverse nations through a wide network of institutions.³⁶

The proposed framework in this chapter is envisioned as independent of SAARC as incorporating it within SAARC would require modification of its charter. In the future, provided that structural and legislative amendments are undertaken to facilitate the incorporation of the framework within SAARC, it could act as the overseeing body of the framework. The constituents of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), particularly its annual security dialogue, can be implemented within this framework. Since several member states of SAARC are discussing security issues under the ARF, it is evident that the time has come to establish a forum within South Asia for the discussion of security issues of direct concern to the countries of the region.

The aim of this chapter is to provide the outlines of the proposed cooperative security framework based on the existing traditional and non-traditional security threats in the region and to suggest ways and means to respond to these threats.

PROPOSED COOPERATIVE SECURITY FRAMEWORK FOR SOUTH ASIA

Mission

1. To promote peace and stability in South Asia through structured periodic dialogues and joint research programmes both at the intergovernmental level and through NGOs and Think Tanks.
2. To undertake multi-pronged approach to respond to the growing number of traditional and non-traditional security threats.

Structure

The administration and implementation of the framework would be undertaken through three major mechanisms:

1. Inter-governmental—This would include periodic meetings of Foreign Ministers and Home Ministers of all South Asian countries.
2. Government/Non-Government—This would include regular meetings of government officials, think-tanks and civil society from the eight member states of SAARC.

3. Non-Government—This would include regular meetings of think-tanks, non-state actors and members of civil society.

The three above mechanism or bodies, will be supported by a small regional secretariat.

The main activities of the three above mentioned bodies will be as follows:

1. Dialogues: Dialogues on critical security issues would be undertaken through seminars and workshops. Participation would include Government and Non-Governmental representatives.
2. Research: Extensive collaborative research would be undertaken on major security concerns, particularly climate change, health security and disaster management. Research would be undertaken by academics and think-tanks; the outcome of their research work and the findings would be disseminated to Governments and relevant NGOs.
3. Training: Training of Law enforcement officials would be undertaken at the Inter-Governmental level. At the initial stage, joint exercises between law enforcement officials of different South Asian nations will be undertaken.
4. In the future capacity building measures could be undertaken through:
 - Joint Peace Keeping Operations
 - Joint Disaster Management Missions
 - Joint Institutional arrangements for dealing with NTS threats, including data collection on food, water and energy security
 - Annual meetings of heads of intelligence agencies.

Pathways to Cooperative Security in South Asia

Regional conflict, perennial mistrust, overt nationalism and disparities in political and economic influence are some of the major impediments towards the implementation of cooperative security in South Asia. Despite the existence of a magnitude of constraints, several key pathways exist towards transforming South Asia into a peaceful, stable region conducive to security cooperation.

The dominant strategic impediment to robust regionalism in South Asia is the conflict and hostility between India and Pakistan. To overcome this hostility, Kanti Bajpai has espoused several innovative models of achieving peace in South Asia. According to Bajpai, the two predominant powers, China and the United States, should play a key role in mitigating differences between India and Pakistan. Although both powers follow diverse ideologies in their foreign policy and global security, particularly on the issue of non-proliferation, a more balanced and nuanced role by both with a view to mitigating long-standing conflicts, rather than the patronisation of any one particular county, can provide the impetus to a peaceful relationship between India and Pakistan.³⁷

Economic and functional exchanges between India and Pakistan can also be viewed as a pathway to greater bilateral cooperation. An entrepreneurial middle class and vibrant civil society are the main constituents of achieving peace through economic cooperation. The financial and economic power of both nations can be utilized to influence policymaking with the aim of creating substantial economic incentives to strengthening regional economic cooperation, with the focus on improved Indo-Pak bilateral relations.³⁸

Finally, the most enduring pathway to peace is through the evolution of common and integrated values in the region. All South Asian countries have converged politically in two important aspects: the dissemination of democratic values and similarities in the relationship between religion and politics. Currently, all South Asian nations are democracies and political parties in all countries share secular characteristics. Furthermore, the countries of South Asia have all adopted a parliamentary system based on the Westminster model. Bajpai argues that the ubiquity of democratic principles which entail tolerance, communication and consultation, would encourage greater communication between states and civil societies in South Asia. Thus the convergence in democratic principles, secularism, importance of civil society and informal exchanges between states should integrate the region based on a pluralistic security community, where individual states retain their sovereignty but abolish the use of force or threat to use force in solving conflicts.³⁹

Shireen Mazari has stated that the two main aspects critical to regional security cooperation in South Asia are advanced weapons proliferation and confidence building measures. She argues that missile development and nuclear arms have not made South Asia unstable but have prevented limited military conflicts from escalating into all out wars. Whereas there may be some truth to this, the danger of nuclear arms and missile technology falling into the hands of terrorists and insurgents cannot be ignored. Although embargoes have been imposed on both India and Pakistan for conducting nuclear tests, domestic constraints have compelled the leaders of these nations to continue the pursuit of sophisticated weaponry. Technological restraints imposed by some developed countries initially succeeded in delaying the acquisition of advanced weaponry, while doing little to solve the root causes of hostilities. Instead of imposing the Non Proliferation Treaty on India and Pakistan, which is global in nature, Mazari argues that a regional framework for non-proliferation in South Asia would be more viable. Multi-national nuclear fuel centres and nuclear cooperation in the energy field would serve as useful confidence building measures between South Asian nations.⁴⁰

Greater confidence building measures between India and Pakistan, such as the accord on non-attack on each other's nuclear facilities, would greatly reduce the level of insecurity prevalent in the region. Mazari states that conventional

force reductions, based on the 1990 Treaty in Europe would greatly enhance security perceptions in South Asia. Most importantly, the psychological and structural dimensions of political relationships between South Asian nations would need to be revamped in order to create a socio-political environment conducive to regional cooperative security.⁴¹

Another route to peace and stability in South Asia, which has gained prominence in recent times, is the socio-economic development route.

Benefits of a Cooperative Security Framework

The advantages of a multilateral security mechanism in South Asia can be evaluated in terms of the mutually beneficial cooperative arrangements undertaken in other regions of the world. In Europe, the EU and NATO have effectively ended decades of war between neighbouring states and expanded their operations to include regional responses to non-traditional security threats. Following decades of interstate conflicts in South East Asia, ASEAN has effectively consolidated peace and stability in the region and undertaken the implementation of a regional security apparatus. From a South Asian perspective, the advantages of consolidating security under a regional framework would be manifold and far outweigh the concessions or difficulties involved in the formation of such a body. Envisioning the South Asian region from a collective security perspective would lead to an era of confidence building and conflict avoidance to counter years of mistrust and confrontation. The efforts against terrorism, smuggling and nuclear proliferation could be approached as a shared challenge rather than national or domestic issues.⁴²

Although steps have been taken to counter the threat of non-traditional security risks, a holistic approach would generate further impetus in fostering a collaborative approach to promoting human security in the region. India, Pakistan and Bangladesh make enormous contributions to the UN's peacekeeping efforts in war ravaged regions around the world and a cooperative security framework could foster the utilisation of these resources to tackle insurgencies and humanitarian crises closer to home. Regional security collaboration may also help to remove the existing concerns and uneasiness among the smaller states in the region towards India's growing military might and instead replace it with a South Asian identity and approach, making the region a key player in global management and greatly enhance the power and influence of South Asia as a region, in global economic and security forums.⁴³

Lessons from Other Regional Bodies

The activities of various regional bodies around the world, evaluation of their successes and failures and the viability of emulating their doctrine and operational activities is an imperative component of envisioning a security framework for

South Asia. Although the European Union and NATO are extremely successful regional organisations, from a pragmatic approach, they are not viable models on which South Asian regionalism can be based. Both these bodies required the transfer of portions of national sovereignty of individual countries to a central supranational body. Unlike Europe, where states have enjoyed hundreds of years of sovereign rule, countries in South Asia have gained their independence only in the last century and are thus less inclined to compromise on national sovereignty.⁴⁴

The range of security threats is also vastly different and compounded by the vast disparities in state and individual wealth. Although ASEAN and the ARF have undertaken concrete steps on confidence building in the region and gained consensus on regional approaches to non-traditional security risks, analysts have criticized the organisation for underperformance in several key areas. ASEAN has been criticized for not playing a role in resolving regional disputes, such as the Singapore-Malaysia dispute over Pedra Branca, which was eventually resolved by the International Court of Justice. ASEAN's role of regional trust-building is also called into question by the emergence of what seems to be a significant arms race across the region.⁴⁵

Although the issues of non-traditional security have been addressed in several ASEAN dialogues, further progress needs to be made on addressing human rights, creating economic safety nets for the poor in the region and progressing regional cooperative schemes from the deliberation stage to operational activities.⁴⁶

Limitations to Multilateral Initiatives

Despite the perceived advantages of security cooperation in South Asia, several limitations are expected to hinder multilateral initiatives. These are set out below:

1. **Lack of political will:** Confidence building and overcoming years of mistrust requires concerted efforts by all governments/states in the region. A lack of political will would thus severely undermine any collaborative efforts.
2. **Lack of consensus:** Consensus on the need for a regional effort to tackle non-traditional security has been slow. Assertive actions are required to promote the idea of a regional security framework leading to a consensus among states and key stakeholders.
3. **Scarcity of Resources:** South Asia is home to some of the most impoverished nations in the world and a lack of resources would severely limit the effectiveness of a regional security body. Assistance of the UN in training, administration and logistics would be beneficial to overcome resource constraints.

Conclusion

An analysis of the current security threats facing South Asia and initiatives by SAARC to mitigate these threats has revealed that although several important declarations have been ratified and concrete steps taken under multilateral agreements, the lack of a holistic security framework severely undermines the effectiveness of these initiatives. To strengthen proactive multilateral engagement and accelerate the progress of regional cooperative schemes from the deliberation stage to operational activities, a cooperative security framework needs to be envisioned and consensus gained from all stakeholders on its role and operations.

The creation of a regional framework on NTS is a complex task, given the low level of integration in South Asia. However, given the enormity of the challenge faced by the region due to NTS threats, a multilateral institution, encompassing all the eight countries of the region, has become essential in order to ensure the safety and security of the populations, resources and environment of the region. Despite the recognition by individual governments of the need for immediate action on NTS issues, SAARC has achieved very little in fostering a regional response. Since incorporating a regional body on NTS within SAARC requires the modification of its charter, envisioning a framework independent of SAARC would have a much greater chance of success based on recent experience.

While accounting for the severe constraints and impediments in overcoming deeply entrenched regional acrimonies, the paper concludes that a regional cooperative framework is an important step towards confidence building, preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention, which would be the precondition for regional cooperation on NTS issues. A concerted effort by all states, private and external actors is required for South Asian nations to overcome decades of mistrust and resolve the long standing mutually destructive conflicts, thus enabling the region to move towards an era of cooperation which would enable the region to tackle more effectively both current and future NTS challenges. Civil society must extend its full support for regional cooperation by sensitizing policymakers, stakeholders, and the public to its benefits.

The magnitude of the threat demands that a security framework to tackle traditional and NTS issues in South Asia can no longer be viewed as a distant aspiration in the future but a matter that requires urgent action on the part of both the governments as well as the people in general, throughout the region.



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4

Does South Asia Need a Regional Security Architecture?

Smruti S Pattanaik and Nihar Nayak

While much attention is devoted to the regional economic integration in South Asia, there is a lack of discourse on the need for a cooperative security framework in the region. The reason could be that the states in the region (except India) perceive that the threat is from within the region than from outside. As a result there is a tendency amongst India's neighbours to engage external powers in the regional context. As has been seen Pakistan's quest for parity with India has led it to rely on the United States and later, on China. There were similar attempts in Nepal to curtail India's influence during the monarchy and Sri Lanka unsuccessfully tried to garner support from international community to bypass India in its effort to resolve its ethnic problem. This is because unelected and authoritarian regimes in India's neighbourhood perceive India as a threat to their regime survivability. There are also other structural reasons based on the organising principles that go back to the formation of nation states in South Asia. At various times democratic forces in the neighbouring countries have been supported by the people and political leaders of India posing a threat to autocratic regimes. Therefore, there have been efforts to involve extra-regional powers to marginalise or balance India. This was the prevailing attitude in the Cold War period. However, in the post Cold War context, though the regional security situation has undergone a transition, mistrust and suspicion continue to prevail in the countries of the region.

India has also accused regimes in its neighbourhood of sheltering forces and sometime actively supporting them to destabilise India, thereby feeding on the mutual mistrust. As Barry Buzan argues: "Since the state is an essentially political entity, it may fear political threats as much as military ones. This is

particularly so where the ideas and institutions are internally contested, for in such cases the state is likely to be highly vulnerable to political penetration".¹ This has essentially been a problem in South Asia where the incumbent regimes feel that their regime stability is under threat. They have built these around institutions that have promoted authoritarian governments or have strengthened the regimes that perceive India as the ideological other.² In such a situation, in spite of India's primacy in South Asia in terms of geography, military potential and economy, it becomes difficult to build a security community. India's rise and leadership role is contested by Pakistan and this is nurtured and sustained with the help of external forces who have a vested interest in ensuring that New Delhi remains mired in local conflicts within the region.³ Thus the argument, that India has problem with its neighbours, is then used to question its aspirations for a greater global role. Due to this attitude the emergence of a security community, cooperating on hardcore defence issue becomes a non-starter in this region as the countries feel they can militarily defend themselves given the low level of military threat within the region with the exception of conflict between India and Pakistan).

Local dynamics arising out of inter-state problems pertaining to boundary disputes and territory, river water sharing, state sponsored terrorism, illegal immigration compounded by the problem of porous and undemarcated borders etc do not allow the coherence that is necessary for the formation of a regional security community. Most of these countries are facing the challenges posed by terrorism that is internally generated and in some cases externally supported. While it is difficult to envisage cooperation against state sponsored terrorism (in the case of Pakistan supported terrorism against India and Afghanistan); in the cases of other states this issue can be resolved as was evidenced by the cooperation that India received from Bhutan, Myanmar and Bangladesh. As long as a state does not perceive that its internal order will be threatened by perpetuating non-state actors as strategic assets a common approach to security would be difficult to achieve.

Some scholars like Barry Buzan argues that in South Asian the security complex is dominated by local issues and relations which "define national security priorities of the states within it".⁴ China is increasingly becoming a factor in the South Asia regional security complex given its expanding presence in the countries of the region for various reasons. The unsettled border between India and China cast a shadow in their engagement in South Asia and created concerns in New Delhi's mind regarding the future posture of China. While India's security, defence build up, and military modernisation has been adopted keeping China's threat in mind; it affects the South Asian regional security complex necessitating Pakistan defence build up as a response. Moreover, India interest and concerns go beyond the South Asia security complex. After nuclearisation of the subcontinent, many scholars argued that the relations between the two countries

(Pakistan and India) will become more volatile. South Asia was described as 'nuclear flashpoint' affecting the stability of the region. The relations between the two countries largely influenced the security dynamics in the region; the situation in Afghanistan has now shifted the focus away from South Asia (India and Pakistan) to the Af-Pak region. Developments there not only affect India but also the entire region in terms of domestic implications.⁵

Thus South Asian security complex is no longer local but has become global in nature, at least in relation to terrorism and the globalisation of economic issues that impinges on societal harmony. Yet there are issues pertaining to non-traditional security which will force the states to cooperate. The states of South Asia are dependent on one another to address the issues of non-traditional security. This provides avenues for cooperation in terms of traditional security threats. Only India and Pakistan are in a position to pose a military threat to each other. Other countries of south Asia feel vulnerable to the security dynamics that these two countries may generate due to their rivalry. While the military dimension of the security of each South Asian country is difficult to bridge, there is abundant scope for building a security architecture based on cooperation on non-traditional security issues that compel the states to cooperate. As S.D. Muni argues: "India's neighbours generally feel more comfortable in a regional design that incorporates bilateral priorities and concerns".⁶ Though SAARC has kept bilateral conflict out of its purview; the organisation has been able to take up issues that are regional in nature and non-traditional in content. Efforts are now made by India to blunt the perceived security dynamics vis-à-vis India by economically engaging its neighbours and enable New Delhi to be a factor in development and growth. This also addresses the vulnerability of the states to social unrest which can be further manipulated by regimes which would try to create an atmosphere of anti-India by blaming India for various problems that it is confronting.⁷ Given the contested view of threat/security/vulnerability the question that arises is: Can the countries create a regional security architecture to deal with myriad non-traditional security problem? Do they have a need for security architecture? If so what would be the structure of such an architecture? And finally, can such an architecture reduce the salience of military threats in South Asia? Therefore, security should not only be understood in terms of military security or defending the country against external aggression. Core insecurity lies in non-military issues where cooperation is a pre-requisite and desirable and possibly would yield results. The main argument of this paper is that there are several non-traditional and non-military threats in the region that threaten the very existence of the nation states and have made them fragile. A cooperative security framework is therefore essential and feasible for dealing with non-military challenges. It can be argued that such cooperation will gradually help in building confidence between the countries of the region that is an essential pre-requisite for cooperation on military issues.

Perhaps SAARC can provide a framework for a regional security architecture as non-aggression and pacific settlement of disputes are a part of its charter. It facilitates cooperation on various socio-economic aspects of human security and argues for market integration and trade in service which will help regional integration and can contribute to community building. Moreover, in the recent past Pakistan is moving towards a more cooperative relationship with India. Its decision to confer MFN status on India and engage it economically may have a salutary effect on the bilateral relations or at least facilitate the SAARC process where consensus among member states is a prime requirement to implement the decisions taken by the organisation. SAARC has taken the initiative to seek cooperation on the issues on non-traditional security, to forge regional ties and avoid getting entangled in hardcore security issues. However, in its present structure it does not act as an interface between the government and civil society groups and has remained a completely government initiative out of touch with local realities.⁸

Why the Need for a Regional Security Architecture?

The geographical location of each country, the porous borders, the myriad security challenges they face, the fragile democratic structure that is vulnerable to internal ruptures and a growing population that needs governmental attention make it imperative for the countries of the region to frame a supra-regional organisational framework that will facilitate interaction between the states and establish regional order through institutional norms.

In South Asia, the states continue to be extremely sensitive and are reluctant to surrender their power due to excessive sovereignty consciousness to any supranational authority or body that could be based on mutual accommodation and adjustment to achieve common good.

However this in itself can create problem. This is because suspicion and mistrust also prevent the creation of an enabling environment. Regional initiatives are seen as a zero sum game by some countries. Security also continues to remain state centric and the approach to security remains militarist. Issues such as human security often remain an area of neglect. Linkages between poverty, illiteracy, unemployment or underemployment and security do not attract the attention that is necessary to highlight them as factors of instability. Thus, the state often becomes the victim of insurgency and terrorism given the problem of governance and the failure in fulfilling aspirations of people. The vacuum that is created between individual aspiration and state capacity to deliver often facilitates the intervention of non-state actors who create a counter narrative to justify the capture of state power and seek the support of the people. Some of the issues that affect the regions are discussed below. A regional security architecture needs

to factor in these issues to make the endeavour towards cooperative security possible.

Terrorism

In the last decade, terrorism, natural calamities and disaster management have emerged as major challenges for South Asian countries. Almost all the countries in the region are faced with the challenge of terrorism. In this aspect the states can cooperate in terms of sharing intelligence, managing borders and controlling terrorist finance. Extradition treaties can prevent terrorists from taking shelter in neighbouring countries. Yet there is lack of regional consensus regarding the definition of terrorism and approach of the states towards the issue as some states have used them as instrument of state policy. Due to this and in spite of the fact that issue of terrorism is afflicting all the countries of the region the SAARC convention as well as the Additional Protocol on terrorism has remained ineffective to address the menace.

As Table 4.1 indicates, close to one lakh persons have been killed in terrorist related violence in the last seven years. There is a sharp increase in terrorist related casualties since 2005. In 2011 alone, 6061 people in Pakistan were killed in ethnic, sectarian and tribal violence.⁹ At the independence day celebrations of Pakistan this year, General Kiyani said war against terrorism is Pakistan's own war and Pakistan's trouble is internal.¹⁰ Same is the case with other countries of South Asia. Therefore, SAARC countries need to either empower SAARC to make it more effective or formulate a new mechanism to deal with these extreme security threats.¹¹

Table 4.1: Terrorism Related Casualties in South Asia (2005-12*)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Civilians</i>	<i>Security Personnel</i>	<i>Terrorists</i>	<i>Total</i>
2005	2063	920	3311	6294
2006	2803	1725	4504	9032
2007	3128	1504	6145	10777
2008	3653	2342	14632	20627
2009	14197	2738	12703	29638
2010	2571	844	6016	9431
2011	3174	962	3284	7420
2012	2480	699	2507	5686
Total	34069	11734	53102	98905

Source: South Asia Terrorism Portal (www.satp.org). Data till October 7, 2012.

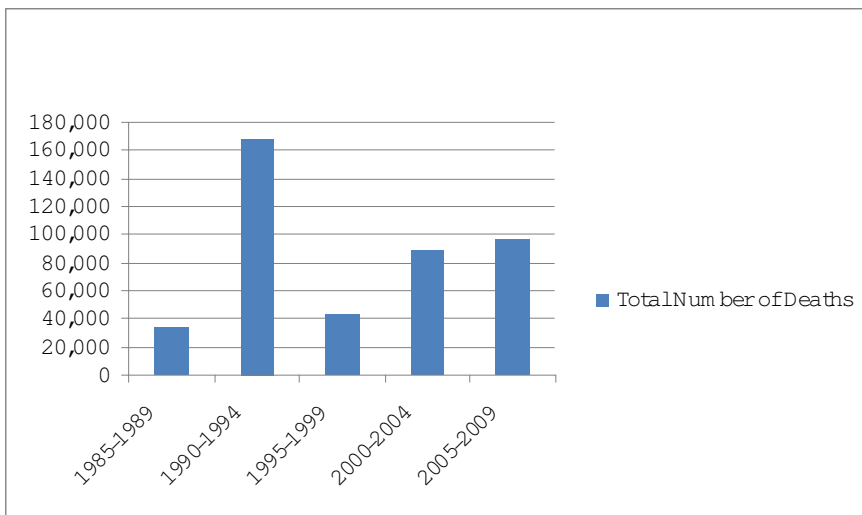
Natural Calamities

Other than terrorism, a large number of people have been killed or displaced in the natural disasters over the last one decade. Although the exact reason for

these frequent weather extremes are still the subject of debate and investigation, the fact remains that these have posed a serious challenge to states in South Asia. As seen in Figure 4.1, the region experienced a total of 728 natural disasters between 1985 to 2009 with around 4,30,162 casualties and loss of resources.¹² On an average one lakh plus people are killed in natural disasters in the South Asian region, which is highest amongst number of people killed in any calamities related to the non-traditional security issues. Amongst the South Asian countries, India experienced the maximum number of disasters due to its topography (Table 4.2). Natural disasters are beyond the control of the member-states. However, cooperation in terms of sharing flood data, early warning systems, managing the post-flood situation will certainly reduce human suffering. Displacement of population through natural disaster can affect interstate relations as this would lead to flow of environmental refugees and affect precarious ethnic and communal balance in the neighbouring regions.

According to the World Bank (WB), despite the high rate of economic growth in South Asia region over an extended period, the region also has the world's largest concentration of poor—more than 500 million people live on less than \$1.25 a day.¹³ The region also has the lowest people to people contact among other underdeveloped regions like Africa and Latin America.¹⁴

Figure 4.1: Total Number of Deaths Due to Natural Disasters in South Asia



Source: Raghav Gaiha and others, "Natural Disasters in South Asia", ASARC Working Paper 2010/06, Revised 17 February 2010, data from EM-DAT.

Table 4.2: Frequency of Natural Disasters in South Asia (2000-09)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Type of Disaster</i>	<i>Country</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
2000	Floods	India	6
2001	Earthquake	India	1
2002	ET*, Earthquake	India, Afghanistan	2, 3
2003	ET*	India	2
2004	Earthquake, Earthquake, Floods, Floods	Sri Lanka, India, India, Bangladesh	1, 1, 6, 3
2005	Earthquake, Earthquake, Floods	Pakistan, India India	1, 1, 17
2006	Floods	India	17
2007	Storm, Floods, Floods	Bangladesh, Bangladesh, India	2, 2, 16
2008	Storm	Afghanistan	1
2009	Floods	India	2

Source: Raghav Gaiha and others, “Natural Disasters in South Asia”, ASARC Working Paper 2010/06, Revised 17 February 2010, data from EM-DAT. *ET—Extreme Temperature.

Problem of Drugs

Between 2002 and 2010, the South Asian region mainly Afghanistan, Pakistan and India were the major source of cannabis after Morocco. This is the most profitable cultivation in Afghanistan and contributes to the civil unrest in both Pakistan and Afghanistan.¹⁵ This region also has been witnessing an increase in production, trafficking and consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. “The abuse of drugs by injection is increasing in South Asia and has reached significant proportions in Bangladesh, India and Nepal.”¹⁶ Media reports indicate that the political instability and poor public order in Nepal, have led to an increase in narcotics drug consumption in the cities. The India-Nepal border has become one of the major transit hubs for trafficking of drugs in South Asia.¹⁷

Poverty and Unemployment

South Asia also faces the challenge of poverty and unemployment. Most people are employed in agricultural sector that makes them vulnerable to climatic conditions. In South Asia, the region with the highest vulnerable employment rate in 2011 (at 77.7 per cent), 51 per cent of workers were from the agricultural

sector.¹⁸ The growing youth population would also require new jobs to be gainfully employed. According to the International Labour Organisation report over 12 million new jobs will be required each year in South Asia.¹⁹ As has been mentioned, economic development and employment opportunities can be created through market integration and facilitation of movement of labour. According to the Vice President of World Bank for the South Asian region:

If intra-regional trade is facilitated, cheaper transport costs, wider markets and broader supply chains will reduce production costs and expand jobs for the 1-1.2 million young South Asians entering the labour market each month... It could result in a 17 per cent increase in GDP for Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, a 15 per cent increase for India, and a five per cent increase for Pakistan.²⁰

The above factors make it amply clear that non-traditional threats to security have now emerged as a dominant factor and forced the states to cooperate closely on climate change, environmental protection, optimising usage of natural resources, alleviating poverty, better healthcare—all of which impact the larger security dynamics of the state. These problems are beyond the control of individual states and have transnational linkages beyond the sovereign territory of one state. In the absence of a common enemy, the common challenges could be a motivating factor for cooperation. Social unrest with political overtones has the capability to threaten regimes which can have spiralling effect in the region as one has seen in the case of Arab spring, though the two regional are structurally different.

Regime survival depends on these issues which also directly affect the population. Therefore, it can be argued that the states in South Asia are not prepared for a security architecture with a common security doctrine based on common military threats. Instead external powers have been cultivated to counter Indian domination. South Asia faces more challenges from within than without—both military as well as non-military. The region continues to have a weak regional organisation as the states are yet to start thinking regionally therefore local issues assume greater importance than efforts aimed at regional good. Given the enormous security challenges that threaten to destabilise the states, this chapter discusses the necessity of evolving a cooperative security architecture; the structure of regional consultative mechanism and the shape of this security architecture.

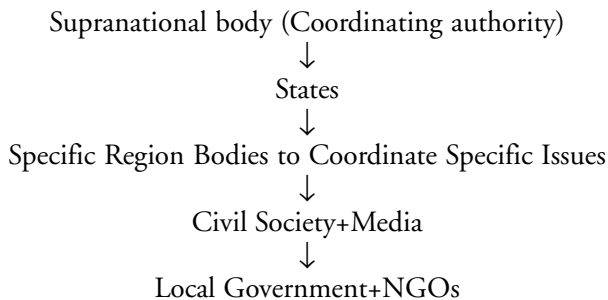
Although some non-traditional security issues within the framework of regional cooperation, have been taken up, they are yet to yield results as they remain the concerns of individual states. It is true that there is no immediate external threat that would prompt South Asian countries to emerge as a security community but the issue of terrorism which confronts all the countries should nudge them into a unified approach. Forces of globalisation have not only

facilitated the integration of the market and the labour force but have made transnational linkages between the terrorist groups possible and sustainable. For example: The LTTE was sustained by diasporas and indulged in smuggling and drug trafficking to raise funds in collusion with other non-state actors. These transnational actors have emerged as a potent force of destabilisation.

Possible Shape of this Security Architecture

While one cannot rule out the possibility of SAARC playing a greater role in effecting a regional security architecture; but at the same time it needs to be restructured to make it more effective and relevant. It remains government centric and members spend more time in discussion and debate rather than taking concrete action. This chapter proposes that in any regional security framework to be effective the state needs to remain at the top of this security architecture. The state will be the primary facilitator of this architecture as it is legitimate authority responsive and accountable to its people. The state and people should not see this architecture as hegemonic or imposition from outside but a framework for common good. It can activate civil society members and generate an informed debate that will feed Information to the government and make it more responsive to the society. NGOs can act at the local level to connect the state with the people. At the regional level member states need to use the forum to evaluate cooperation on non-traditional security issues. Community building, as has been mentioned earlier would remain a pre-requisite for this regional security architecture that looks beyond state boundaries. States will be working within their own political boundary but should report their success to the supranational body. Since these are common issues funds would be mobilised by the states.

Regional Security Architecture (Non-Traditional Issue)



The regional security architecture needs to be confined to non-traditional security issues while attempts should be made to build confidence so that hardcore security issues can be discussed in the future. At present, external powers are bolstering the security of some of the countries in South Asia. For example: the US is the

main security guarantor in Afghanistan, China remain a close defence ally of Pakistan, and the main supplier of military hardware to Bangladesh. China and the US are the two countries who have a deep security involvement in the region due to their geo-strategic interests. Focusing on non-traditional security issues would be important at this stage.

1. Taking small steps to build a security community based on the challenges of non-traditional security. Such a step would not require any major revision in the traditional security threat perception that would involve major military CBMs.
2. Effective policing of borders, joint patrols and management of porous borders to tackle drug trafficking, arms smuggling and also human trafficking. This would require regular meetings between the border forces to calibrate their strategy.
3. Intelligence sharing at the regional level.
4. Sharing data on climate related and flood related issues that cause displacement of population. There should be a SAARC disaster management squad.
5. Initiate efforts to re-establish communication networks with a relaxed visa regime for the movement of labour, creating employment opportunities and regional economic integration would attract investment. This would address under development and lack of market mobility. Employment opportunities would enable youths to channelise their energy constructively. This is needed for the stabilisation of the region and to some extent would address the issue of economic migration that has resulted in frequent cross border firing as in the case of Bangladesh and India.

This also means setting regional standard for poverty alleviation programs, effort to address environmental degradation, protect river embankments from encroachment; setting regional human rights body etc. These bodies should facilitate the countries of the region to help them in meeting the regional standard. This can work in cooperation with governmental and non-governmental social sector organisations working in the region which can be engaged in capacity building. Rather than pointing finger at the performance of the government it should help consolidate government's reach to enable it to play a meaningful role.

India needs to play a prominent role in the region given its size, its geographical position and economic strength. India should capitalise on its changing relationship with its neighbours to structure a consultative mechanism making its neighbours equal partner in the decision making. Bilateral security cooperation between the states has worked excellently. There is no reason why such cooperation on issues beyond individual states' control will not work

regionally. Confidence building measures through engagement at various levels would help in the formation of a security community. Meetings of defence ministers, army chiefs and intelligence chiefs should be held frequently to enable them to deal with hardcore defence issues which would help build confidence among the states who perceive each other as threats.

Whither Regional Security

The post Cold War international order brought to the fore challenges posed by non state actors with transnational linkages and networks that have undermined the security of states. Military threats became less salient as the superpower rivalry ended and non-traditional security issues emerged as main focus of the countries. The porous border and ethnic spill over across the national boundaries have facilitated the movement of men and materials easily through personal and familial networks that works efficiently in the network of terrorists, drug dealers and criminals. Moreover, due to poverty and unemployment people have fallen prey to smugglers and terrorists who employ them to fulfil their sinister designs. Even within the countries in the region, ethnic assertion, demands for better political representation have thrown up new challenges. Violent movements have often depended on the trans-border network of arms dealers to achieve their aims by resorting to armed struggle. Many times these groups are unwilling to negotiate with government. Rather they take extreme non-negotiable positions as they have access to arms and support from across the political barrier.

Another aspect of regional security is economic development, market integration, movement of labour and trade in service. The South Asian region is the least integrated region in the world. The economic development and prosperity of one state is likely to create disparity within the region and may lead to migration of population seeking economic opportunity. While underdevelopment and poverty can be the major challenges for a country and it is however unlikely that this issue would remain confined to the boundaries of a nation state. Therefore cooperation among the states is essential. Being aware of the problems that such challenges may pose, India has wants that the neighbouring countries, instead of being wary of India's growth, should take advantage of its large market and economic growth and be partners in development.²¹ Rather than resisting market integration it is argued that integration of economies and markets would help the region. It is important to remind ourselves that South Asia during the British rule was one political unit and the transport and communication systems, established by the British were ruptured due to partition. However Pakistan facilitated movement of goods and people between India's Northeast and East Pakistan without interruption until the 1965 war.

No single state, as has been mentioned else where in this paper can deal with terrorism, environmental threats and economic deprivation single-handedly. SAARC provides a framework for cooperation through the 1988 SAARC convention on terrorism and the Additional Protocol adopted in 2004. The convention on terrorism has excluded political offences from its ambit. The states pledged:

Aware of the danger posed by the spread of terrorism and its harmful effect on peace, cooperation, friendship and good neighbourly relations and which could also jeopardize the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states; have resolved to take effective measures to ensure that perpetrators of terroristic acts do not escape prosecution and punishment by providing for their extradition or prosecution.²²

Yet the convention on terrorism has not resulted in regional cooperation. There are many examples of bilateral cooperation within the region: India and Pakistan in the past had established a joint terror mechanism in the aftermath of the Havana non-alignment summit that became dysfunctional after the Mumbai attack in 2008; India's success in dealing with the problem of insurgency in its Northeast has been achieved through cooperation with Bangladesh, Bhutan and Myanmar. Similarly, Sri Lanka dealt with the issue of terrorism through bilateral cooperation with India which provided Colombo with intelligence to deal with the issue rather than through a regional framework. In fact the lack of cooperation at the regional level has allowed bilateral cooperation to become successful. Even the Additional Protocol to the SAARC convention on terrorism requires the countries of the region to act in their individual capacity to prevent money laundering. The SAARC home ministers meet took up this issue as part of their agenda. Cooperation on the issue of extradition also has been rendered difficult by the introduction of exception clause in Article 17 which reads:

None of the provisions of this Additional Protocol shall be interpreted as imposing an obligation to extradite or to provide mutual legal assistance, if the requested State Party has substantial grounds to believe that the request to extradite or to provide mutual legal assistance, has been made for the purpose of prosecuting or punishing a person on account of that person's race, religion, nationality, ethnic origin or political opinion, or that compliance with the request would cause prejudice to that person's position for any of these reasons.

This provision offers space for the political interpretation of a terrorist. Can people fighting the state for political reasons be deemed as terrorist given the fact that many challenges to state in terms of violence have been posed by ethnic or religious minorities. As per this definition a Prabhakaran or Paresh Baruah can be excluded from extradition because they are fighting for political reasons based on their ethnocentric political demands. Moreover, the states are not

obliged to extradite. The states have denied presence of terrorists in their soil because some of them have carried out terrorism either at the behest or with the help of another state. For example: The Mumbai attack which happened with the help of state actors in Pakistan. Dawood Ibrahim is also a case in point. So how does the state deal with terrorists who often take shelter in the neighbouring countries? States have utilized bilateral framework which continues to remain efficient due to less complex decision making structure. If there is political will legal hurdles pertaining to extradition can be overcome. For example: Bangladesh handed over insurgent leaders from north-eastern Indian states, who had taken shelter in Dhaka.²³ Similarly Myanmar asked the Manipuri groups this year to leave their territory.²⁴ Such instances provide hope for regional security architecture as the states realize the linkage between these militant groups and the criminal elements in the host country. As has been realised some of the states are facing the problem of terrorism which at one point of time they had perpetuated. Thus a regional cooperation network can be worked out within a overarching security architecture. SAARC has seven avenues of cooperation in security related issues.

These are: coordination between drug enforcement agencies; a terrorist offences and drug offences monitoring desk; a convention on narcotic drugs and psychotropic convention; cooperation on police matters and a meeting of home ministers; apart from the convention on terrorism. All these issues need regional cooperation and cannot be handled by single countries.

In the recent past South Asian countries seem to have overcome the zero sum game mindset given the changing security scenario in the domestic political context. The process has been extremely slow. But nevertheless, the countries are coming to agree on connectivity and facilitating people to people contact²⁵. There seems to be a change in mindset at least in short term some measures can be taken to boost regional cooperation. For example: the challenges that Pakistan is facing now did not exist a few years ago. The reason could be lack of civil society activism to pressurize governments to cooperate on these issues which are no more country centric.

As mentioned earlier, South Asia region has got the least people to people contact given the rigid visa regimes. This seems to be changing although at a slow pace. Regional security can be achieved through regional community building. This would also require regional bonding to form a common forum to deal with common problems. This would require trust so that there would be commonality of perception on the challenges that the region is facing.

Having argued for the need for a regional framework to optimise a security architecture that will bind the countries of the region it is important to dwell on the possible shape and component of this security architecture.

Challenges to Framing South Asia Regional Security Architecture

The partition in 1947 on the basis of the two-nation theory continues to shape the national mindset and discourses in some of the countries of South Asia. The state directed enemy discourse sowed the seeds of mistrust and suspicion. The willingness to cooperate has been abysmally low. Bilateral relations are marred with several disputes that do not help the security environment. The military was strengthened at the cost of socio-economic development and the enemy discourse ensured that such expenditure could not be questioned. In such a context it has been difficult to evolve any consensus on common security architecture that will take into account the individual country's security interest. Moreover, the South Asian countries were not even prepared to come together on a common platform and to discuss such issues as they believe that it will give the impression of the state's incapacity.

The initiative taken by SAARC was initially not welcomed. However, the countries found reasons to become part of this initiative. While the forum started with a modest objective the bilateral political issues were kept beyond the purview of the SAARC so that the organisation does not become prey to bilateral politics. If the countries are not prepared to discuss contentious political issues it is almost impossible to conceive of a common security architecture. However, if the states within the SAARC framework have moved on and have included common non-traditional security challenges confront them, it is time to discuss hard core security issues that confronts them.

The second challenge is the regime centric states in South Asia. Many times in the past, regime security has often been considered as being synonymous with state security. The regimes in power protect their regime interest to survive and this is portrayed as essential for ensuring the state security. These authoritarian regimes benefit most from the tension and mistrust between countries. This atmosphere is not conducive for regional security as the states continue to arm against each other or undermine state sovereignty by supporting groups opposed to state thereby defeating any aspiration for regional cooperation.

Third, is the conflictual relationship between countries in South Asia. India-Pakistan, Pakistan-Afghanistan relations would constitute major stumbling blocs for any security architecture. At present India's relations with Bangladesh have improved however, there is a fear that with the change of government in Dhaka the meeting of minds between the two countries would again become difficult to achieve.

Fourth, the countries lack a common definition of terrorism. Though the Additional Protocol was adopted in 2004 SAARC summit the course of negotiations demonstrated that there is no meeting of minds on the issue. The lack of regional consensus has hampered any possibility of regional security framework.

Fifth, it is important to define cooperative security? Does it stand for security of the people or security of state? Any security architecture that is conceived with people in mind will succeed. There is a need to transit from state centric discourse to a human centric discourse. If the people are kept at the centre of the discourse it is likely that consensus may be easy to arrive at.

Most of these challenges could be overcome if the state realises the need for a regional security approach. The countries of the region have a shared history and culture, therefore the possibility of forming a security community should not be ruled out.

Can the Obstacles be Overcome?

There are many ways for removing the fear of the 'other' in South Asia. The states are realising that terrorism can become an existential threat. Therefore there has been much bilateral cooperation between some countries in South Asia. A few years ago even the US did not imagine that it would become victim of terrorism. Nearer home Pakistan also did not imagine that the forces it had nurtured would threaten its stability and impair its growth.

Three important factors will motivate the states to overcome differences and challenges:

- (i) Forces of market integration will compel the countries into economic integration that will address the problem of economic development;
- (ii) Challenges of terrorism have undermined state stability. Thus linkages between the non-state actors will motivate the countries to cooperate.
- (iii) Growing realisation of the effect of climate change. Rather than water sharing there has to be integrated approach to river basin management.

The above issues automatically raise the question whether these challenges can be overcome by a single country? In this context India can play a leading role as the dynamic of its bilateral engagement with its neighbours is changing. This is manifested in the various measures India has taken to enhance economic cooperation, build connectivity that will fuel growth in the region. India has been taking steps to cut down the negative list for the LDCs of South Asia as it believes that the countries of the region need to be partners in India's prosperity. Article 1 of the SAARC Charter envisages cooperation among the states. Rather than duplicating and having another forum, the current organisation can be made more effective and responsive to the welfare of the people of the region. South East Asia region has several regional mechanisms that have addressed regional tension. While any regional security architecture at the moment cannot deal with military related issues it can certainly deal with the common challenges of water, climate and terrorism that have the capacity to fuel regional tensions and may even lead to regional military conflict. Cooperative security architecture can be part of SAARC. It can also be conceived

outside. In the meanwhile as confidence building measure dialogue on security issues between the Armies of south Asian countries can be envisaged. Joint exercises of the military of the region would be useful. Once non-traditional issues become the drivers of security cooperation they will open up new vistas in defence cooperation and the management of military security in the region.



Notes

1. Barry Buzan, *People, States and Fear: An Agenda for International Security Studies in the Post-Cold War Era*, Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991, pp.76-77. For example Nepal under Monarchy, Bangladesh during military regime, Sri Lanka's quest for external help to deal with political problems at home.
2. India's multicultural plural character poses challenge to those states that are based on the identity of the majority community. Similarly Indian democracy challenges autocratic regimes like monarchies and military dictators. This India is perceived as an ideological other by religion based states as well as undemocratic regimes.
3. For example: China's assistance to Pakistan to balance India; the US arming of Pakistan that nurtured contested politics in South Asia; and India's relationship with the Soviet Union to bolster its defence; external power egging Nepal to float the zone of peace proposal in 1975 are some examples. In the case of Bangladesh, the balance India policy of the military regimes made the country to explore close defence ties with China, a country that was opposed to the creation of Bangladesh. Some Bangladeshi intellectuals also empathise with Chinese 'compulsion' for not voting in favour of Bangladesh's admission to the UN as an independent country in a clear motivation to underplay India's role in the liberation war.
4. Barry Buzan, no. 1, p. 106.
5. Afghanistan has fed into radicalism in the region. Many jihadists from the region participated in the anti-Soviet jihad and nurtured hopes of establishing an Islamic emirate back in their home country. The rise of Tehrik-i-Taliban, Pakistan, which aims at establishing an Islamic state; the country wide bomb blasts orchestrated by Jamaat-ul Mujahedeen Bangladesh in 2005 alludes to the point that how Afghan jihad and leer the Taliban regime inspired radical groups.
6. S.D. Muni, "Problem Areas in India's Neighbourhood Policy", *South Asian Survey*, 10 (2), 2003, p. 188.
7. India has in the recent past tried to engage its neighbour economically, so that they can emerge as developmental partners. Its \$1 billion credit line with a revised one per cent interest and converting \$200m into a grant is essentially to help Bangladesh develop infrastructural facilities. It has a \$2 billion investment in reconstruction activities in Afghanistan. It has also invested in Sri Lanka and Nepal. All these developmental initiatives help in addressing the angst in the neighbouring countries regarding India. This will surely help the regional security dynamics in which India remains a main driver. The recent peace drive with Pakistan, in spite of Mumbai also goes a long way in addressing security complex.
8. Smruti S. Pattanaik, "Time to Redeem SAARC," 20 August 2010, at http://www.idsa.in/idsacomments/TimetoRedeemSAARC_sspattanaik_200810
9. This figure is taken from the Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies but excludes 1046 people killed in drone attack. "Pakistan Security report 2011", *PIPS*, p.5, at <http://san-pips.com/>
10. For the full text of Kiyani's 14th August speech, see <http://criticalppp.com/archives/227063>
11. See Smruti S Pattanaik, "Does SAARC have a Future", in Smruti S. Pattanaik (ed.), *South Asia: Envisioning a Regional Future*, Pentagon Press, New Delhi, 2011, pp.237-252.
12. Raghav Gaiha and others, "Natural Disasters in South Asia", ASARC Working Paper 2010/06, Revised 17 February 2010.
13. February 2010, p. 09.

13. "South Asia: Regional Strategy Update 2012", The World Bank, at <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/SOUTHASIAEXT/0,,contentMDK:21265405-menuPK:2298227-pagePK:146736-piPK:146830-theSitePK:223547,00.html> (accessed 14 October 2012).
14. For details see "Regional Update 2012," The World Bank, at <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INDIAEXTN/Resources/295583-1328744264781/RegionalUpdate2012.pdf> (accessed 14 October 2012).
15. For more information see "World Drug Report 2012", United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UN, June 2012, p.45.
16. "Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2011", International Narcotics Control Board, p. 79.
17. "Drug use on the rise, say narco police" *The Himalayan Times*, 12 October 2012.
18. International Labour Organisation, "Global Labour Market situation", at http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-dgreports/-dcomm/-publ/documents/publication/wcms_171681.pdf, p.44.
19. "Global Labour Market Situation", International Labour Organization, p. 35, at http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/-dgreports/-dcomm/-publ/documents/publication/wcms_171681.pdf
20. Isabel Guerrero, "What if Trade Barriers were Reduced in south Asia", *Express Tribune*, 09 October 2012, at <http://tribune.com.pk/story/449213/what-if-trade-barriers-were-reduced-in-south-asia/>
21. "India and its Neighbours", Speech by Former foreign Secretary Shyam Saran, at <http://www.idsa.in/node/1555>
22. "SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism", SAARC Document, at http://www.saarc-sec.org/uploads/document/SAARC%20REGIONAL%20CONVENTION%20ON%20SUPPRESSION%20OF%20TERRORISM_20100420034259.doc
23. In 2010, Dhaka handed over ULFA leaders, who had taken shelter in Bangladesh. It is now going to hand over Anup Chetia, who was arrested in 1997 and has been in a Dhaka prison. The two countries are negotiating on an extradition treaty.
24. "Myanmar sets Deadline for Manipuri Group" *The Hindustan Times*, 29 May 2012, at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/NewDelhi/Myanmar-sets-deadline-for-Manipur-groups/Article1-863207.aspx>
25. For example Bangladesh has now agreed to provide connectivity to India, Nepal and Bhutan. A few years ago transit was a bad political word and a nonstarter. Now that is not the case. Similarly, Pakistan, which does not allow overland transit facility to India to trade with Afghanistan, has now allowed India to export wheat via Karachi port.

5

Cooperative Security in South Asia: An Elusive Dream Need of the Hour?

Mahwish Hafeez

The discourse on Cooperative Security in South Asia is gradually gaining momentum but before getting into the intricacies of the issue, it is important to understand what exactly the concept of “Cooperative Security” means. Though this concept is believed to have been introduced first by Immanuel Kant in the late 18th century in his “Second Definite Article of Perpetual Peace”, where he proclaimed that “the law of nations shall be founded on a federation of free states”, the term became more popular after the end of the Cold War. Although there is no standard definition of the concept of cooperative security, its common usage and application clearly indicate a new approach to international relations. A number of scholars have come up with a variety of ideas to define this term. In this regard the model for cooperative security presented by Richard Cohen, professor of NATO and European Security Studies at the George C. Marshall European Centre for Security Studies, is interesting. In his words:

It has been generally used to describe a more peaceful, but rather idealistic approach to security through increased international harmony and cooperation.¹

Based on established institutions and on two well-recognised forms of international security, i.e., Collective Defence and Collective Security, Cohen proposes to add two new dimensions to the Concept of Cooperative Security. The model presented by him talks about four concentric and mutually reinforcing “rings of security” that includes *Individual Security*, *Collective Security*, *Collective Defence*, and *Promoting Stability*. Since the concepts of collective security and collective defence are well known, the paper focuses more on the additional two aspects that Cohen feels must be a part of the concept of cooperative security.

Cohen argues that the idea that true security must be based, first and foremost, on the security of the individual human being and it should form the core or first, inner ring, of any long-lasting and robust cooperative international security arrangement and hence, sharing of basic liberal democratic values by the member states becomes a precondition. The cooperative security system must also be proactive. Its members must be prepared to engage in collective diplomatic, economic and military action in areas outside their common space which may threaten their welfare and stability thereby promoting stability in the adjacent areas.

C. Raja Mohan describes cooperative security as:

... policies of governments, which see themselves as former adversaries or potential adversaries to shift from or avoid confrontationist policies. Cooperative security essentially reflects a policy of dealing peacefully with conflicts, not merely by abstention from violence or threats, but by active engagement in negotiation and a search for practical solution and with a commitment to preventive measures.²

This, he argues, is a complex process of building confidence and trust and there could be repeated failures.

Similarly, former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans described cooperative security as something

... to connote consultation rather than confrontation, reassurance rather than deterrence, transparency rather than secrecy, prevention rather than correction, and interdependence rather than unilateralism.³

Hence, cooperative security should link states in many ways. They must be committed to a dialogue amongst themselves on a wide range of issues and interests. Mechanisms must be developed for peacefully and amicably resolving differences between individual states or groups of states within the system, including perceived violations of individual security within one or more of the member states. Nations forming the cooperative security system must be linked by close and continuing political consultations; free and open trade relations; and closely aligned foreign and security policies, including integrated or multinational military formations. Individual nations must sometimes forego or modify pursuit of their own individual national interests for the sake of the longer-term common good. For cooperative security to become a reality, it is imperative that countries develop a sense of a common future and realize that unilateral attempts to increase their security may be doomed to failure because one state's actions cause corresponding reactions by another state, degrading the security of both. At the same time, indecisive political leadership, insufficient military capabilities, and the inevitable compromises inherent in any cooperative and consensual relationship between states are considered to be major obstacles

in the way of cooperative security. Absence of any one of these limitations will result in the failure of cooperative security system.⁴

Keeping this in view, let us now examine the factors that have prevented the regional countries from forging a close cooperative security community.

Cooperative Security in South Asia: Challenges

There seems to be a consensus among many scholars that the idea of collective security or collective defence are farfetched pipe dreams as far as the South Asian region is concerned. In fact South Asia was described by Peter Lyon two decades ago as a “region without regionalism.”⁵ At the same time, growing economic as well as energy interdependency has been proving a major factor towards bringing the regional countries on some sort of understanding on regional cooperation. However, there are some hurdles in the path of attaining this regional cooperation, namely, political instability in the region, the preponderance of India and the lack of trust of each other’s intentions among the member states. But the first and the foremost of these hurdles is the problematic relationship between the two major countries of the region—India and Pakistan. The seeds of disputes and mistrust between India and Pakistan were sowed from the time of partition. Unlike other regions of the world, like West Europe or South East Asia where cold war dynamics brought regional countries to some sort of cooperation, the South Asian region went through greater security problems as both the countries extensively procured weapons from the two superpowers to bolster their security. This, though provided a balance and stability during that time, it created conditions for long-term instability in the region. Both countries have fought wars against each other and held number of rounds of talks but have been unable to find amicable solutions to their problems. It was this deep sense of mistrust and suspicion that ultimately led the two sides to conduct nuclear tests, much to the concern of other smaller regional countries. Setting aside the core dispute of Kashmir, which has become a nuclear flashpoint in South Asia, India and Pakistan have not been able to solve disputes that are easy to do away with and might serve as a confidence building measures—the issues of Siachen Glacier and Sir Creek. The issue of Sir Creek, which was almost ready to be resolved before the Mumbai attacks took place, failed to make any headway during the meeting between the surveyor generals of the two countries in June 2012. Similarly, the issue of Siachen Glacier also failed to make any progress during the meeting that took place between the defence secretaries in June 2012.

In recent times, besides the defence question, the issue of Siachen Glacier has acquired ecological importance for Pakistan as, according to latest reports, cracks and streams have started to appear in the glaciers due to human intervention. The Glacier regulates the environment in the region and is a major

source of water for Pakistan. The projection that it might disappear in the future presents Pakistan with an existential threat.

The diversion of river waters is yet another problem that bedevils the relationship between the two South Asian countries. The diversion is expected to make Pakistan dry in a few years' time. A number of defence analysts in Pakistan have expressed their concern that this diversion of water would dry the canal systems which are strategically important for Pakistan from a defence point of view as well. Besides creating a drought-like situation in Pakistan, it is also feared that India might use various dams as a coercive tool by releasing dam water at its will causing floods in Pakistan.

The political problems between the two neighbours have had an effect on economic relations. The deep mistrust has never allowed bilateral trade relations to realize the full potential. The current volume of formal trade stands at a little over 2 billion whereas the potential is some 10 billion. Besides, both the countries have been spending major portion of their national wealth on defence instead of social sector.

Terrorism is yet another factor that has created deep rifts in South Asia. With the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, came a decade-long jihad that brought with it what is popularly known as 'Kalashnikov culture' and rise in drug trafficking in the region, particularly Pakistan. With Pakistan becoming the frontline state, the extra regional powers encouraged and trained fighters from around the world to take on the USSR. The withdrawal of Soviet forces in 1989 was followed by another long and bloody struggle among the different factions of Mujahideen but what was of more serious consequence was the abandonment of these fighters; no effort was made to rehabilitate and reintegrate the militant forces. Following the 9/11 attacks in the United States, the South Asian region once again became the battleground of the sole superpower of the world. With the large number of trained combatants readily available and religiously motivated, the war in Afghanistan has resulted in an unprecedented rise in religious extremism. Underdevelopment, lack of education and despondency of the population provided a fertile ground for recruits by parties in conflict. The country has been witnessing a series of unabated violence for the past many years that has resulted in thousands of civilian deaths. Things further got complicated with the regular Drone attacks by the US in the FATA region of Pakistan which has killed more innocent civilians as compared to actual or proclaimed targets.

Today, the situation is that the onus of dealing with this problem has been put on Pakistan alone; it is being blamed for not taking concrete steps for elimination of these militant groups. It is worth mentioning here that it is not only the neighbouring countries that are coming under attacks from the groups that are based in Pakistan or Pak-Afghan border regions but some groups inimical

to Pakistan have also been launching attacks against Pakistan from across the border region of Afghanistan. One cannot but wonder if the US, which is the sole superpower, along with its other NATO partners has not been able to establish peace and ensure security in Afghanistan after a decade long war, how Pakistan, with its very limited resources can be expected to deal with the situation without the cooperation and understanding of other regional countries. It is also incorrect to associate the menace of terrorism with one particular country or religion as all of the South Asian countries have experienced this menace at one point of time or another; be it the LTTE in Sri Lanka, Maoist movement in Nepal, Naxal movement or the rise of Hindutva organisations in India.

So what is the remedy for this grave problem? The answer lies in greater cooperation among the regional states and a strong commitment that bilateral relations will not be made hostage to incidents of terrorism as this approach encourages the forces that do not wish to see normalisation of relationship between neighbours. In addition, efforts are also required to be made to address the root causes of terrorism and extremism like lingering bilateral contentious issues, lack of education and unemployment etc. to effectively deal with the menace.

Other South Asian countries have their own set of internal and bilateral problems. Geographically located at the centre, India shares its border with almost all the regional countries, which have disputes with the largest country of the region. However, these problems are not as severe as compared to the disputes that exist between India and Pakistan. The relationship of India with her smaller neighbouring countries has also been marked with suspicion. Traditionally, the threat perception of smaller states from India coupled with the fear of hegemony has dominated the bilateral relations with India. Besides Pakistan, India also has a water sharing problem with both Bangladesh and Nepal. Indian plans of interlinking some of the major river systems running through its territory have caused much concern in both Nepal and Bangladesh. If implemented, this project would prevent Nepal from making consumptive use of river water as it would affect the flow downstream in Indian territory and Bangladesh would become dry if India digs deep canals on the upper reaches for diverting rivers that have been the main source of water for Bangladesh. Despite huge expectations, both India and Bangladesh failed to sign the Teesta water treaty during the recent visit by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to Dhaka. Furthermore, the issue of open border between India and Nepal and the Friendship Treaty of 1950, which is seen to be heavily in favour of India, also serve as irritants in India-Nepal relations. The general perception that India has been manipulating the internal political dynamics particularly in bringing down the Maoist government has resulted in anti-India feelings. In Sri Lanka, the Indian role in the ethnic conflict during 1987-90 is debateable. In addition, soon after the partition of British

India, the issue of Durand Line erupted between Pakistan and Afghanistan, an issue that continues to bedevil the relationship between these two countries.

On the positive side, since the coming of Sheikh Hasina's government, the relations between Bangladesh and India have been on the upswing. The decision on the use of Mongla and Chittagong seaports for movement of goods to and from India through road and rail with access to Nepal and Bhutan has been largely hailed as a good one. India would be facilitating Rohanpur-Singabad railway link to Bangladesh for transit to Nepal while Bangladesh might convert Radhikapur-Birol railway line into broad gauge to extend a railway link to Bhutan. This is expected to create a strong economic and trade relations between the regional countries. Similarly, Nepal and Bhutan are estimated to have a hydropower potential of 30,000 to 50,000 MW of clean renewable energy to be fed into the Indian and Bangladesh grid in the years ahead. India is also assisting Sri Lanka in its effort of rehabilitating Tamils who were displaced during the final phase of war against the LTTE.

Regionalism and the Role of SAARC

The idea of setting up a regional organisation was first mooted by the late Bangladeshi President Ziaur Rahman. In 1985, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation or SAARC appeared on the world stage to give this region its rightful place in world affairs. The creation of SAARC was a land mark achievement and the first institutional effort on the part of seven South Asian countries to forge an understanding and cooperation among themselves. The organisation was envisaged as complementing, instead of being a substitute for, bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Sovereign equality, territorial integrity, political independence and non-interference in the internal affairs of the other states provided the basis of this cooperation. The main aim behind the creation of SAARC was the welfare of the people through economic growth, providing the people of the region with the opportunity to live in dignity and promoting collective self-reliance among each other. It was also agreed upon to cover the issues of mutual trust, understanding of each other's problems and cooperation in international forums on matters of common interest. Since its creation, SAARC has attempted to address several regional issues including drug trafficking, human smuggling, economic cooperation and to tackle the issue of terrorism.⁶

By 1990s, there was growing sense of adopting a new approach to the neighbouring countries in India. This thought finally resulted in the "Gujral Doctrine", which advocated accommodation of the interests of neighbouring states without expectation of reciprocity. Subsequently, certain positive developments took place in South Asia. India signed agreements on water sharing with Nepal and Bangladesh in 1996. In 1998, India signed a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with Sri Lanka—the first country which signed FTA with India in the region. During the 12th SAARC summit held in Islamabad, the

member-states signed an agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA).⁷ For many, this was the turning point for the organisation. The agreement provided a framework of rules for step by step liberalizing intra-regional trade in such a manner that all countries would share the benefits of trade expansion. The SAFTA agreement was ratified and entered into force in early 2006.⁸ The agreement aimed to eliminate all sorts of barriers in trade and facilitation of free and fair movement of products, promoting fair competition and free trade environment in respect of the existing economic conditions that ensures maximum benefits and establish an institutional frame to promote and expand regional cooperation. The agreement also called for the compensation for revenue losses for smaller regional economies like Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Maldives in the event of tariff reductions. India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka were required to bring their duties down to 20 per cent in the first two years of SAFTA's implementation. In the final five years phase ending in 2012, the 20 per cent duty will be reduced to zero in a series of annual cuts. Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Maldives have an additional three years, till 2017, to reach zero duty.⁹

Here again, the troublesome nature of relations between India and Pakistan proved to be a stumbling block. However, the September 2012 meetings between the commerce secretaries and finance ministers of the two countries resulted in some positive movements with the Pakistani Cabinet approving the grant of Most Favoured Nation status to India. SAARC has also focused on areas like population stabilisation, women empowerment, human resource development etc. through its social charter that was signed in Islamabad in 2004.

Another achievement of SAARC was the adoption of the "SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism". This convention was signed on 4 November 1987 and came into force on 22 August 1988.¹⁰ An additional protocol to the SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism was signed during the twelfth SAARC summit in January 2004. This came into force on 12 January 2006, and sought to strengthen the SAARC Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism by criminalizing the provision, collection or acquisition of funds for the purpose of committing terrorist acts and taking further measures to prevent and suppress financing of terrorist acts. Since then, a number of meetings of SAARC interior or home ministers have taken place to review and discuss measures undertaken by the member states to implement the convention and the additional protocol at the national level. As the issue of terrorism is a common challenge in the South Asian region, it certainly can provide a basic framework for cooperative security in South Asia.

It is worth mentioning here that being a regional organisation, SAARC also provided a forum for regional countries to continue dialogue even if the talks had broken down at the bilateral level. In fact, the renewed peace process between India and Pakistan is the result of a series of meetings between the foreign

secretaries and prime ministers of the two countries at the side lines of SAARC summits.

Yet, the fact remains that SAARC has not been able to realize its full potential due to ongoing disputes the member-nations. The organisation has failed to forge an effective regional identity. Apart from India-Pakistan relations, the concerns peculiar to other regional states have also hindered cooperation between member-states. The discrepancy of power and size between India and the neighbouring countries of the region has been a significant factor in the policy thinking of the smaller countries of the region. There has been a fear that increased interdependence will lead to the erosion of political autonomies and would undermine their efforts for securing an honourable settlement of bilateral disputes with India. The region is plagued by a number of common challenges having potential of posing serious threats like drug smuggling, human trafficking, illegal migration of people, and arms proliferation etc. It is the need of the hour that the SAARC member states come closer to each other and deal with these issues together.

Conclusion

Given the single geographical component, the fates of 1.64 billion people of South Asia are inter-connected. Despite the hitches in the way of forging cooperative security in South Asia, some recent developments are of some respite. The dialogue between India and Pakistan has once again been resumed after a gap of almost two years. In fact, the resolve to turn a new leaf in bilateral relations that was expressed during a meeting between the then Pakistan Prime Minister Yousuf Raza Gilani and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at the 17th SAARC Summit, is indeed commendable.¹¹ Some positive decisions were taken during the course of the series of meetings that have taken place between senior level officials of the two countries. However, the fundamental challenge for both the countries is: how to make this renewed dialogue sustainable, uninterrupted and result-oriented. One cannot shy away from the responsibility of tackling the menace of terrorism. It is absolutely imperative for Pakistan to take concrete measures to deal with the growing extremism in the country which is threatening its national integrity. Extremism and terrorism is threatening the very fabric of Pakistani society and believed to be posing an existential threat. But, at the same time, it is also important to understand that holding a bilateral relationship ransom to one or two odd incidents is also not a helpful policy to deal with these issues effectively.

Political instability, drug trafficking, human smuggling, rise of fundamentalism and religious extremism, deteriorating law and order situation and human rights, trade and environment are the factors that necessitates close cooperation amongst the South Asian States in order to come up with a common vision and a common regional response. Since the charter of SAARC does not

allow discussion on contentious bilateral issues, therefore, it becomes the responsibility of all the states, and more so of India, by virtue of being the largest country of the region, to lead the region towards peace and cooperation. The mistrust and threat perceptions of the smaller countries of the region are the main hurdles in the way of creating an environment conducive to enhancing cooperation among the SAARC member-states; they have to be replaced with a higher degree of mutual trust and confidence. In this regard, the role played by Indonesia, the largest and militarily strongest country of South East Asia, in making ASEAN an effective organisation sets a good example. The people of South Asia have a common cultural heritage and historic experience. With better understanding of each other and the sincerity of a political will and commitment to the better common future, this region can secure for itself its rightful place at the world stage. It is now up to the people of South Asia to decide whether they overcome the troubled past and move forward towards achieving peace and economic prosperity for the benefit of all or let the clouds of uncertainty continue to hover over this region.



Notes

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PART-II

Security Challenges for South Asia: Country Perspectives

6

Prospects of Cooperative Security Framework for Afghanistan

Mohammad Daoud Sultanzoy

A look at Afghanistan, its future, its challenges, both internal and external, has been a consuming proposition, which has kept all those involved, and occupied for several years with no clear answers about its future.

It is true that after decades of fighting this volatile state has witnessed some progress in terms of human rights, political and economic reforms and infrastructure building.

On the other hand, a number of extremely disturbing countervailing trends are evident: The actual influence and control of the government of Hamid Karzai extends only feebly beyond the outskirts of Kabul; ethno-linguistic fragmentation is on the rise; an increasingly sophisticated insurgency threatens stability; large areas of Afghanistan are still ruled by warlords/druglords; and—possibly most damning for the long-term stabilisation of Afghanistan—the country is fast approaching narco-state status with its opium production and transport, representing over 65 per cent of the country's GDP. Current estimates posit that approximately 90 per cent of the world's heroin is produced in Afghanistan. Most troubling of these trends is the persistence of old patterns of identity politics in the seemingly new Afghan context.

It has become very clear that in the past ten years many opportunities for improvement have been lost. These opportunities have been lost first and foremost by the Afghan leadership, for not being able to play its part in every single aspect of governance, and second, by the international community, for not fully recognizing the importance of a more transparent, disciplined, well-coordinated and coherent approach to tackling the problems in Afghanistan. Such a wrong footing has turned a historic opportunity into a potentially colossal

failure. The third and equally important dimension in this dilemma is that the Afghans as a society and nation have failed to become active participants in their own affairs. This blame can be shared by the Afghan leadership and international community for keeping an entire nation hostage to the forces of war, drugs, quasi-political organisations and the new emerging economic/political mafia, robbing it of the self-confidence and trust in each other, in the government and the international community, a vital prerequisite of societal participation in all matters of importance to a nation.

International actors have to take cognizance of the reality on the ground—the reality of poverty, poor healthcare, the lowest life expectancy in the world, poor education and an acute shortage of other services which pales in proportion to the amount of aid and money that has been allocated to this country so far.

Issues to Deal with

The people of Afghanistan know they still have to deal with corruption, lack of co-ordination and cohesion, indecisiveness coupled with other problems, stemming from a failed leadership that makes the effectiveness of aid delivery and reconstruction difficult as it has been for the past ten years. The people know that the reasons for problems have not changed, the only thing that has changed is greater emphasis now than ever before on discussing them. They know that while the future of Afghanistan depends on them and what they do, they also realize that involvement of the international community has become more of a pertinent factor for a nation that has endured so much strife.

While issues like security are at the forefront, many other related factors are equally relevant. Reforms of all sorts are perpetually discussed at length. Weak leadership, corruption, rule of law, good governance, justice and transitional justice, opium and drugs, and reconstruction are topics discussed and critiqued at length and to the extent of desensitizing those who should act.

The “Mission” started in a reactive mode when the world began its Afghan endeavour in 2001. It is this mode that has added to the already complex nature of the mission. New dimensions of these complexities are noticed daily. While all involved need to stay focused on the above-mentioned issues, there is also the need to address some specific concerns that may be lost in the rush to reach advertised milestones, benchmarks and timelines.

The “War on Terror” achieved one of its stated goals of ousting the Taliban from power. International military efforts have attempted to achieve the other stated goal of uprooting al Qaeda. The emphasis and concentration of efforts on this latter goal, however, compromised the other pressing aspects of the war, as issues of reconstruction and institution-building were anaemically dealt with, and regional aspects of the war were not adequately confronted to say the least.

There are some issues that the people of the country, especially the younger generation which comprises 85 per cent of the population, is worried about and

are anxiously looking for answers. Plainly put, they are wondering what is going to happen to them in terms of daily living, jobs and simple aspects of life. While they are worried about the provision of basic necessities, they are also concerned with the political future of their country, which is connected to their own, personal well-being.

They are asking basic questions for like:

- How effective is democracy in Afghanistan if the generation of the future, the majority, are hostages to the past, indefinitely and see themselves ruled by the old guards of the dark ages?
- Who is providing real and meaningful support to the people who are genuinely working for democracy, as others of dubious credentials and anti-democratic forces who have hijacked democracy, have multiple regional and international sponsors and are setting out to undo whatever is done in the direction of democratisation and harmony?
- Will there be stability and democracy in future or will there be a return to its chaotic and turbulent past?

It is of vital importance to realize that younger generations of Afghans are at crossroads. They are watching helplessly as bystanders, while others who do not understand them and cannot relate to them, are making all the decisions for them. The youth do not feel they are part of the political process. This is due to a lack of integration into meaningful social and political programmes, in addition to the inability of the Afghan leadership to galvanize and lead the youth. Similarly, the leadership does not appear to be addressing the immediate needs of the citizens, thus creating a disconnect and a void between the population and government. The risk of maintaining this inadequate relationship is further driving people away from the mainstream and creating opportunities for distrust in the authority that once vehemently stated it would fulfill its promises. If these needs are not met, citizens could be driven toward extremism and criminality, and once these occurrences fully unravel, it will be increasingly difficult to restore control and order.

These issues are not only of immediate concern to the younger Afghan generations but should also be immediately addressed by our regional and international allies and the Afghan government.

Finding an adequate response to these needs can create the essential impetus and provide a catalyst so the people can become part of the process and not simply observe as bystanders. The following points are quite important in this context.

- No nation and region can be accorded lasting security, unless its citizens have ownership of that security.
- No people can have a sense of ownership if they do not feel being part of the process.

- No process will succeed if it lacks proper leadership.
- No leadership can lead if it is void of credibility.

With these facts in mind we must examine, whether there is:

- i) a danger that non-democrats could hijack a new democracy in Afghanistan;
- ii) a need to give Afghans a sense of ownership of this democracy; and
- iii) a need for Afghans to make the democratic process more accountable.

The challenges and needs elaborated here seem even more daunting when one looks at the ticking clock, with 2014, the date of withdrawal of foreign troops, approaching even faster. Much needs to be done and if Afghanistan proceeds at the same pace, with the same players, it is not going to meet the timelines and benchmarks that are usually being fixed by looking at political calendars outside Afghanistan.

As an example, the news of troops reduction by the US can be used as a good barometer by which we can measure matters after the withdrawal of NATO and US forces by 2014.

An emboldened Taliban has resurfaced, mainly because some in Pakistan, Iran, Russia and perhaps China are seriously calculating that the US and international community's lack of resolve and global economic crises have created a perfect situation for them and they are well prepared to take advantage of this disarray. The Taliban and their benefactors are fully aware of the inability of the Afghan government.

In order to show our seriousness as a group of nations in our promise to help Afghanistan and the region, we must fully equip ourselves to fulfill our commitment. We know what the people of Afghanistan want and need in terms of change, and these demands can be realised by the Afghans and in cooperation with members of this region.

The desires of the Afghan people are not any different from other peoples or nations. Meaningful and long-lasting change is what the people want. If we fail to recognize this "much-needed" aspiration, then a nation will arise whose majority will side with the opponents of democracy. Disillusionment will lead to widespread extremism and criminality, among other consequences of failure to fulfill Afghan needs during this critical period. We may be confronted with a nation which will no longer trust any system of governance, as the failure of promises to provide change and reform to Afghanistan by so many countries has shown. The ramifications of such failure and loss of credibility by the international community in Afghanistan will not be limited to Afghanistan, as its reverberations will be felt throughout the region, the entire Islamic world, and beyond.

The Prospects of Cooperation for Security

The prospects of a Cooperative Security Framework for Afghanistan in the context of regional security can be looked at, based on an analytical foundation in which we must allow for options that are coherent and realistic and which take into consideration the existing realities in all arenas (domestic, regional and global). In order to achieve the objective in this short rendering, we must briefly review some options.

The first priority is to define what is meant by “regional security.” Is the primary focus on the national security of individual nation-states, on collective security among sovereign allies, or on the security of individual citizens? Who is the architect and who the subject of a regional-security architecture?

In general, the sovereign nation-state remains the principal focus when constructing a framework for security and stability in all the regions of the world, including Afghanistan and South Asia. However, states are made up of individuals, and it should be recognised that the domestic dimension of stability, peace and prosperity cannot be forgotten. This applies in particular to the present situation in Afghanistan.

If we look at the demographics of this region and unlock our vision from the existing mindset with which we see this region, we can go so far as to say that in the long run the greatest primary danger in South Asia is not a threat of a nuclear India and Pakistan or of a conventional invasion by an aggressor, but rather of internal socio-economic and political changes that might be increasingly hard to control. The latter may cause the former.

One can offer the following definition of regional security: a situation in which the financial and human capital of nations is used primarily for social, political, economic and spiritual development, rather than for military and security/police forces. The question is, how does one arrive at this ideal endpoint?

To clarify the major strategic choices facing decision-makers in both the South Asian region and in the capitals of external powers, we can draw a concise outline of three competing schools of thought in international security: *the hegemonic* or *counter-proliferation school*, *the realist school* and *the cooperative-security school* (sometimes referred to as liberal internationalism, liberal institutionalism or constitutionalism).

The final goal of all three frameworks is to create a stable and peaceful structure of relationships that allows every state to meet its minimum security needs and develop its economy and political institutions without at the same time increasing the level of threat towards its neighbours.

The frameworks must also address the question of legitimacy and authority: What constitutes the lawful use of power, whether diplomatic, economic or military? How can instruments of power be used in a way that is seen as legitimate by as many actors as possible?

Legitimacy and authority matter. If some prominent states (or even sub-national groups) believe that the prevailing framework for security is purposely disadvantageous for them and targets their beliefs, values and economy, these targeted actors will find ways to subvert, weaken and even destroy it, undermining the chances for peaceful development for all states within the region. Hence, legitimacy and authority are intimately connected to questions of sustainability. If a security framework is to last, it must be supported by most of the actors affected by it. The gains achieved through the creation of a security framework must, to a large extent, be seen as mutual gains. In turn, how widely and equitably the gains of growth are distributed will depend on whether the ideological, economic and military circumstances of a given region are conducive to sharing them.

Alternative Frameworks

While we can keep in mind the options of various competing schools of thought in security practice today—the traditional model of competitive *Realpolitik* and the evolving, conflicting models of *hegemony* and *cooperative security*—the South Asian region will probably need to look at the *cooperative-security school*.

This school incorporates far different assumptions about world politics and the place of the stronger powers within it. The central idea is that all nation-states will find greater relative security through mutual obligations to limit their military capabilities rather than through unilateral or allied attempts to gain dominance. It is not only friends and allies who participate in security regimes. The cooperative-security outlook assumes that enemies or potential enemies will accept the same legal and technical constraints on behaviour as friends, despite the existence of substantial mutual mistrust. It is also assumed that these legal and technical constraints will be mutually advantageous and verifiable. Security is guaranteed not through dominance, but through the outlawing of policy options that have the goal of achieving dominance over the opponent in order to prevail as a hegemonic power.

Ground Realities in Afghanistan

The internal aspect of conflicts in Afghanistan for several decades is significant by itself. Looking at a larger and historic context at least from the colonial era, with which India is thoroughly familiar, Afghans feel they are still paying for their “deeds” of that period of history. Pakistan since its inception has been the benefactor of the inheritance of that era. This has been a major factor for instability in the region. For any security framework to be sustainable, we must take into consideration a process that, with historic facts in mind, depicts a path which would produce enough dividend in peace and stability than subversion and war. The zero sum game mindset of some regional players must be counterbalanced by a coefficient that is derived from economic schemes as the cornerstone of the South Asia Security Framework.

Earlier we mentioned the issue of legitimacy when addressing options for a security framework. One serious obstacle when addressing issues relating to legitimacy is also the legitimacy of some states, more specifically the legitimacy of political leaderships in some countries. This major legitimacy concern is more pronounced in Afghanistan, to the extent of alienating the Afghans not only from their government but, more importantly, from the international friends of Afghanistan who are perceived and seen as sponsors of the imposition of intolerable conditions in multitude of spheres of daily lives of people. By the same token, the basic recipients of a security framework should be the people of the region. Afghans being an integral part of the region have no ownership in the system they live under, and therefore, have no interest in playing their role as the stakeholders they need to become.

In order to address another important factor in which some countries, including regional countries as our allies, should play a practical role in enhancing the chance of establishing a sustainable security framework in which Afghanistan must play its necessary role, is to hold the Afghan government accountable and force it to address the pressing needs of its people. This becomes more pertinent in light of the fact that the same countries are donor countries to Afghanistan and owe it to their own citizens to enforce accountability. Taking this necessary step would narrow the gulf between the people and the government in Afghanistan as well as regain trust in the international community's efforts in this country.

This democracy in Afghanistan has perilously fragile foundations. The resurrection of the Taliban was not a work of God but the work of our allies and their ill-conceived half-baked strategies designed for quick gains without taking into consideration even their own claims of helping a democracy in Afghanistan. The us invasion had toppled the Taliban but, many Afghans complained that it left behind other forces they hated: the warlords who had plundered the country for decades. Instead of being banished, many of the old faces came back with a vengeance.

At the moment democracy is hijacked in this country by those whose DNAs are anti-democratic. Some so-called Afghan experts and countries that sponsor those experts have already coined a phrase "good enough for Afghanistan",¹ by which they mean that what is going on in Afghanistan in terms of political transformation and lack thereof is what we should be content with and not set any higher goals for achieving a better society. They ignore the fact that we are all living in the same times and are affected by the same currents: technological, sociopolitical and so on. The 21st century's human needs, even if we omit the word "democracy" from it, remain very similar for most societies, advanced or otherwise. They all need basic services, basic freedoms, rule of law, a justice system that can function. This can only be provided by a government that is responsive to these basic needs. This type of government can only be produced

by the people it is required to serve. Call it what you want; only a democracy can suffice in today's environment for the basic needs of today's humans.

So even those who want to keep Afghanistan as a "museum of nostalgia" should realize that "good enough" for Afghanistan is "no longer good enough".

Our international friends, especially India, must bear in mind that the overwhelming majority of our young population are living under unrepresentative appalling political conditions while all our friends are perpetuating this state of affairs consciously or otherwise are prolonging this condition by feeding the political and economic mafia in the country. Those of us who are trying to present a political alternative for the people and for the future of stable and secure Afghanistan are helpless. India in particular needs to pay attention to this important void, help remedy the situation and defuse this time bomb by supporting the real and credible democratic elements in the country. Inattention will allow the extreme fringes of the political spectrum in an unholy alliance with regional political and economical mafia to once again steel the next presidential election. If and when that happens, the prospect of regional security for the region will be very grim at best. Help those who can help regional security.

In this age of information it is extremely explosive for people to see the trappings of representative democracy around them but little tangible evidence of it working in their lives. This essentially makes them feel powerless. It should not come as a surprise when these helpless millions of young unemployed youth are attracted to, and absorbed by, extremism. Then, God help this region.

There is also a classic case in which we can observe a hegemonic behaviour, by our neighbour Pakistan, while Indian involvement in Afghanistan is extremely sensitive because of the delicate and often deadly power games in South Asia; with Pakistan vehemently opposed to India having a close relation with Afghanistan it considers its backyard.

After the signing of the strategic partnership between Afghanistan and India, C. Raja Mohan, a senior analyst at the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, said Karzai's speech was clear in its message that Pakistan would need to be brought on board for peace to prevail.² It "highlights one point very clearly: that India and Afghanistan will have to find ways to deal with Pakistan...both countries are facing enormous difficulties in dealing with Pakistan."³

Analyst Hasan Askari Rizvi, referring to the Pakistani reaction to the signing of the strategic partnership with India, said, "Unfortunately, there is so much Indian obsession in Pakistan that with every minor Indian move, there is panic."⁴

India, which has trained a small number of officers from the Afghan National Army, is offering more security training to Afghanistan. Even though India and Pakistan have been trying to improve relations, Pakistan is desperate to minimize any Indian role in Afghanistan. To do that, Pakistan is looking to the Haqqani Afghan insurgent network to counter Indian sway, a strategy that infuriates

Washington. A former top US military officer has accused Pakistani intelligence of supporting an attack allegedly carried out by the Haqqani group, which is close to al Qaeda, on the US embassy in Kabul on 13 September 2011. Pakistan, which denies ties with the group, says it is committed to helping all parties secure peace in Afghanistan. Pakistan's long ties to militant groups in Afghanistan, however, are a constant source of concern for India. It suspects Pakistan of involvement in several major attacks, including two bombings of its embassy in Kabul in 2008 and 2009, seen as warnings from Islamabad to stay away from its traditional "backyard." We will have to persevere in Afghanistan in the face of opposition by Pakistan.

The generals who run Pakistan have not abandoned their obsession for challenging India. They tolerate terrorists at home, seek a Taliban victory in Afghanistan and are building the world's fastest-growing nuclear arsenal. They have sidelined and intimidated civilian leaders elected in 2008. They seem to think Pakistan is invulnerable, because they control NATO's supply line from Karachi to Kabul and have nuclear weapons.

The generals also think time is on their side that NATO is certain to leave Afghanistan, and they will be free to act as they wish. So they have concluded that the sooner the foreign troops leave, the better it will be for Pakistan. They think that Americans and Europeans have realised that they cannot win the war in Afghanistan, that is why they are encouraging the Taliban and other militant groups to enter into dialogue with them.

Ironically, while the rhetoric from Islamabad is about political talks and multi-track diplomacy, Pakistan has, till date, been either unwilling or unable to present a preferred end-game in Afghanistan, or articulate an alternate strategy for engaging all relevant sides on the country's future. Pakistani leaders have also failed to elucidate their vision of Afghanistan and their own role in the region. Instead, as has been the case for the past four decades, it has used repeated denials and deceptive tactics, preferring to covertly use extremist groups as proxy assets, and stoke ethnic tensions between Pashtuns and other groups.

On the other side, recent tensions have generated a nascent debate and introspection of alternate strategic choices within segments of the Pakistani intelligentsia. This can be construed as a positive development. There is a growing body of opinion in Pakistan itself that the time for their strategic games is up... and some say [the Haqqanis] "are assets for the future", others say, "Haven't we played enough of Afghan games and isn't it time to let that unfortunate country be on its own?"⁵

Dialogue between India and Pakistan is essential. India and Pakistan are trying to improve trade and transportation links severed after they became independent in 1947, a step that should be encouraged. Efforts should also be made to increase intelligence cooperation against terrorist targets in Pakistan.

And both countries should be encouraged to be more conciliatory on Kashmir, by easing border controls and releasing prisoners.

Today, Afghanistan stands at a critical juncture: one path leads down to the abyss of more warfare and unforeseeable predicament; the other offers a silver line of hope along a slower and winding road to what Afghans hope will be durable stability, peace and prosperity. But to get to this point, Afghanistan must deal with four key issues: Pakistan and broader regional rivalries, persistent governance shortcomings, future economic prospects, and sources of tension and worry in the international community.

While we must pursue a coherent and coordinated political track as a necessity, building up good neighbourly relations based on non-interference, sovereign rights, and mutual interest is the only win-win option left. This counter-approach will require an added effort not only on the part of the United States and NATO, but also other concerned interlocutors, including the Chinese, Saudis, Russians and Turks, to make use of collective diplomatic leverage to push for a cessation of hostilities, and seek a resolution that is in line with past U.N. resolutions dealing with Afghan sovereignty and outside interference.

External Powers and Regional Instability

America needs a new policy for dealing with Pakistan. First, we must recognize that the two countries' strategic interests are in conflict, not in harmony, and will remain that way as long as Pakistan's army controls Pakistan's strategic policies. All parties must work together to contain the Pakistani Army's ambitions until real civilian rule returns and Pakistanis set a new direction for their foreign policy. To this end, the United States and NATO need to clearly lay out a policy that does not swing between "appeasement" and scolding of those who are using non-state terrorist actors as strategic assets against Afghan and international forces.

In Afghanistan, we should not have false hopes for a quick political solution. We can hope that top figures among the Quetta Shura versus Afghan Taliban leaders who are sheltered in Quetta, Pakistan will be delivered to the bargaining table, but that is unlikely in the near future, since the Quetta leadership assassinated Burhanuddin Rabbani, the leader of Afghanistan's High Peace Council and a former Afghan president. The ISI will veto any Taliban peace efforts it opposes, which means any effort it does not control. Rather than hoping for ISI help, we need to continue to build an Afghan Army that can control the insurgency with long-term NATO assistance and minimal combat troops.

Gains over the last 10 years could not have occurred without the significant contributions and sacrifices made by the international community. But these gains are fragile and ultimately unsustainable. The emphases should be to create a viable democratic process, to help and build-up "national" security institutions, social and economic development, governance, rule of law, gender rights, and

regional and international cooperation. And we know now that none of the aforementioned tasks can be fully realised unless the insurgency is brought under control. The worst scenario would be to continue with rhetorical declarations. It is always good to think the right thoughts and say the right things. The task would be to put all of that into practice.

While a small, yet growing, urban middle class is emerging across the country, economic growth in the years to come will depend on security, good governance and rule of law. As long as people are living in fear of attacks and corruption, local and foreign investment outlays will suffer, and more money will leave the country through illegal pathways. Although other indicators such as yearly Gross National Product (GNP) per capita (which has almost tripled since 2001 to more than \$500) and government revenues have experienced exponential growth, economists forecast a drop in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of 30 per cent by the end of 2014, when international forces are expected to hand over security to Afghans and leave. To offset this dramatic shock, the country needs to accelerate the development of its promising mineral and agricultural potential, as well as call on learned economists and other specialists to proactively propose alternate solutions.

Since Afghanistan's position as a land-bridge between Central Asia, China, Iran and South Asia allows it to facilitate multi-directional trade and transit, it is essential that other nations in the region with high demands for raw material, natural resources or trade corridors appreciate the importance of promoting regional integration and revitalisation of projects such as the "New Silk Road" initiative with the United States, China, India, Central Asian nations and other interested parties.

To this end, it is of utmost importance to free Afghanistan from a de-facto "selective blockade" by Pakistan and its transit arteries. This should be achieved by linking Afghanistan through the port of Chabahar to sea, and developing other alternatives via Central Asia as well. India could be encouraged to use its influence and purchasing power with Iran and Afghanistan as both a steady customer and facilitator. India should also see the long term need for resources available in Afghanistan as an instrument for stability and prepare to make strategic investments in the country which will become a catalyst for stability while fulfilling Indo-Afghan needs.

A lingering anxiety about 2014 and what sort of government develops in Afghanistan after that date have presented scope much for discussion. The final verdict is unclear, but as the United States pulls its troops out of Afghanistan, Pakistan may make sure the future government structure in Afghanistan will almost certainly include elements of the Taliban that are now fighting us forces. That could provide a bridgehead for radical Islamist groups to move northward, into the ex-Soviet Central Asian Republics and possibly to Russia itself. Indeed, over the last months, Russian officials have been openly discussing this threat.

“We [are not] on the verge of solving the problems in Afghanistan, but on the worsening of them, and quite a qualitatively different situation in the Central Asian region, especially after 2014,”⁶ said Nikolai Bordyuzha, former chief of the Russian border service and now secretary general of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation, a Russia-led group that aims to form a political-military bloc to increase security in the former Soviet Union. As he noted, for Russia, the “prognosis is clear: Afghanistan will remain a base for organizing terrorist and extremist activities...[and]...Russia should expect the activation of militant activity on the borders of Central Asia after the withdrawal of coalition forces from Iraq and Afghanistan. Threats can now come creeping to our southern borders’. Irina Zvyagelskaya, vice president of Russia’s Centre for Strategic and Political Studies and senior scholar of the Russian Academy of Sciences Institute of Oriental Studies, expressed Russian concerns and dilemmas in a very lucid manner: ‘There were a lot of people here who said the US being in Afghanistan was against Russian interests. Now the same people are saying, “How dare they leave Afghanistan?”’⁷ ‘We don’t want NATO to go and leave us to face the jackals of war after stirring up the anthill. Immediately after the NATO withdrawal, they will expand towards Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and it will become our problem then,’ said Russia’s ambassador to NATO, Dmitry Rogozin, in an interview with the French newspaper *Le Figaro*.⁸

In the meantime, authoritarian regimes in Central Asian states have, fearing internal opposition from extremist groups, imposed strict controls on their people. They may give a fillip to radical Islamist assertion leading to instability closer to Russian borders.

In any case, a decreased US presence in Afghanistan and the surrounding countries is inevitable. And whether Russia likes it or not, it will have to take a greater amount of responsibility for managing threats that might emerge in its near abroad.

One of the fundamental assumptions driving US exit strategy is that the Afghan National Security Forces will be able to stand up as the foreign forces withdraw. They underline that the Afghans are good soldiers and given a chance, they will take care of themselves. However, slashing of budget for training, paying and equipping the ANSF may prove counter-productive. A reduction in salaries to about \$200 a month for an Afghan army private could lead to wider defections.

The American attempts to rapidly boost the number of alternative security forces may also undermine stability. A report released recently by Human Rights Watch documents alarming levels of abuse by the Afghan Local Police, a force created by the US in remote areas where more formal security forces are spread thin. These militias have been accused of rape, murder, extortion, armed land grabs and, in one gruesome case, hammering nails through the foot of a suspected teenage insurgent. David Petraeus, who commanded the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force before he stepped down to head the CIA, told the US

Senate in March 2012 that the programme was “arguably the most critical element in our effort to help Afghanistan develop the capability to secure itself.”⁹

After publicly accusing Pakistan’s intelligence service of aiding and directing the insurgents, the US administration has offered a new compact. The price of attaining its desired position of influence over Afghanistan’s future, Clinton and others in a high-powered delegation told Pakistan during a visit there last week, is intelligence and military assistance in US strikes against the Haqqani leadership, along with pressure on the insurgents to negotiate. Once again, it seems Afghanistan has been sacrificed in the new great game many countries do not have the stamina to play. And once again the ISI might be prevailing.

It is against this background that we need to address the inevitable work ahead of us to prepare the region to meet its present and future challenges by bringing peace and stability. It is only then that we can all enjoy the full potential of what lies ahead in terms of opportunities that can allow our masses and our future generations to live as productive participants of our times.

The prospect is not of doom and gloom. It just requires a steady and concerted effort and it has to start by as few or as many countries that are committed to this necessity and urgency and who understand the inevitable need for such a regional approach. The initial steps must be taken and eventually others will wake up and adopt a new vision for joining hands to meet the more pressing challenges of the region. Progress cannot wait for those who are stuck in the past.



Notes

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7

Cooperative Security Framework for South Asia: A Sri Lankan Perspective

W. I. Siriweera and Sanath de Silva

The concept of security has undergone changes over the last two decades as have the leading concerns of security strategists. Security, today, encompasses issues such as environmental pollution, depletion of the ozone layer, global warming, the influx of refugees, hierarchical social relations, feminist security, food security, etc. which fall into the category of “human security” or “comprehensive security”. The concept of “human security” came into prominence in the debate following the 1994 Human Development Report of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The UNDP proposed that the focus should shift from traditional norms of security including nuclear security to human security. The Report redefined security thus: “For most people, a feeling of insecurity arises more from worries about daily life than from dread of a cataclysmic world event... Human security is not a concept with weapons—it is a concern with human life and dignity.”¹ While this concept may be useful in indicating the variety of human needs that must be satisfied, it is far too expansive and elastic to be an effective policy goal, and does not offer an appealing alternative to the traditional conception of security.

On the other hand, the production of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) has forced states to consider protecting themselves through new forms and ways such as prevention of proliferation of conventional and unconventional weapons. International terrorism, too, poses a threat that cannot be countered by instruments used by the traditional defence systems. It is in this context that the idea of “cooperative security” emerged to achieve traditional security goals.

South Asia in comparison with other regions in the world has experienced a large number of inter-state conflicts since World War II. Therefore, the need

for a cooperative security framework was not perceived in the region and for the region for several decades after the independence of the region's States that were under colonial domination. The influence of globalisation and the worsening security situation in different parts of the world has led South Asian countries to demand greater regional cooperation for development. These countries have realised that the costs of non-cooperation are higher than the cost of cooperation.

The ideal in the South Asian context would be to bring all the countries belonging to the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) to a common platform instead of seeking to redress power imbalances among themselves through assistance from external powers. Resolving political conflicts prevalent among the regional neighbours and developing a collective regional security architecture is the best means to deal with extra-regional threats. The realisation of the goal is an enormous challenge and a colossal task that cannot be achieved in a short span of time. SAARC can succeed in achieving the extra-territorial objective of regional cooperation only upon the willingness of its members to subordinate their mutual fears and suspicions.

Although the boundaries of traditional security have expanded noticeably, historical legacies play a key role in determining bilateral relationships and inhibiting the process of regional cooperation to deal adequately with security issues in the South Asian region. Sri Lanka and India would not be able to address future cooperative security issues unless they understand the root causes of the present cooperative security ambiguities. There are historic factors that hinder issues of cooperation between two countries. In the pre-colonial era, for instance, political factors and the segmented nature of the Indian states resulted in only South Indian power centres posing a threat to the Sri Lankan state under different dynasties.² Major North Indian kingdoms on the other hand, had maintained cordial commercial, religious and cultural relations with Sri Lanka. This state of affairs has changed as a result of the emergence of an independent Indian state. Even prior to India's independence, the Indian scholar-diplomat K.M. Panikkar had stated in 1945 that "a realistic policy of Indian defence was the internal organisation of India on a firm and stable basis with Burma and Ceylon."³ In the same year, Jawaharlal Nehru, the architect of India's foreign policy, added that Sri Lanka "would be inevitably drawn into a closer union with India."⁴ But subsequently, on numerous occasions in the 1950s, Nehru repudiated any suggestion that India had designs to interfere with the island's sovereignty and assured Sri Lanka of India's goodwill and peaceful intentions toward her.⁵

Yet, the perception of threat from India was a very real element in security considerations in Sri Lanka, more specifically during the period 1948-56, but to a lesser extent after. Some of the statements of the Indian defence establishment too have contributed to this perceived threat. For example, Ravi Kaul, a former commander in the Indian Navy, wrote in 1974: "As long as Sri Lanka is friendly

or neutral, India has nothing to worry about but if there be any danger of the island falling under the domination of a power hostile to India, [it] cannot tolerate such a situation endangering her territorial integrity.”⁶

It was not unnatural for India to have its own perception of its regional security interests. It had demonstrated interests and concern over Sri Lanka's international relations, but it was also inherent in the geopolitical situation, in the locational determinism of India-Sri Lanka relations that a fear psychosis of India persisted in Sri Lanka to a greater or lesser degree. This depended on variables such as international situation, issues of domestic politics and the personality factor.⁷

Therefore, there had been tendencies on the part of Sri Lanka's decision-makers to seek diplomatic reinsurance in various forms against any attempt by India to dominate it. On India's part, there had been a tendency to regard Sri Lanka (together with other small neighbours), as a legitimate object of its interest and concern as a country located within its security sphere. India in many instances had assumed that Sri Lanka's foreign contacts had to be conditioned by the demands of Indian national security interests. Relatively recent concerns of India's security as well as concerns of Sri Lanka's security need to be understood in this broader context.

There are specific as well as general factors that need to be taken in to account in a situation of cooperative security paradigm between India and Sri Lanka. One of the important specific issues is the Indo-Sri Lanka maritime boundary. The maritime boundary between Sri Lanka and India is divided at three different sea areas: Bay of Bengal, Palk Straits and the Gulf of Mannar. Both countries have signed bilateral agreements on the maritime boundary as per the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

After years of dispute and a few rounds of negotiations, Indian and Sri Lankan governments agreed to recognize the territorial waters of each country by enacting maritime legislations in 1974 and 1976 by which the barren island of Kachchativu, 24 km northeast of Ramesvaram and 22.5 km southwest of the Delft Islands, was left to Sri Lankan ownership. A debate on Kachchativu has resurfaced in the recent past as Tamil Nadu politicians desire to extend the fishing area of South Indian fishermen. Jayalalitha Jayaram, the incumbent chief minister of Tamil Nadu, has been in the forefront of this debate, claiming that the maritime boundary should be re-demarcated so that Kachchativu will come within Indian territorial waters. Although the Central Government of India has not taken these agitations seriously, the issue needs to be sorted out permanently.

Related to the issue of maritime boundary is the problem of poaching by Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan territorial waters and Sri Lankan fishermen in Indian territorial waters. As a result of poaching, there have been frequent arrests of fishermen by the respective navies of both countries. As of 25 October 2011,

there were 23 Sri Lankan fishermen and 8 fishing boats of Sri Lanka in Indian custody.⁸ Reports of harassment by fishermen on both sides are frequent. Tamil Nadu politicians have attempted to highlight this as an important political issue. In response to a public interest litigation filed by lawyer B. Stalin, the Madurai branch of the Madras High Court on 14 October 2011 directed the Central Government to provide two-tier security for Indian fishermen by the Indian Coast Guard and Navy so that they are not subject to atrocities of the Sri Lankan Navy. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalitha has urged Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh not to look at the Sri Lankan Navy attacks on Indian fishermen as a solitary problem of Tamil Nadu. In a letter to Manmohan Singh, she has stated: "I would also like to emphasize that the harassment of the fishermen of Tamil Nadu should be viewed as an act of provocation and aggression against India by Sri Lanka, similar to acts of firing across the borders of India by neighbours such as Pakistan and China."⁹ Although it is evident that the Tamil Nadu Chief Minister has over-reacted, resolving the issue of poaching by fishermen of both countries is vital to maintain healthy Indo-Lanka relations.

The *Setu Samudram* Canal project is another specific issue that needs amicable settlement between India and Sri Lanka. India does not have a continuous navigable route around the peninsula within her own territorial waters due to the existence of a shallow (1.5 to 3.5 metres in depth) ridge described as the Adam's Bridge between Pamban Island on southeastern coast of India and Talaimannar of Sri Lanka. As a result, ships calling at ports on the east coast of India have to go an additional distance of more than 400 nautical miles and 36 hours of ship time around Sri Lanka. The *Sethu Samudram* is a project to construct a navigation channel between India and Sri Lanka through the Palk Straits. This will enhance Indian coastal security and reduce shipping time as well as costs. It will also allow more flexibility to large Indian fishing vessels and will facilitate oil exploration in the Palk Bay.

Circumnavigation between the east and west coasts of India exclusively within Indian territorial waters has its defence implications. But since this project can impact Sri Lanka, the authorities have expressed concern over the following issues related to the project:

- 1) Lack of dialogue between India and Sri Lanka on the proposed project;
- 2) Environmental safety of the canal. The proximity of the proposed dumping areas of dredgespoil to the maritime boundary;
- 3) Need for a collaborative defence strategy for the Palk Bay area;
- 4) Impact on the commercial status of Colombo; and
- 5) Danger of oil spillage in case of leaks from ships.

These are only some of the specific issues related to India-Sri Lanka relations. On the other hand, certain general conditions which affect all other South Asian countries are also relevant to Sri Lanka. One is the feeling of insecurity among

the small South Asian nations created by the advantageous position of India in terms of size, geopolitical location, resources, population and military power. India needs to assuage such feelings of insecurity by diligently restoring to measures of confidence building. In fact, much of the responsibility devolves on India to promote goodwill and cooperation than on the states surrounding India. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's recent address to India's Combined Commanders' Conference clearly indicates that India has the political will to take measures in that direction. He had said: "We have paid special attention to our immediate neighbourhood. This is based on our conviction that the task of India's socio-economic transformation will always be more difficult and less likely to succeed if we do not manage relations with our neighbours properly; more importantly, if we do not give them a substantial stake in India's economic progress and stability."¹⁰ An understanding of India's sentiments by its South Asian neighbours at the same time seems essential.

The nuclearisation of India and Pakistan is another reason that impinges on the security of the entire region; both countries should be sensitive to the security of their neighbours. Any nuclear exchange or accident may well impact them. As far as Sri Lanka is concerned, it will be directly affected by any accident at the Indian Fast Breeder Reactor Complex at Kalpakkam near Chennai, the nuclear power reactor complex at Koodankulam and the experimental establishments in Kerala. A further threat to the whole region including India and Pakistan is the risk of chemical, biological or nuclear weapons falling into the hands of terrorist groups. That would be an unimaginable nightmare.

The third is cross-border activities such as smuggling of arms and trafficking of drugs particularly by insurgents or terrorist groups. They legitimize their actions on the basis of the demand for drugs and arms in the world and the employment opportunities available in the drugs and arms trade. India and Pakistan are also vulnerable in this regard and they cannot be countered through direct military interventions.

Thus when South Asia is considered as a whole, the nature and magnitude of some of the security issues of the region are incredibly interrelated. It is difficult for any single South Asian country to address them in isolation; here a "cooperative security" framework becomes increasingly important and relevant. Besides, in an increasingly interrelated global security situation, it is difficult to isolate a crisis in one part of the world from affecting development in other distant areas.

Ramifications of external relations of South Asian countries obviously extend far beyond the region in to almost all parts of the world. In that context, too, regional cooperative security becomes absolutely essential. As Barry Buzan has noted, "Security is a relational phenomenon. It involves not only the capabilities, desires and fears of individual states, but also the capabilities, desires and fears

of other states with which they interact. Because security is relational, we cannot understand the national security of any given state without understanding the international pattern of security interdependence in which it is embedded.”¹¹

Political stability and order in the South Asian sub-system may not put an end to the influence of outside or global powers in the region. But resolution of political conflicts within the region will certainly reduce external involvements in the sub-system.



Notes

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8

Maritime Security Cooperation in South Asia: A Maldivian Perspective

Ahmed Shaheed

The Republic of Maldives is calling for greater maritime security cooperation in the Indian Ocean region. This is not surprising, given the geographic and geostrategic context of the Maldives, as well as its vulnerability to a whole range of threats which it can only address through wider cooperation.

The Maldives presented a concept paper to the SAARC Interior Ministers Meeting held in Thimphu in July 2011, calling for a discussion among member-states on formulating a collective engagement policy to combat piracy in the Indian Ocean. Later, while inaugurating the 17th SAARC Summit in November 2011, the then President Nasheed followed up that proposal by calling for instituting regional arrangements to combat piracy.¹ The Addu Declaration issued at the end of the summit recorded the agreement of the Heads of State and Government to initiate action on the proposal by the Maldives.²

The call for regional arrangements to combat piracy was followed by the signing of a number of bilateral agreements with India. These agreements reflected not just deepening and intensification of the relationship with India, but also demonstrated a joint commitment to working together on a host of areas related to security cooperation.³

The quest for a multilateral framework is, therefore, a natural outgrowth of the desire for stronger bilateral ties with other countries in the region to enhance the security of the Maldives. This dual quest reflects growing concerns over a number of issues related to the security and stability of the Maldives, and the search for effective ways to deal with them. In addition to piracy, the Maldives and its partners in SAARC are concerned about finding effective ways to deal with other aspects of organised crime, such as terrorism, drug trafficking and

human trafficking, all of which, together with disaster-preparedness, are already within the purview of the SAARC agenda, however limited the scope of cooperation may be with regard to meeting those threats.

In addition to those matters already covered under the SAARC umbrella, the Maldives' perspective on maritime security cooperation is also influenced by other developments, such as the growing interactions between the Maldives and other users of the Indian Ocean—ranging from countries that are located in the region to external powers seeking influence there.⁴ Because of the centrality of the Indian Ocean in global commerce and politics all these countries have abiding concerns about, security and stability of the region and many of them emphasise the idea of cooperation to ensure regional security.⁵

This chapter seeks to identify the impulses that drive Maldivian interest in maritime security cooperation, and identify the interplay between bilateral and multilateral frameworks for cooperation. For a number of reasons, domestic politics in the Maldives intrudes into the sphere of security cooperation in ways which can limit or reinforce the scope for security cooperation.⁶ And the challenge for the Maldives has been to find ways to balance competing interests and demands in ways which are credible and sustainable.

Factors Influencing Maldives' Approach to Maritime Security Cooperation

The Maldivian perspective on maritime security cooperation is affected by numerous factors related to its geophysical features, geopolitical setting and developmental imperatives. A thorough consideration of these issues is necessary to identify the importance the Maldives attaches to the quest for both multilateral and bilateral frameworks for security cooperation.

Geophysical Factors

The sheer geophysical layout of the Maldives—an archipelagic state, straddling the equator and covering a vast expanse of water at the confluence of the Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal—not only explains Maldives' important maritime interests, but also imposes extensive demands on the country which it cannot meet except by collaborating with others.

As an archipelagic state, the Maldives claims an extensive Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) but does not possess the ability to effectively maintain surveillance over its vast maritime zones.

For decades, the Maldives has had concerns about its inability to protect its marine resources. This has implications not just for sustainability of fish-stocks and domestic fisheries, but also has significant political consequences. Progress on bilateral Fisheries Joint Commission with Sri Lanka has been stalled due to the sensitivity of Maldives over the extent to which maritime access could be

given to Sri Lankan vessels. Even earlier this year, rumours of concessions made to Sri Lanka in this sector created a political storm in the Maldives. Inevitably, Maldivian attempt to police the waters pitches it against more powerful countries operating in the Indian Ocean, whether they be major distant water fishing nations or more powerful neighbours. And the government frequently gets caught between the pressures exerted by nations who own the vessels, which are impounded for illegal fishing in Maldivian waters, and domestic political opposition to diplomatic settlement of such incidents.

The demands for greater capacity to monitor its vast ocean spaces (territorial waters) and achieve greater maritime domain-awareness does not aim at countering illegal fisheries alone, they also intend to address a host of other illegal activities, ranging from drug-trafficking and gun-running to terrorism. For example, in April 2007, the Maldives had to seek the assistance from India in dealing with gun-running in Maldivian waters linked to the conflict in Sri Lanka. At the time, there were heightened concerns that numerous islands of the Maldives could be used for illegal activities related to the civil war in Sri Lanka, especially when an Indian vessel which had been commandeered by terrorists was spotted within the waters of Maldives.

Likewise, in the aftermath of the terrorist attack on 9/11 in the US, concerns were raised that Maldivian waters could attract al-Qaeda operatives for a whole range of illicit activities. These fears were heightened by reports of the activities by al-Qaeda operatives in parts of the Indian Ocean amidst fears that elements in the Maldives were also drawn into the fold of radical Islam. This latter concern was amplified by the fact that one Maldivian citizen was taken from Karachi to Guantanamo Bay, although he was released subsequently.

Links between radical elements in the Maldives and those in the region first surfaced following comments published in the wake of 9/11 by the German daily, *Bildt Zeitung*, and attributed to Benazir Bhutto that madrassa-linked activities were going on in the Maldives. Although such links were vehemently denied at the time, in the ensuing years, the links between madrassas in Pakistan and fundamentalists from the Maldives have been highlighted, especially in the aftermath of the attacks on Mumbai in 2009, and alleged recruitment of Maldivians for militant activities in the region.⁷

The Mumbai attacks turned out to be a wake-up call for the Maldives too, given its numerous tourist resorts hosting thousands of Western tourists. Authorities in the Maldives were less tightlipped about links between Maldivians and radical groups, including unverified allegations that Maldivians were involved in terrorist attacks either planned or executed in Pakistan and India.⁸

These concerns have led to greater intensification of Maldives' bilateral ties with both India and Pakistan, with emphasis on greater cooperation on intelligence sharing and joint operations against terrorist groups. Among other

things, this was reflected in the establishment of embassies in both New Delhi and Islamabad, and the development of a steady stream of high level contacts with both countries, especially amongst those concerned with law enforcement functions. The concerns about radical Islamist groups were further highlighted following the detonation of a home-made bomb in the Sultan Park in September 2007 which targeted western tourists, and by the ensuing scuffles between the police and a group of Islamist radicals in a remote island. Subsequently, the arrest and deportation of about a dozen Maldivians evidently seeking Jihad in Pakistan in 2009 further exacerbated alarm over the involvement of Maldivian nationals in radical Islamist activities. Such concerns were focused on the need to monitor the activities of these groups as well as the need to boost the security of resort islands in the Maldives.⁹

The geophysical features of the Maldives also expose it to a host of ecological vulnerabilities, compelling it to seek regional cooperation to improve its disaster-preparedness, enhance the search and rescue capabilities of its security forces, and strengthen its environmental resilience. The tsunami of 2004 exposed major communication vulnerabilities of the country, and it was with the assistance of the Indian Navy that the country began its disaster-relief operations. Indian naval aircraft dropped essential relief supplies to communities who were without food or water or the possibility of gaining access to such supplies for days. Indians were joined later by other South Asian partners, notably by Pakistan, and later by other countries.

Disaster-preparedness will continue to depend on maritime cooperation from other countries, not only in the event of tsunamis, but also in such basic operations as search and rescue across vast maritime stretches. The Maldives has been at the forefront of advocating measures to enhance regional disaster-preparedness, and forging coalitions with like-minded states in the region and beyond, to voice the need for urgent international action to increase disaster-preparedness and address the issue of climate change.

The Maldives has also called upon regional partners for help and support to advance its claims for an extended continental shelf under the Law of the Sea Convention. It has claimed some 65,000 square kilometres to the east and west of the archipelago. While it had resolved its EEZ boundaries with India and Sri Lanka in the Gulf of Mannar during the late 1970s, its boundaries to the south, with an overlap with claims advanced by UK and Mauritius, have not been demarcated nor is it likely that the issues in question will be resolved quickly.¹⁰

Strategic Factors

The Indian Ocean is on its way to becoming the most important strategic arena in global politics. Already, in terms of global energy flows, it is the main hub of operations, and the sea lanes across the ocean are making it the most valuable theatre of global maritime commercial traffic. In addition, changes in power

balances, especially the rise of India, the extension of Japanese naval operations, and the growing interest of China in the Ocean, add to the strategic significance of the Ocean traditionally regarded as a domain of Western influence.

The Maldives sat out the Cold War under the umbrella of non-alignment. Once the RAF staging post was shut down in 1976 and the government rejected the offer made by the Soviets to set up a base there, the Maldives opted out of the strategic chessboard to become a holiday destination without peer. It re-entered the theatre of the great game in 2001, first with rising Chinese interest in the Indian Ocean and followed shortly by the war on terrorism. In May 2001, Premier Zhu Rongyi whistled through South Asia, including Maldives, starting a regular train of high profile Chinese visitors to the Maldives. This was the first sign of renewed interest in the Maldives by great powers. Just as China's interest in the SAARC region intensified, the war on terrorism renewed interest of the international community in internal developments in the Maldives—especially as it became a theatre of popular struggle for democracy. By November 2001, the Maldives joined the coalition of countries combating terrorism, but it was not until after the tsunami of 2004 that the Maldives decided to articulate a more open-minded foreign policy, one which sought clear alignment with the forces of democracy.¹¹

Developmental Needs/Functional Requirements

The impulse to champion maritime cooperation is also linked to the needs of the Maldives as a small island state, requiring connectivity, food security, and enhancement of productive capacity, access to markets and effective participation in multilateral regimes. In recent months, the Maldives has been looking towards India for the development of critical infrastructure, such as ports and airports, just as it had, for a long time, relied on cooperation with its neighbours on ensuring uninterrupted supplies of essential commodities. Both the fisheries industry and tourism, the economic mainstays of the country, depend on collaborative activities with its neighbours to ensure access to markets and continued investment, although such dependence is not limited to its SAARC neighbours. As a small state, the Maldives recognizes that it depends on functional cooperation with its neighbours for the delivery of basic services to its people.¹²

At the same time, the Maldives also needs to be able to draw on a wide range of investors and development partners in order to maximize its opportunities for development cooperation. Since 2005, the number of diplomatic missions maintained by the Maldives overseas has risen to thirteen, comparatively large for a country with a small population. Its activism at multilateral forums on human rights issues and climate change diplomacy signifies the new policy of international engagement and alignment to attain its national aspirations through associative diplomacy and strategic partnerships. These forays have increased international interest in the Maldives, especially

since the opening up of the country to foreign direct investment subsequent to the democratic transition of 2008.

In recent years, China has begun to emerge as a major development partner, firstly as the fastest growing tourism market for the Maldives, effectively shielding the tourism industry from the negative impacts of the global economic meltdown of 2008. China has also increased its development assistance to the Maldives, especially in the area of infrastructure development, particularly housing, and has evinced interest in military cooperation. Likewise, the Maldives has considerable interactions with the EU, especially as a tourism market and development partner, and also with the United States in a variety of fields, including military cooperation. Of late, the Maldives has begun to develop interaction and cooperation with the island countries to its south, especially Seychelles and Mauritius, and it is likely that the Maldives will join the Francophone group, the Indian Ocean Commission, before long. It is also expected that the Maldives will shortly apply to join the Indian Ocean Rim Initiative. Among other major development partners are also countries with a major stake in maritime security cooperation, notably Japan and Australia.¹³

The Maldives will not be able to attain and maintain food security or indeed the basics of its economy without rule of law on the high seas or without cooperative arrangements with major stakeholders in the Indian Ocean. Thus, greater maritime domain awareness is a key goal of the Maldives both in itself and also as a platform for collaboration with its neighbours.

Domestic Challenges to Security Cooperation

The attempt made by Maldives to champion regional security cooperation, while arising out of compelling national interests, is a departure for the country in terms of domestic public perceptions of its geopolitical realities and options. Simply because open public discussion of policy options is new, a number of debates still remain to be adequately aired and argued, in order to complete what has been called successful 'securitisation', or development of a national consensus on security priorities and policies. All too often, foreign policy choices, especially those that embody greater activism, are greeted with anxiety, doubt and even suspicion. The non-aligned policies that were pursued from the mid-1970s sat very comfortably with a public emerging from the European colonial era, and were associated with the closure of the UK military base in Gan. The history of the base is associated not only with the politics of the Cold War, but of imperial politics of divide and rule, where even today primary school textbooks accuse the British of having engineered the secessionist revolts of 1959-63. The paranoia over military bases is so strong that even the current constitution bans the extension of any basing rights to foreign powers, a reflection of the colonial hangover.

Over the years, non-alignment had become such a convenient tool to steer away from engagement and any activity that suggests an alignment is met with a public uproar. Cooperation with military powers, especially those in the neighborhood, is particularly sensitive, in part the result of the well-sold non-aligned ideology, but also because of the suspicion that such alliances boost the security of the regime rather than fulfill the genuine needs and aspirations of the people. Thus a highly visible urban military exercise with the US was made to coincide with a critical vote that could have ended the Gayoom presidency as early as 1993. Similarly, the fast attack patrol craft donated by India, *Huravee*, was used in November 2006 to intercept and harass movements by elements linked to the political opposition, and later the claim that China had agreed to donate 25,000 houses to MDP (Maldivian Democratic Party) became a significant draw-card in the elections of 2008. Indeed, Operation Cactus of November 1988 itself is sometimes associated with regime rescue rather than with good neighbourliness.

Such public disquiet notwithstanding, the government of President Nasheed clearly brought out a shift in Maldivian foreign policy. Under Nasheed, Maldives adopted an active and activist foreign policy, seeking closer engagement with major partners, stakeholders and like-minded states, while downgrading, if not discarding, the philosophies of non-alignment. The hallmark of the country's international orientation today is pursuit of its national interests through active engagement rather than passive non-alignment.¹⁴

The agreements signed during the visit of the Indian prime minister in November 2011 are in part a response to such policies of engagement pursued by Maldives, which opened up the country to interaction with a wide range of international actors. It is the desire of the Maldives to firm up bilateral ties with traditional partners just as it seeks to deepen friendship with new players. In that sense, the philosophy behind these agreements is the converse of the thinking that was articulated by the Maldives in 1989, when it sought to balance its reliance on India for the sake of regime security with the creation of a multilateral framework to legitimize such reliance on powerful neighbours. The statement made by the Maldives in the general debate at the UN in 1989—especially in explaining why it sought a General Assembly resolution on the protection and security of small states¹⁵—emphasized the need to be cautious about developing close regional ties.¹⁶ Today, on the contrary, the Maldives is actively courting regional security cooperation to enhance its national aspirations.

Proposal for SAARC Maritime Security Cooperation against Piracy

The Maldives' call for regional arrangements to combat piracy was presented as a concept paper at Thimphu in July 2011 at the conference of SAARC interior ministers. The paper noted the upsurge in maritime piracy in the Indian Ocean

region and sought to evolve a common policy agenda against piracy through collaborative engagement of SAARC member states.

The Maldives stressed the growing trends of insecurity and instability in some of the sub-regions of the Indian Ocean region, as well as the rise in unconventional security challenges in many parts of the Indian Ocean, together with the rise in the importance of the ocean in international commerce.

The paper noted that piracy in the Indian Ocean region was a grave concern to the Maldives, since the country depended heavily on maritime trade. It recalled incidents where Maldivian local fishing vessels intercepted vessels of Somali origin, which seemed to have engaged in piracy prior to the interception. During 2010-11, seven Somali skiffs were found in Maldivian waters. Clearly, these incidents signaled growing threat to maritime security of the Maldives, and the paper labelled piracy as the single biggest threat to the security of Maldives.

Although the Maldives is part of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium, which brought together a number of navies from across the Indian Ocean rim and beyond, the escalating threat of piracy requires a more focused approach, particularly as it affects member-states of the SAARC sub-region.

In pursuit of closer engagement by SAARC member-states, the Maldivian paper seeks six specific actions in order to strengthen the safety of the sea lanes of communication. These are:

- a) Conduct joint/combined maritime patrols by SAARC member-states navies and Coast Guard in the Indian Ocean region particularly focussing on protecting maritime trade routes;
- b) Establish a mechanism in SAARC where all member-states can share information on maritime piracy;
- c) Enhance the Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) by linking Maritime Operations Centres (MOCs) and Rescue Coordination Centres (RCCs) within the SAARC region in order to achieve comprehensive maritime security coverage;
- d) Strengthen the national legal framework by each SAARC member state to suppress maritime piracy and reinforce it with proper rules of engagements (ROEs) and penalties;
- e) Expand national flagged vessels' awareness on maritime piracy and strengthen the ship security mechanism through proper security training; and
- f) Establish a mechanism to provide convoy security to SAARC member-state flagged vessels operating within Indian Ocean Region.

Although the paper was presented at the Thimpu meeting, there has so far been no detailed discussion of the proposal in any formal setting. Therefore, as the next step to advance the proposal, the Maldives is seeking exchange of information on areas related to the proposal, namely:

- i) a national assessment of the extent and nature of the threat posed by piracy;
- ii) information on measures each member-state is taking to achieve Maritime Domain Awareness and combat maritime piracy within its own waters;
- iii) information on specific contributions each member-state can individually make to a common engagement against piracy; and
- iv) views on what specific measures SAARC needs to adopt in order to suppress maritime piracy.

The call for a SAARC regional arrangement on maritime security cooperation against piracy is a step forward from existing security cooperation arrangements. It is the latest in a series of calls for SAARC countries to enter into region-wide security dialogue. Previously, SAARC had formulated agreements for collaboration in the fields of counter-terrorism and in the fields of suppression of drug trafficking. Although neither project has achieved any meaningful progress, widening the ambit of security cooperation—especially to encompass maritime security—would be a significant change.

Previous calls for security dialogues and security cooperation, again raised by the smaller countries like Bhutan and Maldives, had floundered because of the reluctance of the SAARC countries to engage in potentially fractious dialogues that would strain the unanimity rule and breach the non-contentious limits.¹⁷ However, with the rising threat of piracy, and demonstrable success of cooperation in other parts of the Indian Ocean, a regional arrangement is urgently needed. The potential for sub-regional cooperation in security-related areas can also be explored here.

For a number of reasons, the Maldives articulates this call. First is the growing concern about the threats from piracy and growing lawlessness on the high seas. The Maldives is today host to a large number of Somali nationals, especially detainees, who claim to have drifted from their nation's shores, and in some cases they are seen to have been involved in unlawful activity.

Second is the pressure the Maldives is facing from various sources to join existing frameworks of bilateral or multilateral cooperation that does not necessarily serve the best interests of the Maldives. These include the current arrangements for dealing with piracy issues in the Arabian Sea.¹⁸

Third is the concern about terrorism and seaborne threats to the Maldives, in the form that the Maldives or its neighbours have known in the recent past—be it the attack on the Maldives in 1988 or Mumbai in 2008.

A Broader Agenda for Maritime Security Cooperation

In fact, the Maldives needs a more comprehensive agenda of security cooperation, including in the area of maritime security cooperation, given the vulnerabilities

and challenges that it faces. And it is these challenges which the framework agreement and other agreements signed with India (in November 2011) seek to address, through the formalisation of an alignment that in effect dates back to 1988. What is different from 1988 is not just the global context of the two eras, but also the shifts that have occurred in Maldivian politics, away from strict adherence to the ideology of non-alignment to the open espousal of a policy of closer alignment with India.

Agreement on Bilateral Cooperation between Maldives and India

The Framework agreement between the Maldives and India is a comprehensive agreement that endorses bilateral cooperation between the two countries on a wide range of activities and elevates the India-Maldives relationship to a new level. Citing the history of cooperation between the two countries, and describing the bilateral ties as a “unique relationship based on sovereign equality”, the agreement refers to abiding faith and commitment to democracy and the desire to promote comprehensive economic cooperation and develop enhanced connectivity between the two countries. The two countries also note the belief that cooperation at the bilateral, sub-regional and regional levels will enable them to realize their developmental aspirations, and contribute to peace, prosperity and security in the Indian Ocean Region and South Asia.

The agreement commits the two countries:

- To promote trade and investment and development of infrastructure; work towards closer economic cooperation in sectors such as food security, fisheries development, tourism, transportation, information technology, new and renewable energy, communications, and banking and finance;
- To enhance connectivity between them by air and sea, in particular through shipping links and ferry services. Both commit to encourage the development of appropriate infrastructure, use of sea and air ports, and standardisation of means of transport for bilateral as well as sub-regional use.
- To develop and implement programmes for environmental protection and to respond to the challenges of climate change through adaptation. Both countries shall collaborate on projects of mutual interest to preserve their eco-systems, address vulnerability of the Small Island States to Climate Change, strengthen coastal research and, as far as practicable, coordinate their responses in international forums.
- To develop and streamline mechanisms for technical cooperation and exchange of advance information with respect to natural disasters. The countries shall strengthen training and capacity building initiatives and cooperation between respective disaster management authorities, with a view to upgrading their response mechanisms.

- To cooperate on issues of concern to each other arising from their unique geographical location. These include piracy, maritime security, terrorism, organised crime, drugs and human trafficking. India and Maldives shall strengthen their cooperation to enhance security in the Indian Ocean Region through coordinated patrolling and aerial surveillance, exchange of information, development of effective legal framework and other measures mutually agreed upon. They will intensify their cooperation in the area of training and capacity building of police and security forces.
- To cooperate closely with each other on issues relating to their national interests. Both parties shall work together to create a peaceful environment conducive for inclusive economic growth and development. Neither party shall allow the use of its territory for activities harmful to the national security and interest of the other.
- To promote scientific and educational cooperation between the two countries. The parties shall cooperate by means of exchange of data, scientific knowledge, collaborative research, training, pilot projects and in any other manner as may be agreed between the two parties.
- To promote cultural cooperation and people-to-people exchanges. The parties will promote greater exchanges between their parliaments, youth, sports, academic, cultural and intellectual bodies. They will undertake measures to simplify rules and procedures for travel by citizens of both countries.
- To establish a Joint Consultative Commission for effective and smooth implementation of this Agreement that shall meet at least once a year.

The Framework Agreement, which is similar to the bilateral agreement between India and Bangladesh in September 2011, is further reinforced by a separate Memorandum of Understanding between India and the Maldives, also signed in November 2011, to provide coastal security, promote bilateral cooperation between forces and security forces, and to combat terrorism, piracy, drug trafficking, organised crime and other illicit activities referred to in article 5 of the Framework Agreement. The MoU clearly underscores the action-oriented nature of the framework agreement.

A large number of activities covered in the agreement have been pursued in the past either on an ad hoc basis or through individual agreements relating to specific areas. Even in the area of security cooperation, the two countries have worked closely together since 1988, with India responding to requests from the Maldives to help it in capacity building in different areas. The agreement lays the grounds for sustained engagement and seeks to address a number of concerns the two countries share including the issue of maritime security, which are related to the geophysical and geopolitical factors mentioned earlier.

In addition to developments relating to the sub-region or the Indian Ocean,

recent political developments in the Maldives are also echoed in the agreement. The quest for democracy and greater economic progress in the Maldives has opened up new vistas for wider international engagement, and, therefore, both the countries need to take advantage of the framework agreement. Both the countries could achieve a lot through cooperation and joint action.

The search for a SAARC regional arrangement and stronger bilateral partnership with India turns on its head the arguments that the Maldives aired at the United Nations in 1989, in the immediate aftermath of Operation Cactus (November 1988) launched by India to save the then Maldivian government. The Maldives had sought international frameworks for its security and argued that urgent support by a powerful neighbour could not be a substitute for a much needed United Nations arrangement to guarantee the security of small states.¹⁹ The new approach by the Maldives is a departure from that. It has no qualms for regionalism now and it is engaged in efforts to identify platforms for common security, and seek convergence of security perspectives at the sub-regional and regional levels through a mix of strong bilateral ties and vigorous multilateral frameworks of cooperation. Such clearly articulated positions are necessary especially because of growing geopolitical competition in the Ocean in the post-cold war years.



Notes

1. In fact, maritime security cooperation was listed as the second priority of Maldives in SAARC in the inaugural address by President Mohamed Nasheed at 17th SAARC Summit, 10 November 2011: "Allow me to address the second proposed area of co-operation, maritime security and climate change. Piracy in the Indian Ocean is a growing threat to our security and stability. And so, at this summit, I hope we can consider a regional arrangement to improve maritime security and combat the threat of piracy," at www.haveeru.com.mv/uploads/2011/11/1320921483.pdf
2. See paragraph 11 of the SAARC Addu Declaration: Building Bridges, at <http://www.saarc-sec.org/2011/11/14/news/ADDU-DECLARATION/79/>
3. Some of the topics covered in the bilateral agreements signed during the visit were shared with the media by the Prime Minister of India in his statement to the press after his meetings with the President of Maldives. These included a Framework Agreement on Cooperation for Development and MoUs on specific topics including security cooperation, at <http://pminindia.gov.in/speech-details.php?nodeid=1082>.
4. A number of these concerns were highlighted in the Workshop held in October 2010 on Developing a National Security Framework, which produced the Defence White Paper 2012, published by the Ministry of Defence and National Security on 26 July 2012. See especially pages 14-17.
5. Robert D. Kaplan, *Monsoon: The Indian Ocean and Future of American Power*, Random House, New York, 2010. Although it practically ignores the Maldives, provides to the general reader an accessible and insightful sketch of the growing importance of the Indian Ocean to global commerce and ways in which the countries of the region are being drawn into geopolitical rivalries.
6. For example, reports in the Indian media in early August 2009 that plans to include security surveillance of Maldivian waters through the Cochin based southern command created

- political storm in the Maldives. See for example reports in Dhivehi language in *Haveeru Daily* on 15 August 2009. Especially “Raajjeyge salamathee baeh kanthah thah belehettumaa India in Havaalu vanee,” *Haveeru Daily*, 15 August 2009, and “India ge askaree viuga thereah raajje: kanboduvaan jehey masslaa eh,” *Haveeru Daily*, 16 Aug 2009, at <http://www.haveeru.com.mv/dhivehi/news/80242>. For an English language rendition of the issues concerned please see Ahmed Shaheed, “Building a Framework for India-Maldives Security Cooperation: An Oceanic Agenda for the Future,” at <http://opensocietymaldives.blogspot.co.uk/>.
7. See for example the message from President Nasheed during his visit to New Delhi in October 2009, which was a call for help to curb illegal activity in the Indian Ocean region. “Help Curb Illegal Activity in Indian Ocean Rim,” *The Hindu*, 22 October 2009, at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/help-curb-illegal-activity-in-indian-ocean-rim/article36899.ece>
 8. See for example Angana Guha Roy, “Terror Breeding in Maldives: the Indian Thread,” *South Asia Monitor*, 4 December 2011, at <http://southasiamonitor.org/detail.php?type=n&nid=1290>
 9. Ibid. Also see “Maldives to strengthen defence links with India amid rising terror concerns,” 4 February 2010, at <http://minivannews.com/politics/maldives-to-strengthen-defence-links-with-india-amid-rising-terror-concerns-3188>
 10. “Maldives Wants Continental Shelf Extended Overlapping Portion Claimed by Sri Lanka,” at <http://www.adaderana.lk/news.php?nid=9124>.
 11. China’s clearly growing interest in the Maldives even raised unfounded alarm in some parts which led to the birth of the fiction of an island or atoll called Muroa, ostensibly being developed as a Chinese base in the Maldives. See for example “China-India Rivalry in the Maldives”, *Jakarta Post*, 17 June 2011, at <http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2011/06/17/china-india-rivalry-maldives.html>. For a review of the Maldives evolving engagement with the international community, please see Ahmed Shaheed, “From State-Centric to Intermestic Challenges: A Micro-state Case Study”, Paper presented to International Conference on Foreign Ministries: Adaptation to a Changing World, Bangkok, Thailand, 14-15 June 2007, organised by the Diplo Foundation of Malta and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, at www.diplomacy.edu/Conferences/MFA2007/papers/shaheed.pdf
 12. The primary focus of the Maldives during the 16th and 17th SAARC Summits was the development of SAARC connectivity, especially for trade and transport. See for example the Inaugural Address of the 17th SAARC Summit, Addu City, 10 November 2011, at www.haveeru.com.mv/uploads/2011/11/1320921483.pdf
 13. See for example, “Maldives and Seychelles seek to enhance maritime cooperation, Says President Nasheed,” 08 August 2011, at <http://www.presidencymaldives.gov.mv/?lid=11&dcid=5766>
 14. The break with the ideology of non-alignment was most symbolic in the declaration President Nasheed made in his first Statement to the UN General Assembly General Debate in 2009 when he declared that Maldives will normalise relations with Israel. In addition to a “no-holds-barred” embrace of ties with India, the most active signs of the new dispensation were the role played by Maldives in the field of human rights diplomacy, in the pronouncements on Burma and Libya, and in the support extended to Kosovo.
 15. “Protection and Security of Small States,” UN General Assembly Resolution 44/51, at <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/44/a44r051.htm>
 16. See Statement by Fathulla Jameel, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Maldives before the UN General Assembly on 25 September 1989. In the speech he said “Small States do have friendly States that can and have assisted in the strengthening of their security. While we are grateful for the sense of duty these friends have, it is with regret that we note that bilateral security arrangements in the international system have not yet evolved to a level of maturity whereby the interest of the weaker partner can be reassured. Nor are the socio-

political identity of the weaker State and the principle of sovereign equality strong enough to be impervious to the possible vicissitudes of unequal relationships,” at <http://www.un.int/maldives/UNGA%2044.pdf>.

17. See for example paragraph 08 of the Declaration of the Ninth SAARC Summit during 12-14 May 1997. Despite a spirited attempt by President Gayoom of the Maldives, the Chair, the most that the leaders could agree was on informal political consultations. For more information see at <http://www.saarc-sec.org/userfiles/Summit%20Declarations/09%20-%20Maldives%20-%209th%20Summit%201997.pdf>
18. See for example the programme by UNODC, at <http://www.unodc.org/easternafrika/en/ piracy/index.html> and also, “Maldives Agrees to Repatriate Somali Nationals,” *Minivan News*, 4 October 2012, at <http://minivannews.com/politics/maldives-agrees-to-repatriation-of-somalian-detainees-44880>
19. See statement by the Maldives to the General Debate of the 44th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, 25 September 1989.

9

Cooperative Security in South Asia and Nepal's Security Concerns

Rajan Bhattarai

The Evolving Concept of Security

'Security' and 'insecurity' have different connotations for different people in different situations. "Concept of security in fact lies to a large extent in the perception of an individual or an institution. For some, insecurity comes from lack of employment or loss of social welfare. For others, insecurity stems from the violent conflict or denial of human rights".¹ However, in general, security is defined as the freedom from threats either to the state or to an individual.² Traditionally, the state has been the only referent object of security in international relations discourse. This is reflected in the realist and neo-realist schools of thought in the international relations theories which dominated the 20th century national security discourse and agenda. However, this view was challenged by the other schools of thought such as the constructivists.

With the end of Cold War and expansion of the process of globalisation, the agenda and the definition of security have tended to widen and deepen. There are many new dimensions and issues which have now become the prime concerns in the study of security. While the state-centric security concern has tended to be underplayed, the non-traditional threats to security are increasingly highlighted. These newer threats encompass a range of situations including ethnic and religious conflicts, terrorism, migration, environmental degradation, contagious diseases, democracy, human rights violation, gender, crime, poverty, hunger and deprivation. In contrast to the orthodox concept of security, the basic referent object of the non-traditional security threat is human beings and related insecurity. "Today, states are not only bound to defend their territorial integrity and political independence but also are increasingly asked to ensure

and protect their citizen's freedom, economic independence, social stability and cultural identity."³ Of late, non-traditional threats are becoming more prominent; increasingly, states define threats to their security in economic, environmental and demographic terms.

Cooperative Security: The Concept

The concept of cooperative security evolved after the end of the Cold War. The basic thrust of this concept was to prevent war by creating a multilateral security framework between states. The cooperative multilateral security concept also includes the intention to prevent violent conflicts within the state. The combination of external influences, weak states and the need to maintain human security rather than state security has led to a renewed emphasis on regional approaches to security and the governance of security. "Within the literature this has led to the pushing of the analytical frame in the direction of regional structures, but whilst these regional governance systems may be expected to improve stability and security, they may also contribute to what many writers refer to as regional insecurity complexes which have implications for the power relations, the density of relationships and the normative value of the regional arrangement."⁴

Cooperative security argues that security must make sense at the basic level of the individual human being for it to make the sense at the international level. Likewise, it advocates the removal of tensions between and building of confidence among the states in the region as well as development of better cooperation among the states to deal emerging threats. Cooperative security that includes defence exchange, security dialogues and other confidence-building measures including creating the multilateral framework between the states will help to develop a constructive security mechanism aiming to establish peace and stability. Cooperative security permits deeper understanding of the mutuality of security as well as broadens the definition of security beyond traditional military concerns. "Cooperative security is defined as a process whereby countries with common interests work jointly through agreed mechanisms to reduce tensions and suspicion, resolve or mitigate disputes, build confidence, enhance economic development prospects, and maintain stability in their regions."⁵

Cooperative security is a pragmatic approach and necessary if the concept is to be of real use in an unstable dangerous world. To achieve this, we should reduce our expectations of what cooperative security can achieve. We need to build a system based upon mechanisms and institutions already in place, i.e., institutions that have proven themselves effective in providing relative peace, stability, and prosperity to nations and groups of nations in the last half of the 20th century.⁶ In general, cooperative security is described as states working together to address their common threats to their security. "Cooperative security is more than absence of war. It is the presence of a stable and prosperous peace.

For a stable and prosperous peace, states need to avoid any perceived threats and create confidence.”⁷

Confidence building measures are the main component of cooperative security. These include regular defence exchanges, organizing security dialogues in various levels between the states and among the states, formation of multilateral security frameworks in regional level, sharing of intelligence reports, exchange of observers at military exercises and joint inspection of military bases.⁸ Such multi-level cooperation and exchange of information enhance trust and lessen the perceived threats between the states. The confidence and security building measures are made by means of reciprocal visits of senior military officers, joint exercises and training programmes, sharing of military information, advanced intimation about internal military exercises, and joint geological and other projects in disputed territory. It also includes transparent weapons acquisition programme, demilitarisation of common borders, joint development projects, mutual exchange of defence policy papers and greater interaction and consultation among regional policymakers.⁹

Cooperation among the states on various forms of security and security related issues has been a long practice in international relations. Several conventions were passed among and between the states in the 19th and 20th century, notably the Brussels Convention on the law and customs of war in 1874 and the Hague agreement in 1899 where it agreed to prohibit the use of projectiles filled with poison gases.

The establishment of the League of Nations in the aftermath of World War I was the most shining example of cooperative security in the modern age at the global level. Sadly, the League ceased to exist after it failed to prevent World War II. Its successors, the United Nations and the Security Council are another example of international cooperative security mechanism at the global level. In addition, the UN has become more effective after the end of rivalry between the USA and former USSR. Other groups at the regional level, such as the Organisation for Cooperation and Security in Europe (OSCE), and the Association for Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), are regarded as comparatively successful models in practicing cooperative security in their respective regions.

ASEAN member-states pursue a common regional approach to political issues and practice consensus to solve the problems and avoid disputes despite diverse political systems and cultural heterogeneity. Another reason holds them together is the fear factor; the rise of China and America policy vis-a-vis that country.

South Asia and Security

The eight countries of the South Asian region—Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka—share common

historical ties and geography and ecological cycles. Except for Bhutan, Nepal and most of Afghanistan, these countries share a common colonial past. Common religious and cultural traditions, linguistic affinity and values and social norms further provide grounds for developing common understandings on many issues. Generally, such common situation should have provided a solid ground for regional cooperation. However, such the ground reality is completely different. If we were to observe the last 60 years of post-colonial history of the region, South Asia has been the least regionalized sub-region in the world. As stated by Lyon, "South Asia has been a region without regionalism."¹⁰

The region is beset by major non-traditional security threats like immense poverty, illiteracy, ethnic discord and other oppressive social orders which should have brought the states together in an effort to eradicate these ills. However, it has failed to do so.¹¹ The economic underdevelopment, poor governance and feeble political structures have added to the level of instability, providing a fertile ground for intolerance and extremism. The region has in recent times faced growing religious fundamentalism, ethnic conflicts, environmental degradation, refugee crisis, social crimes and terrorism. Natural disasters here have added to the misery of millions of people.

Even with the growing prominence of the human security concept, the minds of the ruling elites in the region are still dominated by state-centric security views. Their obsession with nationalist passion and jingoism is directed against the neighbouring states as well as the 'internal enemies' of national integration. "While regional cooperation is indispensable for addressing the issues of socio-economic development, the ruling elites in South Asian states have a vested interest in sustaining the conflicts with their neighbours because conflict becomes the most convenient means of diverting the mass grievances in the region caused by the enormous human deprivation that prevails."¹² Successive governments of most South Asian countries have by and large failed to deal the situation. Likewise, the region is further marred by the increase in the frequency of natural disasters due to the breakdown of the Himalayan ecosystem caused by extensive deforestation. Unless all the countries in South Asia make collective efforts to protect the ecosystem, environmental disasters are likely to continue.¹³

As stated by Chari, despite the fact that the locus of conflict in the region has decisively shifted from the external to the internal sphere, the 1998 nuclear tests by India and Pakistan further emphasize the military aspects of security in the region.¹⁴ The asymmetric relations between the states particularly between India and its neighbours, historic rivalry between Hindus and Muslims and the intense rivalry between India and Pakistan have been the major obstacles in the way of regional and security cooperation.

SAARC and Security

The former President of Bangladesh, late Ziaur Rahman had underlined the need for security cooperation among South Asian countries while discussing the formation of SAARC in the early 1980s. It was because of his belief that peace and security were made prerequisites for economic development in the region. However, as stated by Mohsin, the security issue was not included in its initial agenda because at that time it was opposed by two member states, India and Pakistan.¹⁵ The security related issue was thus left to be dealt through other channels in bilateral and other multilateral levels but not at the SAARC level. It was argued that increasing cooperation in the economic area, cultural and other soft areas would eventually lead to stability, development and peace in the region. Military topics were kept off the formal agenda of the SAARC meetings and summits.

However, such a core issue cannot be averted all the time. The region's leaders have been utilizing the opportunity of high level SAARC meetings and summits to discuss security related problems in informal discussions and bilateral meetings. However, now, almost 20 years after the establishment of SAARC, leaders of this region have begun to raise security related issues even in the formal forums. At the 12th SAARC Summit in Islamabad in 2004, the then Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee made an indirect reference to the imperative of security cooperation in South Asia. He called for an end to "mutual suspicions and rivalries" and emphasized that "history can remind us, guide us and warn us. It should not shackle us... We have to look forward now with a collective approach in mind to achieve peace, stability and prosperity in the region."¹⁶ Likewise, other leaders from the region have also expressed the need for better security cooperation to enhance the greater economic cooperation among the states in the region.

At the 13th SAARC Summit in Dhaka in 2005, leaders of the SAARC countries agreed to sign the additional protocol to the SAARC's Regional Convention on Suppression of Terrorism. This also reflects the growing consensus among the leaders to enhance security cooperation to fight against terrorism in the region. Such a move and open expression of the need of security cooperation in the region reflects the growing importance of security consideration in the SAARC process. It is increasingly realised that without addressing core security and political issues, no matter how controversial they are, it would be impossible to implement and promote other regional cooperation programmes in South Asia. Another Indian Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh also voiced the growing importance of security issue and the cooperation among the nation states. "We face a turbulent neighbourhood. It is our foremost challenge to create a stable and cooperative atmosphere in our region that will allow us to concentrate our energies on tackling the problems at home and in our region. Peace, prosperity, and stability in South Asia are the top priorities of our external policies... Our

emphasis is on extending our support and cooperation to our neighbours so that causes of instability are minimized".¹⁷

Some Key Challenges

The asymmetric relations between India and other South Asian countries has been one of the main obstacles in developing and strengthening security cooperation in the region. None of the other South Asian countries can compare with India in terms of geographical size, population, economic development, natural resources, technological advancement. Basically, the South Asian region is India-centric. All the countries in South Asia share a border with India and none with each other, apart from Afghanistan and Pakistan. India's role as a regional power and its aspiration to become a global power is not meant to be perceived as a threat by its smaller neighbours. However, there is widespread perception within these small states that a rising India is a threat for their survivability. They are not convinced by the argument that India's presence and its rise would ultimately secure them from the external threats.

However, in recent days, there is growing realisation on the parts of both India and its neighbours that they have to work together on the basis of mutual interest. On the one hand, Indian policy makers are increasingly realizing they have to remove threat perceptions and build new levels of trust and confidence with their neighbours. As India aspires for global leadership, it requires a stable and peaceful neighbourhood environment. Furthermore, to maintain sustained growth and attract investment from outside as well as promote itself as a leading state in the international arena, it is imperative for India to remove all kinds of mistrust and suspicions with its neighbours and build new levels of trust and confidence with them. As stated by India's former Prime Minister, I.K. Gujral, "India's future depends on what its neighbours think of it, if India's energies are wasted in fights with neighbours, India will never become a world power."¹⁸ On the other hand, India's neighbours are increasingly of the view that India's growing economy and vast markets and technology would contribute positively for enhancing their economic development and social transformation. Thus, a stable and peaceful South Asia is in the interest of all the countries in the region.

Since the partition of India into two nations in 1947, India and Pakistan have fought three wars. Pakistan is not convinced of India's assurance of defending South Asian countries from an external threat. Both countries have entered the "elite" nuclear club, which has made the region more vulnerable, unstable and war-prone. As Tellis argues, the possibility of nuclear accidents, nuclear terrorism and blackmail, misperception, unauthorized nuclear use and technological error have increased in the region.¹⁹

Domestic instability is one of the key causal factors in preventing the development of security communities in South Asia. For example, the rise of Left wing extremism and also several separatist movements is a major challenge

that, while already spilling over the borders into neighbouring countries, if not handled soon by India, could have major negative implications in the whole region. Furthermore, the nature of the state in the region and the use of state institutions as personal resources pose more challenges.

Despite the prevailing challenges, the positive sign is that the policy making elites particularly in India and Pakistan are also gradually realizing the importance of enhanced cooperation and coordination between the countries even in areas regarded as very sensitive and controversial. This is a positive development and needs to be encouraged by all the players in the region.

Another way of developing a regional approach is to improve the governance mechanisms at regional levels. This not only provides a regional security framework within which to monitor the behaviour of individual state regimes, but also coincides with a contemporary desire of the international community to develop regional peacekeeping actors. This may be done partly through institutional development but it is unlikely that this will lead to the development of regional security complexes in the long term. What this will require is the development of what Karl Deutsch termed a security community.²⁰

Nepal's Emerging Security Concerns

The issue of national security has always been the major concern for Nepal since its foundation. Nepal's security policy began to evolve during the period of unification in the 1750s and 1760s. It was conceptualized by its founding father King Prithivi Narayan Shah. Nepal's security issue was evolved particularly against the backdrop of threats posed by the British East India Company in India and Tibet in China during the 18th and 19th century. The security perception that evolved did not alter even with the passage of successive regimes, the emergence of India as an independent country from British colonialism and the birth of China as a People's Republic after the Communist Party took over power in 1949.

However, Nepal has gone through a major change in its political structures in the last two decades. The transition into democracy in the 1990s has generated an enormous amount of political consciousness and social awareness among the Nepalese people. The freedom of speech, right to form political organisations and the openness of the media have all played a significant role towards the empowerment of the general public. People have become more attentive towards their rights and issues that relate to their day-to-day lives. Problems like political instability, failure to maintain law and order, social discrimination, development disparity, lack of inclusiveness, failure of institutional delivery and an inefficient governing system have generated enormous interest among the masses. In the past few decades, the failure of successive governments to address these problems have helped ultra-Left forces like the Maoists and other terror and criminal groups to consolidate and expand their strengths and activities. Armed conflicts

during 1996-2006 have led the country to a state of chaos, instability and violence.

During the Maoists insurgency, 17,800 people²¹ lost their lives, tens of thousands of them were injured and a larger number of people were displaced from their homes, precipitating an internal refugee crisis. The people's desire for peace and democracy resulted in a massive uprising in April 2006 which forced the King to surrender power to the political parties and reinstate the earlier dissolved parliament. This also led to holding elections to the Constituent Assembly in April 2008 and declaration of a Federal Democratic Republic Nepal. The government formed after the CA election is now under tremendous pressure to free its people from the clutches of violence and secure basic needs such as sufficient food, shelters, education, health care, human rights, political stability and security.

Similarly, the last 10 years of conflict has triggered off many other social and environmental crises in Nepal. For instance, migration due to the escalation of violence in the rural areas has led to a large number of internal refugees particularly in the mid and far western hill districts as well as in the mid-Terai regions. Similarly, hundreds and thousands of young people are leaving the country in search of employment. An added pressure has been the large number of refugees from Bhutan, about 1,10,000 languishing in various camps in two eastern districts Morang and Jhapa since last almost two decades,²² and about 25000 Tibetan refugees taking shelter in different parts of Nepal.

Employing terror tactics to assert their own political and social agendas has become quite common among the extremist groups in Nepal. Apart from the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists), the small armed-groups who split earlier from them are also involved in arbitrary killing, abduction, intimidation and harassment of the common people in the mid and eastern-Terai districts of Nepal. This poses a serious challenge for maintaining law and order in those districts and surroundings areas. Likewise, the Bhutanese refugees based in Nepal have also formed a Communist Party of Bhutan (Maoists) recently to launch armed rebellion against the Bhutanese King's regime. It is reported that the Bhutanese Maoists are establishing their links with the Nepalese Maoists and other extremist groups in the region. Their involvement in violent activities would have a serious impact in the bordering regions of Nepal and India.

Though the last 10 years of Maoists 'People's War' was ended after signing a Comprehensive Peace Agreement in November 2006 between the Government of Nepal and the CPN (Maoists), the return of the Internally Displaced People (IDPs) has not been implemented, mainly because of the refusal of the Maoists to return the confiscated properties. Large numbers of displaced people are living in pathetic conditions in different parts of the country. Now, their safe return and resettlement has become another challenge. The protracted IDPs issue has seriously been disturbing the security environment in the cities and various district

headquarters. And there is a great danger of these IDPs taking extreme steps, such as joining extremist groups, if the prevailing frustration and disappointment among them persists.

India and China have expressed their serious concerns on the escalation of violence and breakdown of law and order in Nepal in recent days. They view the growing conflict in Nepal would have spillover effects on the bordering areas of both countries. The hijacking of an Indian Airlines New Delhi bound flight from Kathmandu by the Islamic terrorists in 1999 has raised serious possibility of using Nepali land against India's interests. The growing nexus between the different armed groups in Nepal and India, human trafficking, and uncontrolled migratory movements are issues that India and Nepal have identified as the newer threats to the security and interests of both countries. New Delhi has repeatedly asked Nepal to control the activities of alleged Pakistani intelligence-supported groups acting against India from Nepali soil. Similarly, China's concern today is that insecurity and instability in Nepal might strengthen anti-China elements along its Tibet Autonomous Areas borders, regarded as a China's trouble spot.

With this vitiated atmosphere, Nepal has found many of its traditional security threats diluted and many more new non-traditional security threats becoming pronounced. The changing nature and trends of threat perceptions in Nepal could be seen in some of the recently published literature in Nepal. Indrajit Rai states that "when we talk about Nepal's, perception of threat ... Nepal has least possibilities of direct external arms attack but there are maximum chances of threat for the people of Nepal. In other words, Nepal is not secure from internal threats—insurgency, poverty, education and health problems".²³ He further states that the people of Nepal are not secure at all. Lokraj Baral emphasizes the need for a people-centric approach both in theory and practice on security. He states that "the recent pro-democracy movement in Nepal has established the fact that the military alone cannot protect the rulers if the people fail to identify their interest with that of the state run by anti-people rulers. The comprehensive security idea has emerged strongly as even democracy without human empowerment and social justice cannot create a congenial atmosphere for security of the state and people".²⁴

Since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the successful Constituent Assembly election, Nepal entered a new era of political and social transformation. In this new and changed political landscape, there was an expectation and requirement that the country should review and update government policies and programmes. This is required in many areas, but failings and gaps are particularly conspicuous in the security field. Lack of a coherent security policy was arguably one contributing factor in the misuse and ineffective direction of state security forces in previous years, worsening rather than mitigating internal conflicts. Further, with the dissolution of the Constituent

Assembly on 27 May 2012, after failing to draft and promulgate a new Constitution despite four extensions, there is great public frustration that the political process that started with the coming together of the then Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and non-Maoist parties in 2006 failed to deliver on its mandate. Amid this political instability and constitutional vacuum, there are a number of areas that will require concentration; one of the urgent issues is the issue of national security.

To date, the national security policy of Nepal has basically been guided by *ad hoc* and non-transparent policies and programmes. Nepal's National Security Council (NSC) illustrates this point—the body has never been institutionalized and supported to engage in organised study, planning, policy development or execution. At present it remains in limbo. These facts are compounded by limited awareness among the governing elites of security policy, strategy and security sector governance issues.

Leading political analysts in Nepal conclude that the conflict has evolved into the most serious internal crisis Nepal has faced since its founding in the mid-eighteenth century.²⁵ Today, there is a need of a better coordinated approach internally as well as regionally.

Conclusion

Threat perceptions have never been static. Non-traditional security threats have increased in South Asia in recent years. The region is marred by poverty, unstable political situations, social conflicts, environmental degradation, bad governance, religious fundamentalism, ethnic conflict, increasing extremism, contagious diseases and growing cross-border crimes are some of the issues that each country in the region is facing today. Most of these threats are not confined within a state's boundary; these are transnational in nature and need to be dealt with in a coordinated manner. Therefore, the region needs to develop better security cooperation particularly on sharing of intelligence reports, promoting mutual supports, regular defence dialogues, enhanced security coordination between the states and information sharing. Such a move will help to build confidence among the states and also contribute for the improvement of the security environment in the region.

Likewise, the states of South Asia need to overcome their narrow and traditional security views and build confidence and trust and strengthen security cooperation. Only in this way, will they be able to deal with the emerging threats. Gradually, all the countries of the region, including those that were reluctant in the past, are now realizing the importance of collectively dealing with the security issue. Open expression of the importance of security cooperation in a formal forum like SAARC is an encouraging sign for the future of the region.



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PART-III

Cooperation in Non-Traditional Security

10

Towards a Cooperative Framework for South Asia: Economic Development and Regional Integration

Dushni Weerakoon

Economic development is a critical imperative for socio-political stability both within and between close, neighbouring economies. Economic deprivation and/or rising disparities often result in conflicts and heightened insecurities that in turn stifle a country's or a region's development prospects. In this respect, national and regional approaches to achieve better development outcomes are critical. In addition to national development strategies, initiatives to better support regional economic growth through trade and investment cooperation can offer an additional boost. However, in all respects, the soundness of a country's democratic institutions and regulatory governance, i.e., the existing social, political and institutional conditions—to support economic growth and development play an all-pervading role.

South Asian economies embarked on a process of economic reforms from the early 1970s. Sri Lanka was the first to introduce sweeping reforms in 1977/78, followed by incremental changes in the same direction in Bangladesh, Pakistan and India in the 1980s. Economic reforms began in right earnest across the region once again in the early 1990s, with the boost given by the transformation of economic policy direction in India. These unilateral reform efforts were complemented by initiatives to enhance regional economic cooperation through the framework of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) from the mid-1990s, albeit with very limited results. Notwithstanding the lack-lustre regional initiatives, the unilateral reforms allowed South Asia to make significant strides in raising its growth rate and achieving rapid improvements in human development indicators. Despite the gains made,

however, the region remains home to the largest concentration of people in poverty, with a sharp increase in inequities in income and persistent disparities in socio-economic development indicators. Increasingly, the region's poor are facing similar kinds of vulnerabilities—be they from rising food prices, climate change and natural disasters, and threats to human security.

Whilst the growth outlook for South Asia looks promising in the medium term, a disaggregated picture suggests that rising political instability in some of the South Asian countries will also mean that their development will lag behind neighbouring economies. Clearly such an outcome can heighten regional socio-political conflicts. The pattern of regional economic integration in South Asia under the aegis of SAARC also suggests an unequal integration process is underway, that can further undermine the cohesion of an 'inclusive' regional development process. A weak governance environment across the region has proved to be a critical barrier not only to modernize and integrate the region with a fast-changing global economic landscape, but also to bridge rising socio-economic disparities within countries.

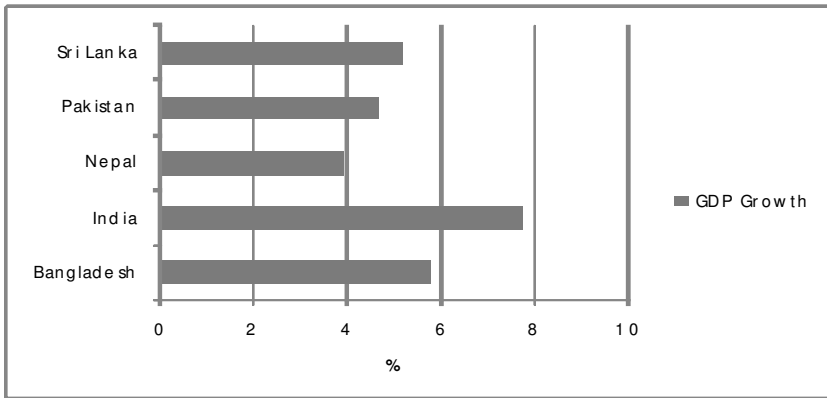
This chapter examines the development prospects for South Asia amidst a weak global economic performance, particularly in the more advanced economies of the world. It touches upon South Asia's economic integration process to date to assess the extent to which it may lend support to a regional growth process. It also discusses the institutional and governance impediments currently prevalent in South Asia, hindering the implementation of a sustained economic development programme across countries of the region.

South Asia: Development Prospects

South Asia is identified as a dynamic growth hub that witnessed rapid economic growth over the last decade and saw an accompanying sharp reduction in poverty. Nonetheless, South Asian countries have also seen an increase in inequities within countries. Growth has been concentrated in urbanized sectors of the economy that is closely integrated with the global economy. By contrast, lagging regions which are rural and rely overwhelmingly on low value agriculture and informal activities continue to experience high levels of poverty.

Unequal growth outcomes within countries are likely to be heightened during periods of rapid growth. The push for higher growth is often accompanied by technological progress and higher growth will likely come from more productive sectors such as services. This can raise the relative demand for skilled workers. When the supply of skilled workers fails to keep pace with demand, which is often the case, it can lead to a widening wage gap between skilled and unskilled workers. India has already witnessed this in pockets, where IT workers command higher salaries or where pockets of skilled migrant workers are skewing income distribution in migrant-dependent states.

Figure 10.1: Annual Average GDP Growth (2001-10)



Source: World Bank, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator>

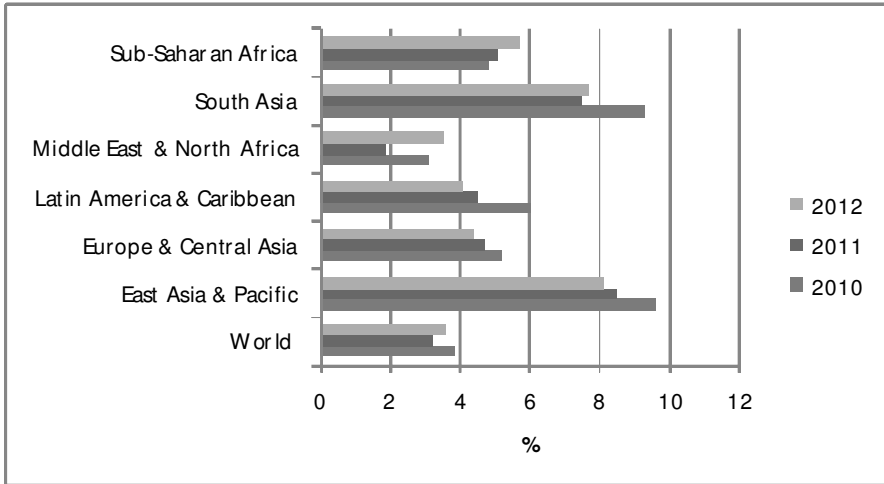
The services sectors account for 50-60 per cent of GDP for South Asian economies, but for most, the bulk of employment is to be found in agriculture, where many of the region's poor are to be found. Emerging risks also threaten the most vulnerable—agriculture is most prone to adverse effects of natural disasters and climate change, rising food prices impacts harshly on the urban poor, security related risks to life affect remote and poor districts disproportionately in countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Such rising disparities within countries are likely to be accompanied by greater inter-country disparities in the short to medium term. South Asia is rightly perceived to be a major centre of economic gravity, along with East Asia, in pulling the global economy out of its current downturn in the next few years. Indeed, South Asia's GDP growth is now almost on par with that of East Asia, the former recording the second fastest growth in 2010 of 9.3 per cent, just short of East Asian growth of 9.6 per cent (Figure 10.2). These trends are expected to continue in the next couple of years, although at a marginally lower pace.

Whilst the picture looks promising at the aggregate regional level, there are significant disparities across individual economies. As expected, the regional outlook is overwhelmingly dominated by the expected outcomes in India. This is hardly surprising in view of the fact that India alone accounts for 80 per cent of GDP in South Asia, whereby rapid economic growth in that country—forecast to average 8.5 per cent per annum in the next 2-3 years will have a positive regional outcome.

Whilst Bangladesh and Sri Lanka are also expected to perform reasonably well, that is clearly not the same for some other countries in the region. Many

Figure 10.2: South Asia's Growth Prospects in a Global Context

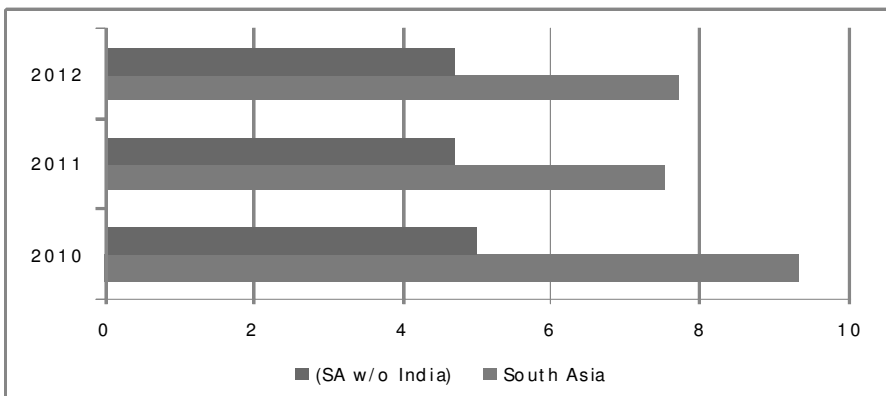


Source: World Bank, *Global Economic Prospects*, June, 2011.

South Asian economies such as Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Nepal are currently racked by political instability of some degree or the other. Pakistan, South Asia's second largest economy, is expected to see average growth of only around 3.5 per cent per annum over the next 2-3 years. Afghanistan's economic outlook is almost entirely dependent on aid flows, while Nepal which is presently experiencing a crippling energy constraint is expected to show only a very gradual recovery in the medium term.

Thus, the pace of economic growth both in terms of inter-country and intra-country outcomes will widen existing disparities across the region. Clearly,

Figure 10.3: Regional Outlook: South Asia with and without India



Source: World Bank, *Global Economic Prospects*, June, 2011.

this has significant implications for issues of regional security and cooperation. Inequitable distribution of wealth creates a high degree of economic insecurity both within and between countries that can in turn spill over into social unrest, particularly during times of acute economic crises.

The Role of Regional Cooperation in Fostering Economic Growth

Increased regional economic integration has been promoted with the idea of not only securing new and larger markets for traditional products, but also as a means of enabling the diversification of domestic economic structures. An integrated market is also viewed as a means of enhancing the ability to take advantage of global investment capital, and manufacturing and services-related technological efficiencies. Both these factors are expected to provide an impetus for sustained growth and employment generation. Although trade complementarities in South Asia are limited due to similar production structures, the potential for intra-South Asian cooperation in both trade in goods and services and investment is not entirely absent.

In view of the slow progress on regional economic cooperation, a somewhat pessimistic early conclusion that the South Asian integration process will continue to remain locked in an unstable situation is not surprising.¹ The argument put forward was that in light of the India-centric nature of the region, any change will require India to adopt a more accommodating stance. In addition, while the economic predominance of India in the region means that any meaningful effort toward regional trade integration will require active Indian participation, such an integration of economies that has India as the dominant member may not be fully acceptable to Pakistan's political and strategic aspirations. The overarching conclusion appeared to be that South Asia may never benefit from a true spirit of economic regionalism as long it continues to be dogged by the vicissitudes of bilateral political relations.

The progress of economic integration in South Asia since the mid-1990s has provided some support for the above line of thought. Economic integration initiatives in South Asia have taken varying shapes since the inception of the South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement (SAPTA) in December 1995. The slow progress promoted bilateral free trade agreements (FTAs) between SAARC member countries that offered a faster pace of liberalisation,² as well as membership in other regional blocs that carry only select members of the SAARC grouping.³ Recourse to other alternatives was primarily a response to the significant shortcomings of the SAARC integration process to achieve the ultimate objective of "free trade" within the region.

In the midst of the implied "fragmentation" of a South Asian integration process, the transition to a more liberal South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA) in July 2006 was seen as an opportunity for the regional track to

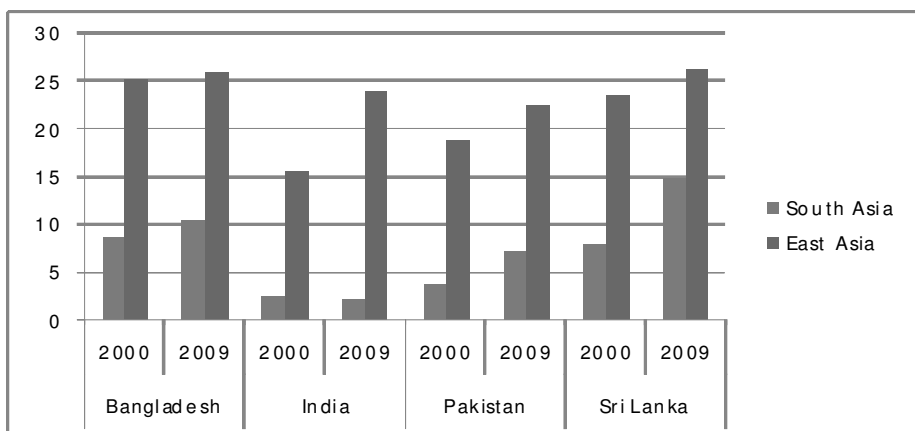
regain the initiative for an inclusive South Asian integration process. However, there has hardly been any improvement in trade outcomes. The volume of intra-regional trade in South Asia has remained depressingly low at approximately 5 per cent of total trade with the rest of the world.

Regionalism in South Asia cannot be viewed as distinct from the broader strategic economic interests of the SAARC member states. A cursory look at the emerging trade patterns suggest that while intra-South Asian trade linkages have stagnated, the region as a whole has seen a rapid expansion of economic interests with the East Asian region. The expansion in trade with East Asia has been led primarily by India and to a lesser extent by Pakistan (Figure 10.4). But from the context of South Asian integration—where India dominates bilateral economic relations independent of the region as a whole—it is India's increasing focus on East Asia that is of more relevance.

India's economic interests in South Asia are limited. These have become even less so in recent years as its economy undergoes rapid changes, reflected in its growing links with East Asia in trade and investment. Indeed, India is a central player to the notion of a greater Pan-Asian economic integration process within a broader Asian grouping, whereby India is essentially viewed as the 'bridge' that can connect South Asia to the East Asian economies.⁴

India has long been viewed as the key to enabling a successful regional economic integration effort in South Asia given the significantly asymmetric nature of economic power it wields. The bulk of intra-regional trade in South Asia is on a bilateral basis with India by individual South Asian economies (Figure 10.5). Pakistan is an exception, particularly in view of existing constraints to

Figure 10.4: Country Share of Trade with South and East Asia

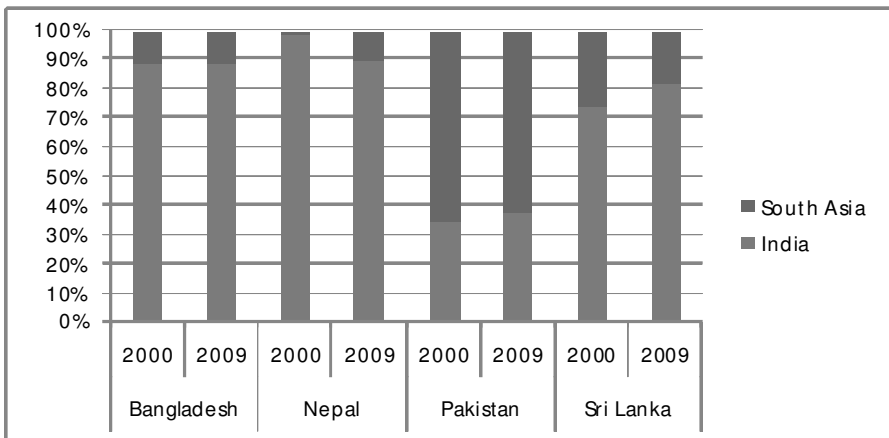


Notes: East Asia includes ASEAN, Japan, South Korea and China.

Source: IMF, *Direction of Trade Statistics*, Yearbook 2010.

bilateral trade such as the maintenance of a positive list of commodities. Thus, the notion of economic integration within the South Asian region, in reality, involves market access between India and each of the other South Asian economies. A key question that emerges is whether India—as the larger and more powerful economy—has in fact been providing that market access. The evidence to date suggests that it has indeed been doing so through a mix of bilateral and regional initiatives.⁵

Figure 10.5: India's Share of South Asian Trade



Source: IMF, *Direction of Trade Statistics*, Yearbook 2010.

Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka have been the obvious beneficiaries of gaining asymmetric preferential access to the Indian economy via bilateral agreements. But other countries such as Bangladesh too have gained, as evidenced by the limited application of India's SAFTA negative list to Bangladesh (Table 10.1). More than two-thirds of Bangladesh's exports to India enjoy preferential market access under SAFTA. Indeed, since the implementation of SAFTA, exports from Bangladesh have been the highest, relative to all other countries. The potential for India to play a catalytic role in generating economic integration in the region is clear from the Sri Lankan experience. As is evident from Figure 10.4, Sri Lanka has seen a sharp increase in its share of trade with South Asia, largely as a result of its bilateral free trade agreement with India under which nearly 97 per cent of Sri Lanka's exports to India enjoy zero duty concessions. There can also be substantial positive spill-over effects of trade initiatives on foreign direct investment (FDI). Although the FTA between India and Sri Lanka was confined to trade in goods, improved business confidence between the two countries in part explains the substantial spill-over effects into FDI. India emerged as a key source of FDI for Sri Lanka in the post-FTA era, with the bulk of Indian FDI finding its way to the services sector in Sri Lanka.⁶

Table 10.1: Bilateral/Regional Trade Initiatives Involving India and Other SAARC Partners

Country	Bilateral Initiatives with India	Other PTAs	Value of Exports Subject to India's SAFTA Sensitive List (%)	Value of Indian Exports Subject to SAFTA Sensitive List (%)
Afghanistan	PTA (2003)		n.a	n.a
Bangladesh	Trade Agreement (2006)	APTA, BIMSTEC	11.2	66.0
Bhutan	FTA (1995)	BIMSTEC	36.8	n.a
Maldives	Trade Agreement (1991)		3.6	65.2
Nepal	FTA (1991)	BIMSTEC	46.2	64.2
Pakistan			16.4	14.5
Sri Lanka	FTA (1998)	APTA, BIMSTEC	41.5	53.5

Notes: n.a. = Not Available; PTA=Preferential Trade Agreement.

Source: Weerakoon, D., 2010, "The Political Economy of Trade Integration in South Asia: The Role of India", *The World Economy*, Vol. 33 (7), pp. 851-957.

As previously noted, India's attention on issues of regional trade initiatives is spreading rapidly beyond South Asia. India's more accommodative stance vis-à-vis its South Asian neighbours can be read as a signal of its growing economic confidence, and a sign of its willingness to carry along the region as it attempts to further its links with East Asia. For the smaller South Asian economies it offers an opportunity to strategically tie up with an expanding Indian economy that may also provide an entry point to a bigger Asian market, viz. East Asia.

South Asia's smaller economies have two options. They can attempt to develop economic linkages to the wider Asian region through closer integration with India—via bilateral or regional grouping—or opt to forge direct links with East Asia, particularly with China. For many South Asian economies the latter is less promising. They hold little economic interest to East Asia on their own merit and are unlikely to be accorded preferential treatment via bilateral agreements. On the other hand, enhanced preferential market access to India for their exports and greater volumes of Indian FDI can play a useful catalytic role as an entry point to a wider Asian integration process.

Thus, market access to India for the smaller South Asian economies is evolving at a fairly rapid pace. The net result of these alternative bilateral and regional agreements in South Asia—with India playing a pivotal role—may eventually become something approximating free trade within the region. However, Pakistan is conspicuously absent in the evolving network of such alternative agreements. Indeed, the only trade initiative that links Pakistan and India is SAFTA. And like India, Pakistan too has been seeking its own trade arrangements with the East Asian region. It has signed FTAs with both China

and Malaysia to date. Thus, while the integration process that is currently evolving might reasonably approximate to 'free trade' in South Asia at some point, the marginal engagement of Pakistan will compromise the many economic and political objectives that were intended to be achieved by SAARC as a forum for an inclusive regional integration process. Thus, even as the pace of economic growth amongst South Asian economies is expected to differ quite sharply in the coming years, the regional economic integration process may serve to exacerbate such trends.

Development Imperatives for South Asia: Political and Economic Governance

The relatively poor performance to deliver rapid and equitable growth through both national and regional initiatives has not helped to build a cohesive and secure regional identity. South Asia has been a region subject to a spate of conflicts—based on ethnic, religious, class differences, etc.—that have also often spilled across national boundaries and hampered the region's development efforts. A key constraint has been slow progress in building and strengthening institutions of political and economic governance. Poor law and order, weaknesses in the judicial system, deteriorating quality of public administration, etc. are major hindrances to effective policy formulation and implementation in South Asia.⁷

Perceptions of widespread corruption at multiple levels of government (and in the private sector) that result from weak institutional and governance structures are major impediments to economic performance. Indeed, perceptions that poor performance is a result of rampant corruption further undermine reform efforts in a vicious cycle. South Asia is rated extremely poorly according to most global indicators of political and economic governance. Across six dimensions of governance captured by the World Governance Indicators for a total of 213 countries in 2009, South Asia's performance is fairly weak, with India scoring the best ranking across most indicators as would be expected (Table 10.2).

Table 10.2: Ranking in Governance Indicators: 2009

	<i>Bangladesh</i>	<i>India</i>	<i>Pakistan</i>	<i>Sri Lanka</i>
Voice and accountability	35	60	21	32
Political stability	8	13	0	12
Government effectiveness	17	54	19	49
Regulatory quality	23	44	33	43
Rule of law	28	56	19	53
Control of corruption	17	47	13	45

Source: World Bank Institute, <http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp>

Whilst liberalisation removed opportunities for rent-seeking by dismantling of licensing arrangements, there has been a continuance, and perhaps even a strengthening, of patronage politics in the region over the last decade. The

concentration of state power has intensified. Political parties continue to be dominated by a handful of elites, with party leadership often passed on from generation to generation within a family. The concentration of power and centralized nature of decision making that often accompanies it, stifles more democratic practices within parties, extending to the policy arena as well.

South Asia has not managed to curb the growth of its bureaucracy despite reforms that called for less state involvement in their respective economies.⁸ Bureaucracies remain firmly entrenched as powerful groups and perform both administrative and political functions. Though theoretically apolitical—whereby they cannot be sacked by politicians for the most part—the bureaucracy has increasingly become politicized over time. The bureaucracy also plays a dual role as policy makers and implementers, blurring the lines and further centralizing political decision making power. This leads not only to a significant lack of transparency in policy decisions—and large discretionary powers in policy-making—but also to a lack of accountability amongst policymakers and elected politicians, and distancing from their constituencies.⁹

Almost all South Asian economies have two major competing political parties that alternate in power. While the existence of two mainstream parties has offered a degree of stability—ensuring the ability to form a government on its own or in a loose coalition arrangement—it has also resulted in increasingly fractious and confrontational politics. Paradoxically, this is despite the fact that such mainstream political parties have embraced a similar economic platform over the last decade.

Thus, a heightening of confrontational politics across mainstream parties in South Asia has seen party rivalry becoming a significant constraint in ensuring the continuation of an economic programme which is undisturbed by political instability. This has been most evident in Pakistan and Bangladesh. Indeed, political parties are likely to oppose anything in opposition merely in the hope of returning to power, stymieing efforts to build broad support for a sustained development effort. In some countries, such as Bangladesh, the rise of business interests in politics is also deemed to place a shadow over efficacy in policymaking.¹⁰ A high representation of businessmen in Parliament is argued to create conflicts of interest between their business interests and pursuit of law making.

For some countries, particularly India and Sri Lanka, the problem has been exacerbated by the rise of loose coalition arrangements. In theory, the diversity that comes with coalition arrangements can inspire stability to glue and hold the political system together. However, in the enactment of economic policies, coalition arrangements—increasing the number of political players and layers—can be a near strait-jacket on sustained development efforts, with constant shifts in coalitions and interests leading to instability and unpredictable policy

environments. This is particularly so in South Asia where politics tend to be fairly fluid, with alliances and political affiliations—represented by interdependencies between a multitude of interests across caste, religious, ethnic and regional divisions—often shifting in response to popular sentiment.

Fragile coalition arrangements heighten the risk of instability, as political parties could cause the fall of a government by withdrawing the necessary support. After the initial reform success of a minority coalition government during 1991-95, India witnessed a period of turmoil with several short-lived alliances during 1996-98. Sri Lanka witnessed a similar upheaval during 2000-04, with three parliamentary elections in quick succession. Fragile coalition arrangements not only encourage governments to take a short term view on policy, but critically also lead the incumbent and contesting opposition to engage in competitive populism, essentially pandering to 'vote-bank' politics. In turn, the presence of many small coalition partners in government further strengthens patron-client relationships. The dispensing of posts and privileges is a common element in political management in such arrangements. The size of Sri Lanka's Cabinet has increased exponentially, constraining the ability to formulate and implement policies in any effective fashion.

All of the above heightens the tendency towards patron-client relationships in the policymaking process, and opens the door to corruption. In the presence of institutional weaknesses that fail to provide effective oversight and accountability, South Asia relies on the electoral system to vote out governments deemed to have crossed an 'invisible' threshold of poor governance and corruption.

Conclusion

South Asian countries share a common goal, i.e., to deliver rapid and equitable development outcomes to the vast majority of people in the region. In this endeavour, existing social, political and institutional conditions will play an important role in determining the outcomes in the medium to longer term. The outlook for the region as a whole remains bright, with South Asia identified as a dynamic global growth hub that is expected to see rapid growth and poverty reduction in the foreseeable future.

However, the aggregate picture for the region masks significant disparities, both within and between countries. Rapid growth over the last decade has left pockets of poverty lagging behind in terms of poor socio-economic development indicators. Often such lagging regions are to be found disproportionately in the more remote and poor districts in countries. The socio-political tensions that can arise from growing disparities and marginalisation of communities within countries can be exacerbated by the likelihood that South Asian countries will see sharply divergent growth prospects across countries. Countries such as India,

Bangladesh and Sri Lanka appear to be comfortably placed relative to more conflict-stricken countries such as Afghanistan and Pakistan.

South Asia's economic integration process under SAARC is not helping to bridge such disparities through shared growth across the region. The most likely outcome of the SAFTA economic integration process appears to be that such an integration will take place on two levels. The smaller economies will deepen integration with the Indian economy, whilst integration between Pakistan and India lags behind. The fragmentation of the SAFTA process does not bode well for the long-term economic integration of the South Asian region. At best, it will only be partial, integrating the smaller economies with that of India through a host of bilateral and regional deals, while leaving Pakistan on the periphery of such a process.

Thus, disparities in economic development outcomes across the region are likely to be further aggravated by regional fragmentation. The region's policymakers appear gridlocked in attempts to push domestic and regional reform agendas forward. A key stumbling block underpinning South Asia's relatively weak development efforts to deliver broad based benefits of higher growth to its constituency has been institutional and governance weaknesses. The current policy process in South Asia can be viewed as the outcome of incentives created by patronage politics. Oversized bureaucracies with strong vested interests are a source of resistance to reform in most of these countries. It is not surprising then that South Asia's major reform efforts have occurred in the midst of economic difficulties and/or when there has been a change of political leadership, introduced by outsiders unconnected to the old regime. But even when such reforms have occurred, there has been limited institutionalisation of a reform process. Decision-making in South Asia remains highly centralized—with major political parties themselves the preserve of a handful of elites—limited to a 'hand-picked' inner team of politicians and bureaucrats. The party system that exists in South Asia, where competing parties have a balanced chance of taking power, also affects the constraints and benefits of politicians for taking the difficult path of reforms to enhance long term development prospects.

While political leadership and structures are often a part of the problem, they are also necessarily a part of the solution to creating capabilities and capacities to implement public policies. If South Asian countries are to overcome what appear to be common problems of weak institutional and governance structures that can deliver equitable development, politico-institutional structures across countries need to be re-invigorated, instituting norms and rules that can restrain the drift towards arbitrary action and corruption.



Notes

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2. These include the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement and the Pakistan-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement.
3. These include the Asia Pacific Trade Agreement (APTA) to which Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka are signatories and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) to which Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, India and Sri Lanka are signatories.
4. J.P. Francois, G. Wignaraja and P.B. Rana (eds.), *Pan Asian Integration: Linking East and South Asia*, Palgrave MacMillan and Asian Development Bank, 2009.
5. See D. Weerakoon, "The Political Economy of Trade Integration in South Asia: The Role of India", *The World Economy*, Vol. 33 (7), 2010, pp. 851-957.
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Should India and Pakistan Look Beyond IWT: Why and How?

Shaista Tabassum

New realities of the South Asian region directly threaten all regional powers, especially with the emergence of powerful non-state actors. These new veracities have convinced the states of the region to adopt shared strategies. The first step for any such coordinated effort could only be initiated only when states cooperate, and minimize their differences by adopting new aspects to the already existing issues. Water is a continuous flowing resource which requires special attention. Due to geographical boundaries the resource is poorly divided and thus more poorly managed. This essential commodity is fast declining, and requires to be monitored and administered by all riparian states. The IWT (Indus Water Treaty) is considered mostly by the academic literature and scholars of CBM studies (Confidence Building Measures) and CR (Conflict Resolution) as one of the classics examples of cooperation between India and Pakistan, since the treaty has remained functional even during armed conflicts between the two treaty partners. At present, the Indus Basin System is facing challenges which are constantly overshadowed because of serious disputes on water distribution rights and the treaty application. Some of these new challenges are the ground water abstraction and declining amount of underground water, the environmental changes that are occurring in the surroundings of the river basin, and the high level of pollution in river water. A new dimension to the treaty approach, like including the joint observation of river flows, joint engineering works exchange of data on ground water level and extraction etc., would go a long way to resolving water related problems. The key to these problems is although mentioned in the article VII of the IWT, asking the parties to develop future cooperation—over the years, it is obvious little importance had been given to the article.

However, the issue of water sharing between India and Pakistan has assumed controversy especially in Pakistan leading to doubts about effective implementation of the IWT. Some constituencies in Pakistan have tried to raise it at the popular level which has put pressure on the government of Pakistan to take up this issue with India. Thus, water is fast emerging as yet another issue of concern between the two countries.

Against this backdrop, there are many questions which are being raised about the functioning of the IWT—like how the treaty remains functional even after 41 years? Although the core treaty remained functional, peripheral problems challenge the functioning of the treaty. If the treaty becomes non-functional or the two parties decided to revise or move forward from the treaty, what are the options available? Are there any new areas which have been ignored by the treaty? How can these issues be incorporated in the treaty? Should the treaty be considered obsolete? Should the treaty subjects be expanded, or the structure of the treaty be expanded by including other states of the region as well? How far is there acceptability on taking a bilateral issue to a multilateral level? Should the two states work towards a new treaty including new subjects? Or should the treaty be dissolved and the affected nations just rely on “simple cooperation” on water and related matters without any legal cover?

This chapter will discuss the facets of Indo-Pakistan water relations. It will first very briefly look into the treaty formulation process and then the areas requiring special attention in future cooperation; and finally, the possible way of addressing those pertinent issues.

Indo-Pakistani cooperation, especially on water related issues is “supervised cooperation”, either due to the presence or involvement of a third party. “Positive, active and continuous involvement of a third party is vital in helping to overcome conflict.”¹

The earlier being the Arbitral Tribunal in 1948, then the active participation of Eugene Black and the World Bank were crucial to the success of the Indus Water Treaty. The World Bank offered not only their good offices, but a strong leadership role as well. It provided support staff, funding, and, perhaps most important, its own proposals when negotiations reached a stalemate.²

Later disputes on the treaty were not settled bilaterally, the case of Baglihar and now the Kishenganga dam both were referred to a third party for conflict resolution. Thus the involvement of a third party in any form has facilitated the matters towards resolution.

The IWT is termed as most effective example of Confidence Building Measures (CBM) between India and Pakistan by many international scholars; despite of two major wars and low intensity conflicts, the treaty has survived and been respected by both nations. One perception advocates it as Confidence Avoidance Measures (CAM) rather than CBM. The CAMs (non-military) can

be distinguished from CBMs since their implementation requires only “extreme low level of trust and faith among the parties.”³

New challenges have arisen since the formulation of the treaty: the current politics of water revolves around the construction of different dams by India namely the Baglihar dam, the Kishenganga dam, the Dulhasti dam, the Swalkot dam and the Wullar barrage, to name a few. Looking at it from another angle, new challenges are constantly overshadowed because of serious differences on water distribution rights and the treaty application between the two countries. Some of these new challenges are:

- a) the declining amount of underground water due to over abstraction;
- b) environmental changes occurring in the surrounding areas of the river basin, affecting the climate in the way of high temperature, heavy rain, floods, in both Pakistan and India, the high level of pollution in river water, and the endangered species in the region;
- c) the unusual increase and decrease in the river water levels, causing severe energy crisis in the region.

One of the important areas of concern is the status of Groundwater (GW) especially in the border areas of India and Pakistan. It is neglected since IWT, while consider the sharing and distribution of surface water, has overlooked the ground water situation, which is in alarming status.

Depletion of Groundwater

Groundwater comes from the natural percolation of precipitation and other surface waters through the Earth’s soil and rock, accumulating in aquifers—cavities and layers of porous rock, gravel, sand, or clay. In some of these subterranean reservoirs, the water may be thousands to millions of years old; in others, water levels decline and rise again naturally each year. The problem with the groundwater is that it does not respond to changes in weather as rapidly as lakes, streams, and rivers do. So when groundwater is pumped for irrigation or other uses, recharge to the original levels can take months or years. Changes in underground water masses affect gravity enough to provide a signal, such that changes in gravity can be translated into a measurement of an equivalent change in water.

The groundwater is premium water for productive and sustainable agriculture. Groundwater represents as much as 97 per cent of Earth’s fresh water fraction in liquid form. In arid and semi-arid zones, it is often the only source of water. More interestingly, most of the groundwater is found in trans-boundary aquifers. Despite over-exploitation and depletion of this important resource, much attention continues to be given to surface water. Therefore, the principles of International law also apply to surface water.⁴

The NASA’s recent report on the status of groundwater in northern India

is an eye-opener for the concerned authorities in both states. The report showed alarming reduction in the groundwater in Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana and Delhi. This area is densely populated depends heavily on groundwater for agriculture. In India nearly 60 per cent of the water used in agriculture is contributed by groundwater. However, here depletion of groundwater is due to over pumping. “If measures are not taken to ensure sustainable groundwater usage, consequences for the 114 million residents of the region may include a collapse of agricultural output and severe shortages of potable water,”⁵ said NASA, adding that after constant survey of the area for years “groundwater levels have been declining by an average of one metre every three years (one foot per year). More than 109 cubic km (26 cubic miles) of groundwater disappeared between 2002 and 2008—double the capacity of India’s largest surface water reservoir, the Upper Wainganga, and triple that of Lake Mead, the largest man-made reservoir in the United States.”⁶

Over use of groundwater on the Indian side would definitely affect the presence of groundwater in Pakistan. In the border areas, depletion of groundwater as shown in the NASA report will definitely one day affect the fertility of the land on both sides of the borders.⁷

Many states have developed cooperation on groundwater: Switzerland and France came to an arrangement in 2008 for the protection utilization and recharge of Franco-Swiss Genevese aquifer after 30 years of negotiation. The other two agreements worth mentioning are the two agreements on trans-boundary aquifers on the Nubian Sandstone Aquifers system agreed among Chad, Egypt, Libya and Sudan. The four states signed two agreements in 1992, on procedure of data collection, sharing and access to the data system. The other agreement was signed in December 2002 on the North Western Sahara Aquifer System shared between Algeria, Tunisia and Libya, when all parties agreed on a consultation mechanism as well as regular exchange of data. At the European Union level, the creation of EU Water Framework Directive, which came into force in December 2002, works as an umbrella incorporating all water related elements and topics based on the concept of integrated river basin management.⁸

Flood Control Cooperation

at the international level that can provide some point of discussion on flood related issues between India and Pakistan, perhaps to start with, at the unofficial level. For example, central European countries Austria, Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary formulated joint flood-control plan to minimize the type of damage incurred during floods. The countries will prepare risk maps, flood-control plans and hydrological analyses as part of the Euro 3.1 million European Union-funded project scheduled to be completed by 2013. The North Trans-Danubian Environment Protection and Water Management Directorate received Euro 392,000 in non-refundable support for the project.⁹

In South Asia, however, environmental issues are sadly the most neglected areas in any bilateral talks between the two countries. Yet many extremely important environmental issues are either directly or indirectly related to the waters used by the two countries. The Asian continent, especially the South Asian region, is most vulnerable to environmental changes. Natural disasters in the last few years have highlighted the vulnerability of the region. The worst impact of global climate change is expected to be in the increase in the frequency and ferocity of these extreme events. In 2009 the increase in temperature in Pakistan, India and China, along with floods, created havoc in the Indian states of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, Maharashtra and Goa and also in Pakistan. The climate was again triggered in 2010 when enhanced glacial melt was accompanied by an unusual shifting of monsoon in the Northern Areas (now renamed as Gilgit-Baltistan) of Pakistan, combining to create flood havoc in the country.¹⁰

Both neighbours have suffered due to heavy rains and flood, but Pakistan, being the lower riparian neighbor, has had to bear the full brunt of it. Due to heavy rain and water release in the western rivers as well as in the River Ravi, in 2010 flood warning was issued in five drainages of Ravi catchment areas (as India released 18000 cusecs of water in the Ravi that caused flood in five drainages of Narowal and Shaker Garh).¹¹ This year again India released water in the Jhelum and then the Sutlej, increasing the level of the Indus river, causing further flooding.¹²

The Indus is called the life and soul of Pakistan agriculture. “Nearly 30 per cent of the world’s cotton supply comes from India and Pakistan, much of that from the Indus River Valley. On average, about 737 billion gallons are withdrawn from the Indus River annually to grow cotton—enough to provide Delhi residents with household water for more than two years. As one observer has noted: “The problem with Pakistan’s economy is that most of the major industries use a ton of water—textiles, sugar, wheat—and there’s a tremendous amount of water that’s not only used, but wasted.”¹³ The same is true for India. This impact is an important part of a complex water equation in countries already under strain from booming populations. More people definitely mean more demand for water to irrigate crops, cool machinery and power cities. “The Indus River, which begins in Kashmir and flows through Pakistan on its way to the sea, is Pakistan’s primary freshwater source—on which 90 per cent of its agriculture depends—and a critical outlet of hydropower generation for both countries.”¹⁴

The excessive use of water causes a shortage of water especially in the summer months in Pakistan. Due to poor infrastructure and unavailability of storage capacity downstream, a very huge part of Indus water is wasted. Keeping Pakistani concerns regarding water in mind, the Indian high commissioner stated at the Allama Iqbal airport in Lahore on 10 February 2010 that the situation is equally

grim in India as well. "India had been affected as much as Pakistan due to water shortage in the Indus", he said and added that water scarcity is a problem common to Pakistan and India and should not lead the two countries to war.¹⁵

The water scarcity is the concern of both sides. A classic example of dealing with the water issue is the Israel-Jordan treaty. The Article 4 of the treaty is about water sharing. The article 4(a) says, "development of existing and new water resources, increasing the water availability including cooperation on a regional basis as appropriate, and minimizing wastage of water resources through the chain of their uses."¹⁶

Pollution Cooperation

Pollution in the river requires special attention since it can directly affect the quality of water and could be a cause of conflict. The military is already most likely the number one producer of wastes in the world, and the leftover chemical and weapons used in times of war can have an effect on water supplies. Wastes from industries and agriculture can contaminate groundwater resources if not disposed of properly.¹⁷

Water in most of the Indian rivers is extremely polluted due to discharge of untreated sewage and industrial effluents directly into the rivers. These wastes usually contain a wide variety of organic and inorganic pollutants including solvents, oils, grease, plastics, phenols, heavy metals, pesticides and suspended solids. The indiscriminate dumping and release of wastes containing any of these hazardous substances into rivers might lead to environmental disturbance which could be considered as a potential source of stress to biotic community.¹⁸ For example, the Ganges alone receives sewage of 29 cities situated on its banks and the industrial effluents of about 300 small, medium, large industries. Eighty per cent of India's urban waste goes directly into rivers, many of which are so polluted that they exceed permissible levels for safe bathing. The major repercussion can be seen in the high mortality rates. It is said that waterborne diseases are India's leading cause of child mortality.¹⁹ So problems of river water pollution are not only on Pakistan side rather the ultimate sufferers are the inhabitants of both the states.

The issue of river pollution is trans-boundary in nature. Any pollution in the Western Indus Basin rivers will ultimately pass to Pakistan as well. The Pakistan Indus Water commissioner has also raised the issue of the pollution in the Jhelum river at a meeting in July 2008. He pointed out that drain from Srinagar to Baramula town opened directly into the river, and he was also not satisfied with the explanation the Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) government gave for controlling the river pollution.²⁰

Although the issue of endangered species is a minor one compared to the throbbing challenges of pollution and water scarcity, it is a matter of concern

for the environmentalist. Some very precious endangered species migrates during different seasons to the region. The area adjacent to the Indian borders at the river Jhelum is the Rasul Barrage Wildlife Sanctuary and the habitat of the migratory birds like the Siberian Crane and Stork and the local black-winged Stilt in winter. In August there are few *Tobas* and *Murghabis* (wild ducks). The Rann of Kutch is a breeding ground for flamingoes and staging ground for pelicans, cranes, storks and many species of waterfowl.²¹

One of the precious species of the Indus River is the blind Indus Dolphin, now threatened to extinction by agricultural pollution and dams, among other pressures. Scientists estimate that fewer than 100 such dolphins remain. In the balance is the fate not only of people, but important aquatic species.²²

Energy Crisis

Frequent power breakdown are a common feature in the Indian subcontinent. There is a serious energy crisis in the region due to increase in population as well as industrialization. In an attempt to solve the crisis, in India, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh entered into peaceful use of nuclear energy deal with the US despite severe criticism from opposition. India's electricity crisis may not be as severe as that of Pakistan; however, the government is attempting to solve the problem by importing rental power plants, causing enormous burden on the deteriorating economy. Even then the most affected are the provinces of Punjab and Sindh,²³ where frequent riots and demonstrations are a symptom of despair over the energy crisis in Pakistan.

The Kishenganga Dam project is a serious dispute at present. Pakistan filed a case at the arbitral court at The Hague, Netherlands. The Court has accepted Islamabad's application for a stay-order on the Kishenganga Dam and ruled that, until a final settlement between India and Pakistan is reached, New Delhi will not be allowed to resume construction. India had planned to generate about 300 megawatts of electricity from the dam, a project that is now likely to be put into jeopardy.

Conclusion

Many misconceptions surround the Indus Water Treaty— that it can be easily violated or that India can always create both drought and floods in Pakistan. India cannot abrogate the treaty. The fact is that the treaty has been in existence for 51 years and it is now practically impossible to go back to the pre-treaty status. Both India and Pakistan have developed canal networks. India has diverted the waters of the Sutlej and Beas by constructing a huge network of canals; if it now attempts to stop the water, its own canal structure would be over flooded. Therefore there is a need to look ahead for better solutions.

The treaty has functioned without interruption only because water has been

separated from rest of the issues and agreed as a non-political matter. As was expressed by Mohammed Sadiq, former spokesman of the Pakistan foreign office, “The Indus Waters Treaty has been an important document for the water issue between the two countries. It has also helped in a framework for the resolution of water disputes in the region. Pakistan is fully committed to the treaty in letter and spirit. As far as the Kashmir dispute, this is not a water issue. It relates to the inalienable rights of Kashmiri people to self-determination.” Although the treaty has created the permanent Indus commission, the commission mostly consists of engineers and technical experts, not politicians, emphasizing the recognition on the part of both states for a technical status of the water distribution issue rather than political.²⁴

The tasks of the Permanent Indus Commission are:

- Establish and promote cooperative arrangements for implementation of the treaty;
- Promote cooperation between India and Pakistan in the development of the waters of the Indus system;
- Examine and resolve by agreement any question that may arise between the two countries concerning interpretation or implementation of the treaty; and
- Submit an annual report to the two governments.

The two commissions are mandated to meet annually to update the Indus Basin Commission’s information-sharing responsibilities; data on new projects, the water level in rivers, and the water discharge of rivers are routinely conveyed to the other parties.²⁵

The question now is how to move forward, especially since the treaty puts certain limitations on amendments. Article XII(3)(4) says the “treaty can be modified from time to time by a duly ratified treaty concluded for that purpose between the two governments.”²⁶ This means adding new subjects would be technical, lengthy and in the prevailing situation, not only impossible but difficult.

We are thus left only with the alternative of cooperation. This could be at two parallel levels; both at the bilateral and multilateral levels. At the bilateral level the enhanced relations may be initiated by highlighting at least three neglected areas provided by the treaty provisions, which may be a point of take-off: (a) the hydroelectric power generation, (b) pollution in the river waters, and (c) future cooperation.

Cooperation on the Kishenganga project could be the launching pad of moving forward while using the framework of the treaty. Article III (2) is important in this context. The Article allows India to use the waters of the three western rivers (Indus, Jhelum and Chenab) for hydroelectric power generation. Annexure D explains the hydroelectric power generation use and also the

limitation of India in the use of the waters. Any such initiative from the upper riparian for electricity cooperation would definitely pave the way for addressing the future challenges. India while respecting the lower riparian rights of Pakistan as well as the treaty may take initiative for cooperation in the hydroelectric power generations projects which will help resolving the current issue between the two countries

Since 1960 not a single case under the Article VII—“future cooperation”—was submitted by any of the two signatories. The paragraph (c) of the same article is important. It says; “at the request of either party, the two parties, by mutual agreement, cooperate in undertaking engineering works on the rivers.”²⁷ Since India has already started the construction of dams on different locations and Pakistan’s Neelum-Jhelum project has also entered the final stages, any engineering work could be jointly initiated under the treaty provision, like a joint cooperation on building storage facilities or any joint project for hydroelectric power generation, expanding the scope of the Article III.

Article IV (10) talks about pollution. It says, “Each party declares its intentions to prevent, as far as practicable, undue pollution of waters of the rivers which might affect adversely uses similar in nature to those to which the waters were put on the effective date, and agree so take all reasonable measures to ensure that, before any sewage or industrial waste is allowed to flow into the rivers, it will be related where necessary, in such a manner as not materially to affect those uses...” The article should be given overemphasis by including the groundwater abstraction its effects on the fertility of the land along with joint mechanism like surveys, data collection and monitoring the pollution in river water while remaining within the treaty provision could be extremely effective.

The treaty is no doubt a historical document, but the two states are required to move forward otherwise the sufferers of this stagnation would be the inhabitants of the two states. The water and other related issues should also be continuously addressed at the multilateral level. SAARC has already taken up the issue of water in its summit in 2007. It took up the issue of water scarcity and management among the member countries as a challenge. SAARC members could emulate the European Union model for an integrated river management system. The EU Water Framework Directive (EUWFD) came into force in 2000. This body acts as an umbrella incorporating all water related elements and topics based on the concept of integrated river management system. The most significant feature of the EUWFD is that it extends to all aquatic systems including ground and surface and even coastal waters.²⁸ The creation of South Asian Water Framework Directive (SAWFD) could also work in the same manner like the EUWFD.



Notes

1. Aaron T. Wolf and Joshua T. Newton, "Case Study of Transboundary Dispute Resolution: the Indus Water Treaty", Institute of Water and Watershed, Oregon University, at http://www.transboundarywaters.orst.edu/research/case_studies/Indus_New.htm (accessed 12 October 2012).
2. Ibid.
3. In case of military CAMS, their primary focus tend to be on separating parties and providing buffer between hostile rather than undertaking measures that require parties to engage in more demonstrable behavior such as, notifying each other of troop exercises in advance. For detail see, "Conflict Avoidance and Confidence Building in the Middle East," in Jill R. Junnola and Michael Kreppon (eds.) *Regional Confidence Building in 1995: South Asia, the Middle East and Latin America*, Report No. 20, Washington D.C, Henry L. Stimson Center, 1995, p.20.
4. Raya M. Stephen, "Trans-boundary aquifers in International Law: Towards an Evolution", in Christophe J. G. Darnault (ed.), *Overexploitation and Contamination of Shared Groundwater Resources*, Springer, Dordrecht, The Netherlands, p.36-37.
5. "NASA Satellites Unlock Secret to Northern India's Vanishing Water", at http://www.nasa.gov/topics/earth/features/india_water.html
6. Ibid.
7. It is important to note that Ground Water (GW) abstraction in India is also affecting the GW in Nepal. See NASA report.
8. Raya M. Stephen, no. 4.
9. "Central European Countries to formulate Joint flood-control Plan", *Budapest Business Journal*, 24 June 2010, at http://www.bbj.hu/economy/—central-european-countries-to-formulate-joint-flood-control-plan_53218
10. For more information see <http://www.andhranews.net/Features/Events/2009-Floods-in-India.asp#ixzz1bIa2Ls5L>
11. At least 168 villages along river Ravi have been evacuated in wake of possible flood while district administration has been red alerted in Narowal and Sialkot. The flood center in Lahore has given prior high flood warning in drainage located in Shakar Garh. More four drainages Basantar, Jhajri, Oojh and Khattar could be affected by the possible flood. Water inflow of 70,000 cusec at Shahdara could cause massive destruction. "India releases 18000 cusec water in Ravi: Flood warning issued", *The Nation*, 21 August 2010, at <http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Lahore/21-Aug-2010/India-releases-18000-cusec-water-in-Ravi-Flood-warning-issued>
12. The point here is that the initial flooding in pockets of northern Pakistan was natural but the subsequent flood waves in the absence of rain are possibly linked to opening the floodgates of Indian dams and also of the Sarobi Dam in Afghanistan. "India releases more water into Sutlej, inundating villages," *Pakistan Today*, 12 August 2011, at <http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2011/08/india-releases-more-water-into-sutlej-inundating-villages/>
13. William Wheeler, "India and Pakistan at Odds Over Shrinking Indus River", *National Geographic Daily News*, 12 October 2011, at <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2011/10/111012-india-pakistan-indus-river-water/>
14. Ibid.
15. Ashraf Javed, "No Pakistan-India water war", *The Nation*, 11 February 2010, at <http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Politics/11-Feb-2010/No-PakIndia-water-war-Ranganathan>
16. Israel-Jordan Treaty, Article 4.
17. "Water Wars and International Conflict", at <http://academic.evergreen.edu/g/grossmaz/OFORIAA/>

18. Sudheer Kumar Shukla, "Indian river systems and Pollution", *The Encyclopedia of Earth*, at http://www.eoearth.org/article/Indian_river_systems_and_pollution?topic=58075
19. Daniel Pepper, "India's rivers are drowning in pollution", *Fortune*, 04 June 2007, at http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/fortune_archive/2007/06/11/100083453/index.htm
20. "Pakistan to raise river pollution issue with India," *Andhranews.net*, at <http://www.andhranews.net/Intl/2007/May/28/Pakistan-raise-2619.asp>
21. Pakistan to raise river pollution issue with India, *Andhranews.net*, at <http://www.andhranews.net/Intl/2007/May/28/Pakistan-raise-2619.asp>
22. The Indus River dolphin (*Platanista minor*) is one of the world's rarest mammals and the second most endangered freshwater river dolphin. Approximately 1,100 specimens of this species exist today in a small fraction of their former range, the lower reaches of the Indus River in Pakistan. However, the population of this species has gradually declined because of various factors, including water pollution, poaching, fragmentation of habitat due to barrages, and dolphin stranded in the irrigation canals. Numbers have dramatically declined since the construction of the irrigation system in the Indus. Most individuals now remain in a 1,200 km stretch of the Indus River. William Wheeler, "India and Pakistan at Odds Over Shrinking Indus River", *National Geographic News*, 12 October 2011, for detail report see: <http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2011/10/111012-india-pakistan-indus-river-water/>
23. For example Karachi which is the hub all economic activities, needs around 17-18 mw of power during peak hours, while the total generation including from two IPPs i.e. Gul Ahmed and Tapal under KESC's licensed area comes to 14-14.5 mw. The short supply of 3.5 mw is not a big deal if one is determined to resolve the problem. Amanullah Bashir, "Karachi-the victim of electricity failure", *Pakistan Economist*, 2-8 April 2001, at <http://www.pakistaneconomist.com/issue2001/issue14/i&e2.htm>
24. Saleem H. Ali, Shaista Tabassum Geoffrey Dabelko, "Environmental Conflict and cooperation in South Asia", UNEP & Woodrow Wilson Center Project, December 2007, p. 9.
25. Ibid.
26. The Text of the Indus Waters Treaty, at <http://mowr.gov.in/writereaddata/linkimages/IndusWatersTreaty196054268637.pdf>
27. Ibid.
28. Raya M. Stephen, no.4. Its objectives are also very clear "Good status is achieved for all surface and ground water bodies except for exceptional cases in 2015". This is in fact being recognized as the best practice in trans-boundary (Surface and Ground) water resources management.

12

Climate Change as a Security Issue: A Case Study of Bhutan

Chhimi Dorji

Climate change is a global phenomenon heading to becoming a concern for societies and governments. The science of Climate Change, although challenged by some, is straight-forward and actually proven true. The change has picked up momentum since the industrial revolution by the use of fossil fuels, coal, change in land use, agriculture and use of other greenhouse gas emitting materials and technologies. Ironically, while the industrialized nations are mainly responsible for this catastrophe, it is the South Asian nations that are the most vulnerable because of minimum resilience and highest exposure. Necessary planning and adaptation mechanisms should thus be created so that the damages are avoided or minimized. This is best achieved by international cooperation, proper studies, political support and chiefly public awareness.

Although Bhutan's net contribution to climate change is negative with its huge carbon sequestration, its impact on Bhutan cannot be neglected. Bhutan, being the least developed, mountainous and landlocked country in the region, is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The government of Bhutan, recognizing the importance of dealing with climate change, has accorded high priority to this topic and has declared its intention to remain 'Carbon Neutral'. Besides other initiatives and proposals, the Economic Development Policy of 2010 also states that "green growth" shall be encouraged in promoting industrial and private sector development, right from the policy and planning stages mostly focusing on a service based economy. The Bhutanese government has also recently initiated activities of mainstreaming climate change issues in policies, plans, programmes and projects in all the sectors.

In the first section of this chapter, the science of Climate Change, sources

of greenhouse gases by sectors and countries are highlighted to underscore the science and responsibilities of the consequences of the climate change we are experiencing. It also has a section on the global impact of climate change. The subsequent section explains the context of Bhutan, including its geography, emission scenario and short descriptions on the water and energy scenario. Comparison of different studies on the change in temperature, rainfall and hydrological flow patterns were done including the results from a field survey done in a pilot location in Bhutan. The last section deals with some of the measures adopted by the government of Bhutan in preparing for future environmental problems, which could be in essence be Water and Energy Security issues of the generation.

Science of Climate Change

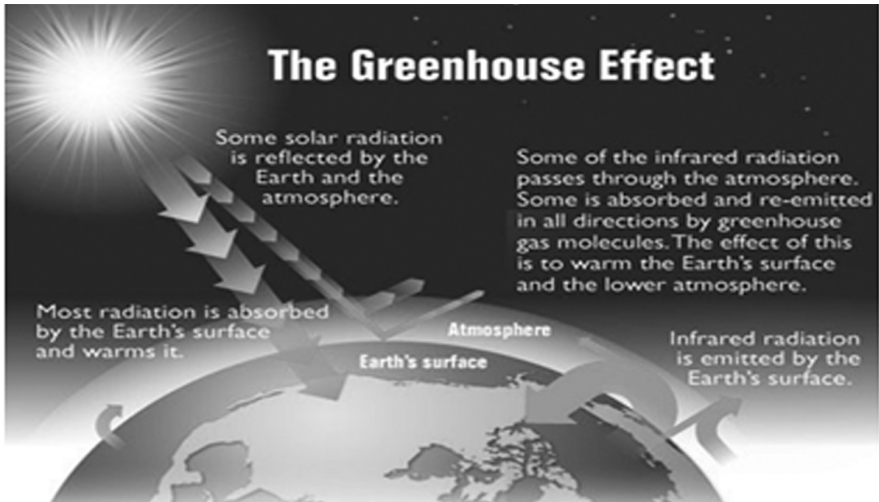
Climate change is perhaps the most important issue of our times. The science of climate change is highly complex and there is no global consensus over long-term effects of changes induced in the environment by human activities. In simple terms, climate change is referred to any significant change in mean values of meteorological parameters over a decade or longer (NSIDC, 2011). The most common parameters being changed are temperatures and precipitation over the years. Changes in the climate occur due to both internal inconsistencies within the climate system and external factors (both natural and anthropogenic). The key influence of external factors is caused by increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases which affect the atmospheric absorption properties of long-wave radiation, which leads to increased radiative forcing warming the lower atmosphere and the earth's surface (Solomon et al, 2007).

The Earth absorbs energy from solar radiation from the sun, some of which is radiated back into space. But, much of this energy going back to space is absorbed by “greenhouse” gases in the atmosphere (Figure 12.1) leading to increase in the temperature of the Earth. This “greenhouse effect” occurs naturally, but human activities have substantially increased the amount of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, causing the Earth to trap more heat. This in turn is changing the Earth's climate (US EPA, 2011).

As per the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate change (IPCC), global atmospheric concentrations of the three most important greenhouse gases (GHG); carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, have increased strikingly as a result of industrialisation after the mid-18th century and now far exceed pre-industrial values, as determined from ice cores spanning many thousands of years (Figure 12.2). The global atmospheric concentration of carbon dioxide has increased from a pre-industrial value of about 280 parts per million (ppm) to 379 ppm in 2005 (IPCC, 2007). Levels of CO₂ in the atmosphere is increasing every year and found to be about 390 ppm in August 2011 based on data from *Mauna Loa Observatory*, NOAA-ESRL (CO2NOW.org, 2011) (Figure 12.3).

Methane concentration in the atmosphere has also increased from a pre-

Figure 12.1: The Greenhouse Effect (US EPA)



industrial value of about 715 parts per billion (ppb) to 1732 ppb in the early 1990s, and was 1774 ppb in 2005. Similarly, nitrous oxide concentration increased from a pre-industrial value of about 270 ppb to 319 ppb in 2005 (IPCC, 2007).

The combined radiative forcing,¹ due to increases in carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide, is $+2.30$ [$+2.07$ to $+2.53$] W m^{-2} , and the increment during the industrial period is *very likely* to have been unmatched in last 10,000 years (IPCC, 2007). Contributions by anthropogenic aerosols (sulphate, organic carbon, black carbon, nitrate and dust) together produce a cooling effect, with

Figure 12.2: Concentrations of GHG, 1750 to 2005 (IPCC 2007)

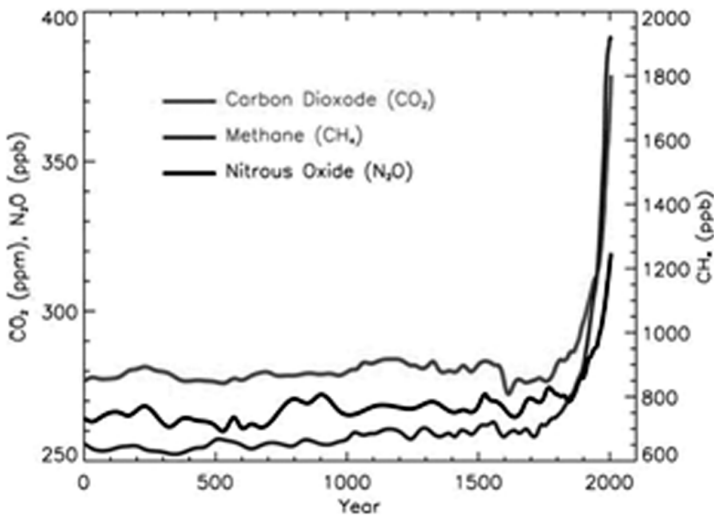
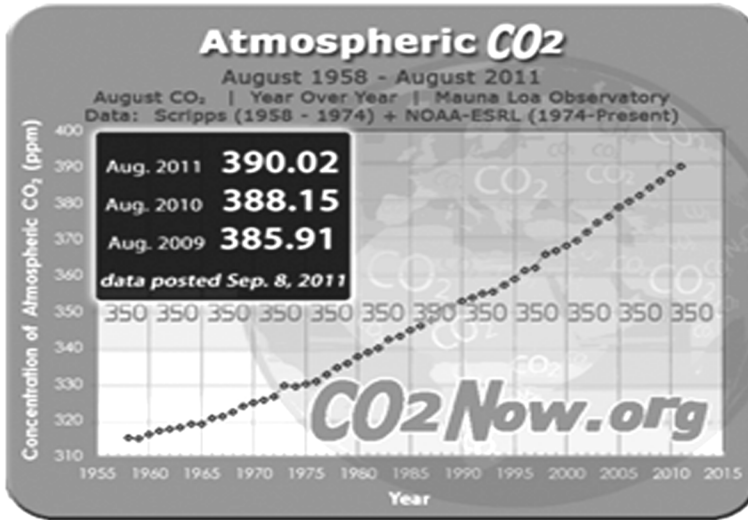


Figure 12.3: CO₂ Concentration, 1955-2011 (CO2NOW.org)

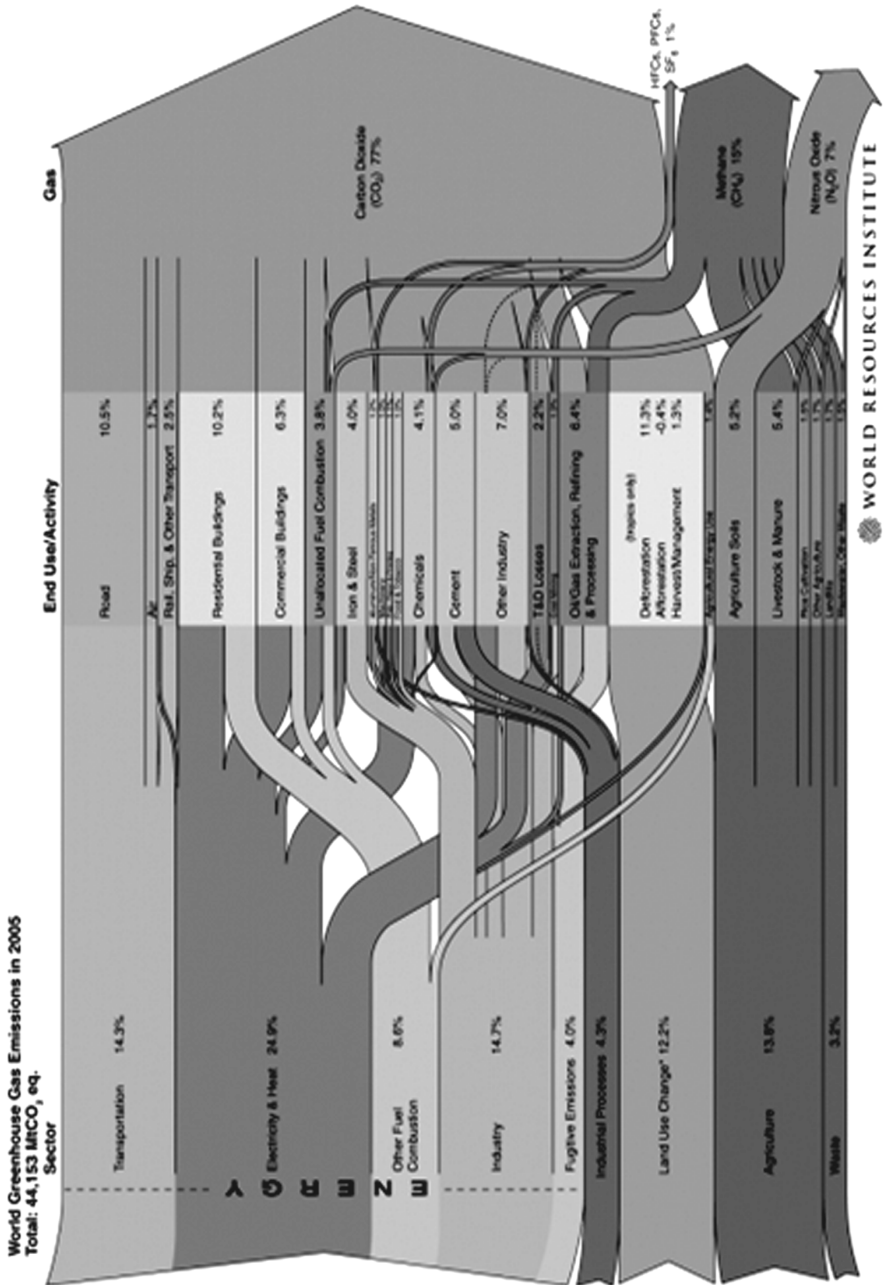
a total direct radiative forcing of -0.5 [-0.9 to -0.1] Wm^{-2} and an indirect cloud albedo forcing of -0.7 [-1.8 to -0.3] Wm^{-2} . However, changes in solar irradiance since 1750 are estimated to cause a radiative forcing of $+0.12$ [$+0.06$ to $+0.30$] Wm^{-2} .

The global increases in carbon dioxide concentration are primarily due to land use change and fossil fuel use, while those of methane and nitrous oxide are primarily due to agriculture (IPCC, 2007).

Sources of Global Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Based on data available from World Resources Institute's Climate Analysis Indicators Tool (CAIT), an analysis was done in a study called *Navigating the Numbers* for the emissions in 2000 (Kevin A Baumert, 2005). An updated version of the same analysis was carried out in 2008 with the emission data in 2005 (WRI, 2008). According to the study, in 2005 total global GHG emission was estimated at 44,153 MtCO₂ equivalents (million metric tons)² as in Figure 12.4. Worldwide, emissions of greenhouse gases from human activities increased by 26 per cent from 1990 to 2005. Emissions of carbon dioxide, which account for nearly three-fourths of the total emissions, increased by 31 per cent over this period. The maximum share of GHG emission is CO₂ with 77 per cent, while Methane at 15 per cent followed by Nitrous Oxide at 7 per cent. From all the sectors, Energy use for Electricity, Transportation and Industry contributes more than 60 per cent followed by Agriculture (13 per cent) and Land Use Change (12 per cent). Total global emissions grew 12.7 per cent between 2000 and 2005, an average of 2.4 per cent a year. However, individual sectors grew at rates between 40 per cent and near zero.

Figure 12.4: World GHG Emission in 2005



Regional and Country-wise Contribution of GHG Emission

By the latest information provided by the International Energy Agency (IEA, 2011) the top 10 emitting countries account for about two-thirds of the world CO₂ emissions (Figure 12.5). In 2009, the United States alone generated 18 per cent of world CO₂ emissions, despite a population of less than 5 per cent of the global total. Conversely, China contributed a comparable share of world emissions (24 per cent) while accounting for 20 per cent of the world population. India, with 17 per cent of world population, contributed only about 5 per cent of the CO₂ emissions. Among the five largest emitters, the levels of per capita emissions were very diverse, ranging from 1 t of CO₂ per capita for India and 5 t for China to 17 t for the United States.

Figure 12.5: Top 10 Emitting Countries in 2009 (Gt CO₂), IEA 2011

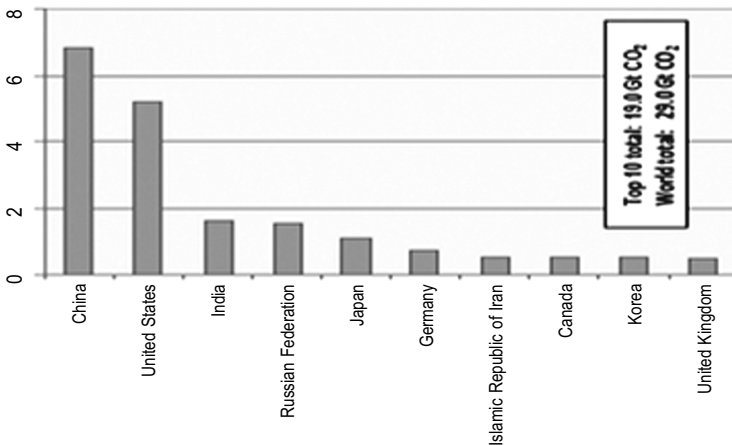
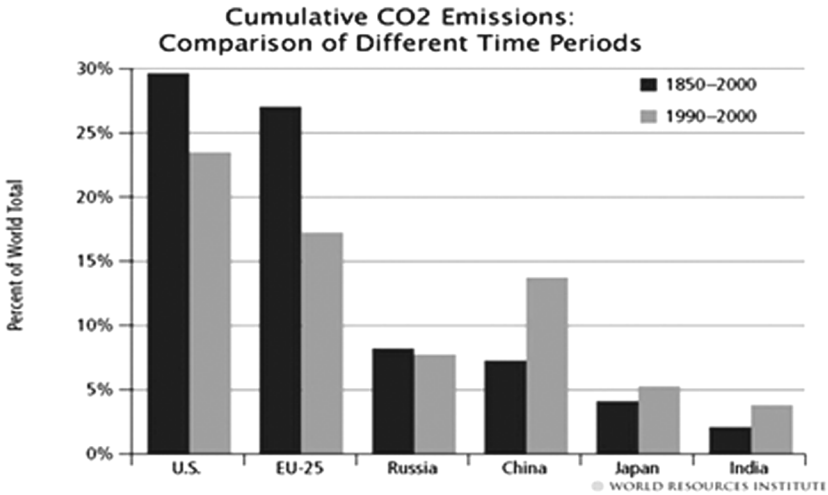


Figure 12.5 shows that for the year 2009, the emissions by European countries and Russia are lower than India or China on both per capita and total emissions. However, it should be noted that developing nations such as India and China has just started industrialisation in the last few decades while the Western nations including Russia have had long history of development and industrialisation. The cumulative contribution to world total emission by the U.S. is almost 29 per cent for 1850-2000, EU-25 about 27 per cent for 1850-2000, while China is about 7 per cent and India about 2 per cent (Figure 12.6, WRI, 2008).

Global Climate Change Impacts

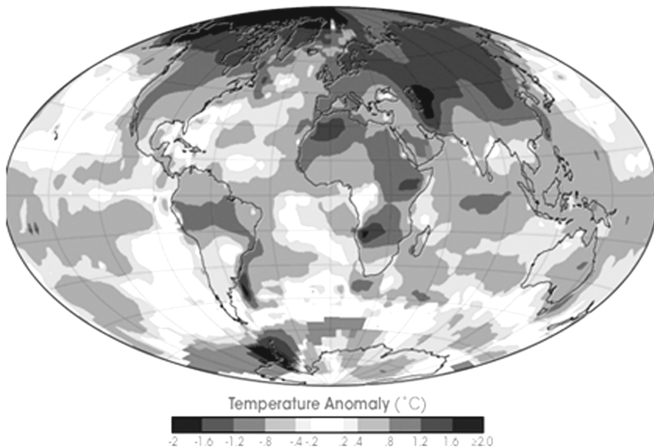
The impacts of climate change are numerous and list is increasing with more research and development in the field.

Figure 12.6: Cumulative CO₂ Emissions of Different Time Periods

Temperature Increase—Global Warming

Climate change is found to have direct relation to temperature (IPCC, 2007). IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report concludes that there is more than 90 per cent probability that the observed warming since the 1950s is due to the emission of greenhouse gases from anthropogenic activity. In Asia, it is very likely that all areas will warm during this century. Average global temperatures shows a warming trend, and 2000-2009 was the warmest decade on record worldwide. Within the United States, parts of the North, the West, and Alaska have seen temperatures increase the most. Biggest temperature increases were in the Arctic region, the Antarctic Peninsula and Central Asia (Figure 12.7, NASA, 2008).

Figure 12.7: Difference in Surface Temperature for 2006 Compared to the Mean from 1951-80 (NASA, 2008)



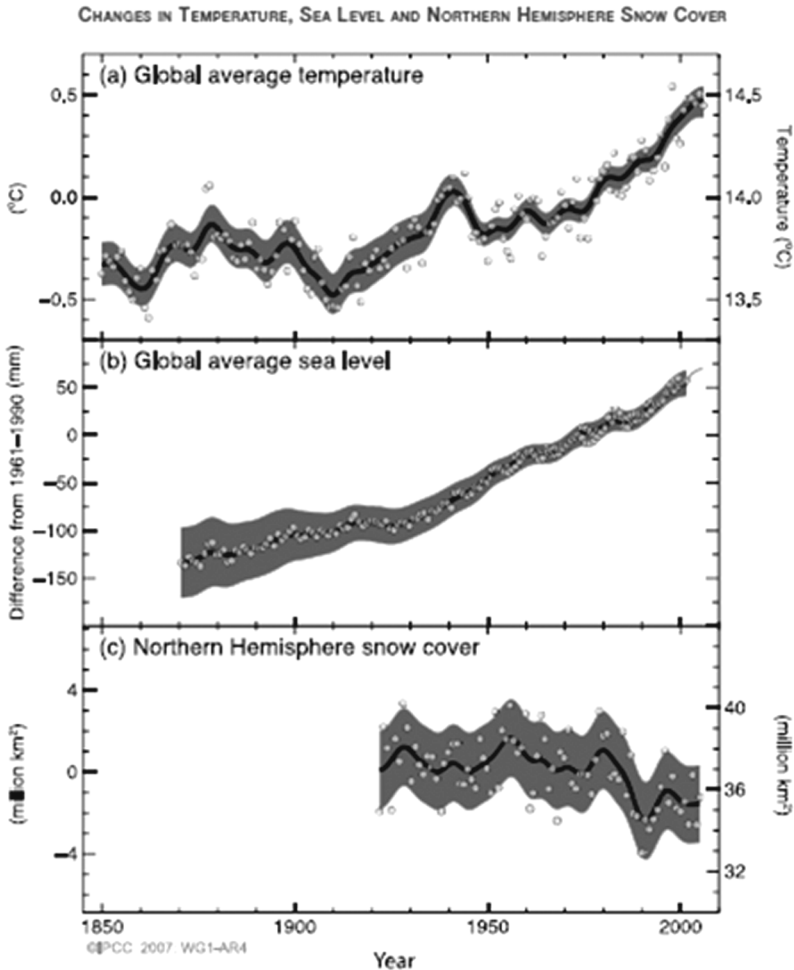
Tropical Cyclone Intensity

The intensity of tropical storms in the Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean, and the Gulf of Mexico did not exhibit a strong long-term trend for much of the 20th century, but has risen noticeably over the past 20 years. Six of the 10 most active hurricane seasons have occurred since the mid-1990s (US EPA, 2011). This increase is closely related to variations in sea surface temperature in the tropical Atlantic.

Sea Surface Temperatures

Sea surface temperatures have been higher during the past three decades than at any other time since large-scale measurement began in the late 1800s (US EPA, 2011)

Figure 12.8: Changes in Temperature, Sea Level and Snow Cover in Northern Hemisphere



Sea Level Rise

The average sea level worldwide has increased at a rate of roughly six-tenths of an inch per decade since 1870. The rate of increase has accelerated to more than an inch per decade in recent years (Figure 12.8). Global average sea level rose at an average of 1.8 mm per year over 1961-2003 (IPCC, 2007). Changes in sea level relative to the height of the land vary widely because the land itself moves.

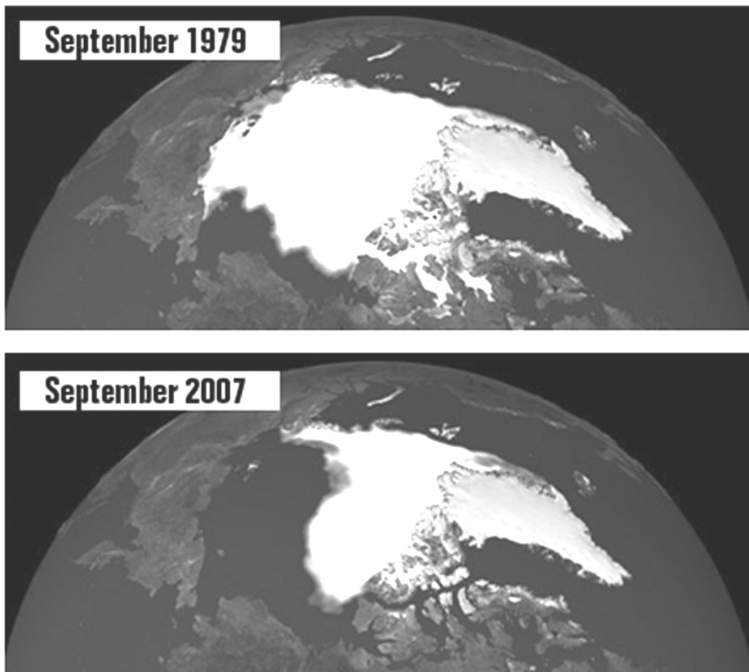
Ocean Acidification

The ocean has become more acidic over the past 20 years, and studies suggest that the ocean is substantially more acidic now than it was a few centuries ago. Rising acidity is associated with increased levels of carbon dioxide dissolved in the water, and can affect sensitive organisms such as corals (US EPA, 2011).

Arctic Sea Ice Melting

Part of the Arctic Ocean stays frozen year-round. The area covered by ice is typically smallest in September, after the summer melting season. September 2007 had the least ice of any year on record, followed by 2008 and 2009. The extent of Arctic sea ice in 2009 was 24 per cent below the 1979 to 2000 historical average (US EPA, 2011), as shown in Figure 12.9.

Figure 12.9: Change in Arctic Sea Ice (US EPA)



Shrinking Glaciers

Glaciers around the world have generally shrunk since the 1960s, and the rate at which glaciers are melting appears to have accelerated over the last decade. Overall, glaciers worldwide have lost more than 2,000 cubic miles of water since 1960, which has contributed to the observed rise in sea level and increased floods.

Climate-Sensitive Diseases

Throughout the world, the prevalence of some diseases and other threats to human health depend largely on local climate. Extreme temperatures can lead directly to loss of life, while climate-related disturbances in ecological systems, such as changes in the range of infective parasites, can indirectly impact the incidence of serious infectious diseases. In addition, warm temperatures can increase air and water pollution, which in turn harm human health. The IPCC has concluded that, overall (globally), negative climate-related health impacts are expected to outweigh positive health impacts during this century (IPCC, 2007).

Climate change may increase the risk of some infectious diseases, particularly those diseases that appear in warm areas and are spread by mosquitoes and other insects. These “vector-borne” diseases include malaria, dengue fever, yellow fever, and encephalitis. Algal blooms could also occur more frequently as temperatures warm—particularly in areas with polluted waters—in which case diseases (such as cholera) that tend to accompany algal blooms could become more frequent.

Higher temperatures, in combination with favourable rainfall patterns, could prolong disease transmission seasons in some locations where certain diseases already exist. The IPCC has noted that the global population at risk from vector-borne malaria will increase by between 220 million and 400 million by the next century. While most of the increase is predicted to occur in Africa, some increased risk is projected in Britain, Australia, India and Portugal (IPCC, 2007).

Air Quality

Climate Change is expected to contribute to some air quality problems (IPCC, 2007). Respiratory disorders may be exacerbated by warming-induced increases in the frequency of smog (ground-level ozone) events and particulate air pollution.

Another pollutant of concern is “particulate matter,” also known as particle pollution or PM. Particulate matter is a complex mixture of extremely small particles and liquid droplets. When breathed in, these particles can reach the deepest regions of the lungs. Climate change may indirectly affect the concentration of PM pollution in the air by affecting natural or “biogenic” sources of PM such as wildfires and dust from dry soils.

Other Health Linkages

Other, less direct health linkages include impacts on agricultural yields and production, especially in developing countries. This is expected to increase the number of undernourished people globally and consequently lead to complications in child development (IPCC, 2007).

Bhutan and its Climate

Bhutan is a small Himalayan kingdom of 38,394 sq. km. area, nestling in the Eastern Himalayas. The country has a complex topography of deep narrow valleys, rugged mountain ranges in the north and gentle foothills to the south. The elevation increases rapidly from about 100 metres in the south to above 7,000 metres in the northern mountain peaks within a span of about 100 km. A network of 10 protected areas connected by biological corridors conserves the diverse ecosystems in the country, from subtropical to mid-temperate to alpine zones covering more than 50 per cent of the area under protection (Figure 12.10). An enormous 70.5 per cent of the country is covered by forests, while agriculture covers only 2.9 per cent and human settlement less than 1 per cent of the total area (MOA, 2011).

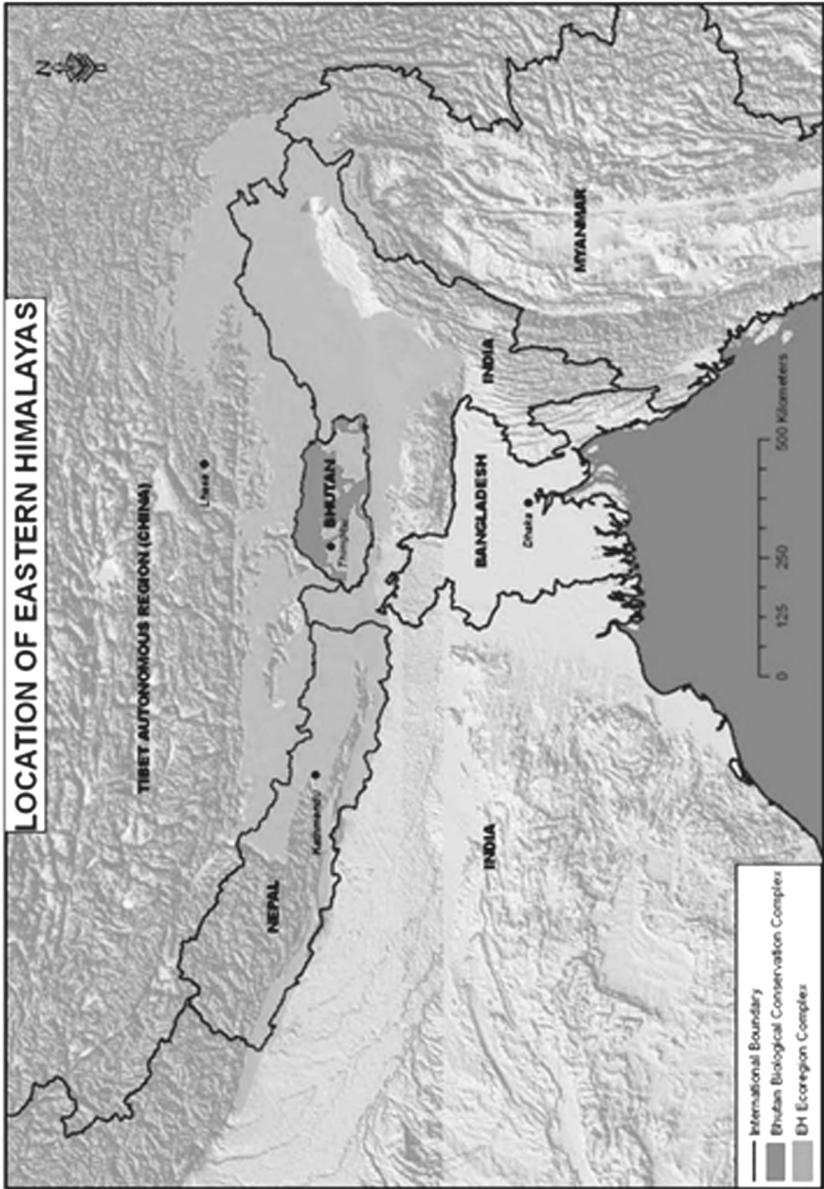
Surrounded by India on three sides and Tibet to the North, there are twenty districts in Bhutan with a total population of about 671,083. About 79 per cent of the population depends on agriculture, animal husbandry, and forestry sectors for their livelihood and income. Staple crops include rice, wheat, maize, potatoes, buckwheat, and barley. Livestock is important as a source of milk, meat, and draft power (WWF, 2011).

The climate of Bhutan is strongly correlated to its topography and altitude. Temperatures vary according to elevation and it is also affected by the monsoon. From a climatic point of view, Bhutan can be divided in three parts: subtropical in the southern foothills, temperate in the middle valleys or inner hills, and alpine in the northern part of the country.

The climate is subtropical and humid in the southern plains and foothills. In the south, temperature range between 15°C and 30°C year-round, although temperatures sometimes reach 40° C in the some areas during the summer (NEC, 2011). Most of the central portions of the country experience a cool, temperate climate year round. Temperatures in Thimphu, located at 2,200 metres above sea level in west-central Bhutan, range from approximately 15°C to 26°C during the monsoon season of June through September but drop to between about -4°C and 16°C in January. Towards the north, the climate is alpine and cold, with almost year-round sub-zero temperatures and snow on the main Himalayan summits.

Annual precipitation ranges widely in various parts of the country. In the humid subtropical southern foothills rainfall exceeding 7,000 millimetres per

Figure 12.10: Map of Bhutan and its Protected Areas in the Context of the Eastern Himalayas (WWF 2011)



year has been registered at some locations. In the temperate central regions, a yearly average of around 1,000 millimetres is more common. Thimphu experiences dry winter months (December through February) and almost no precipitation until March, when rainfall averages 20 millimetres a month and increases steadily thereafter to a high of 220 millimetres in August for a total annual rainfall of nearly 650 millimetres.

In the severe alpine climate of the north, there is only about 40 millimetres of annual precipitation, which is primarily snow. Spring is typically dry in Bhutan and starts in early March and lasts until mid-April.

There are four almost distinct seasons in Bhutan. Spring commences in mid-April with occasional showers which continue through the pre-monsoon rains of late June. The monsoon of the summer lasts from late June through late September with heavy rains from the southwest. The monsoon weather, blocked from its northward progress by the Himalayas, brings heavy rains, high humidity, flash floods and landslides, and numerous misty, overcast days. Autumn, which lasts from late September or early October to late November, follows the rainy season. It is characterized by bright, sunny days and some early snowfalls at higher elevations. From late November until March, winter sets in, with frost throughout much of the country and snowfall above elevations of 3,000 metres (NEC, 2011).

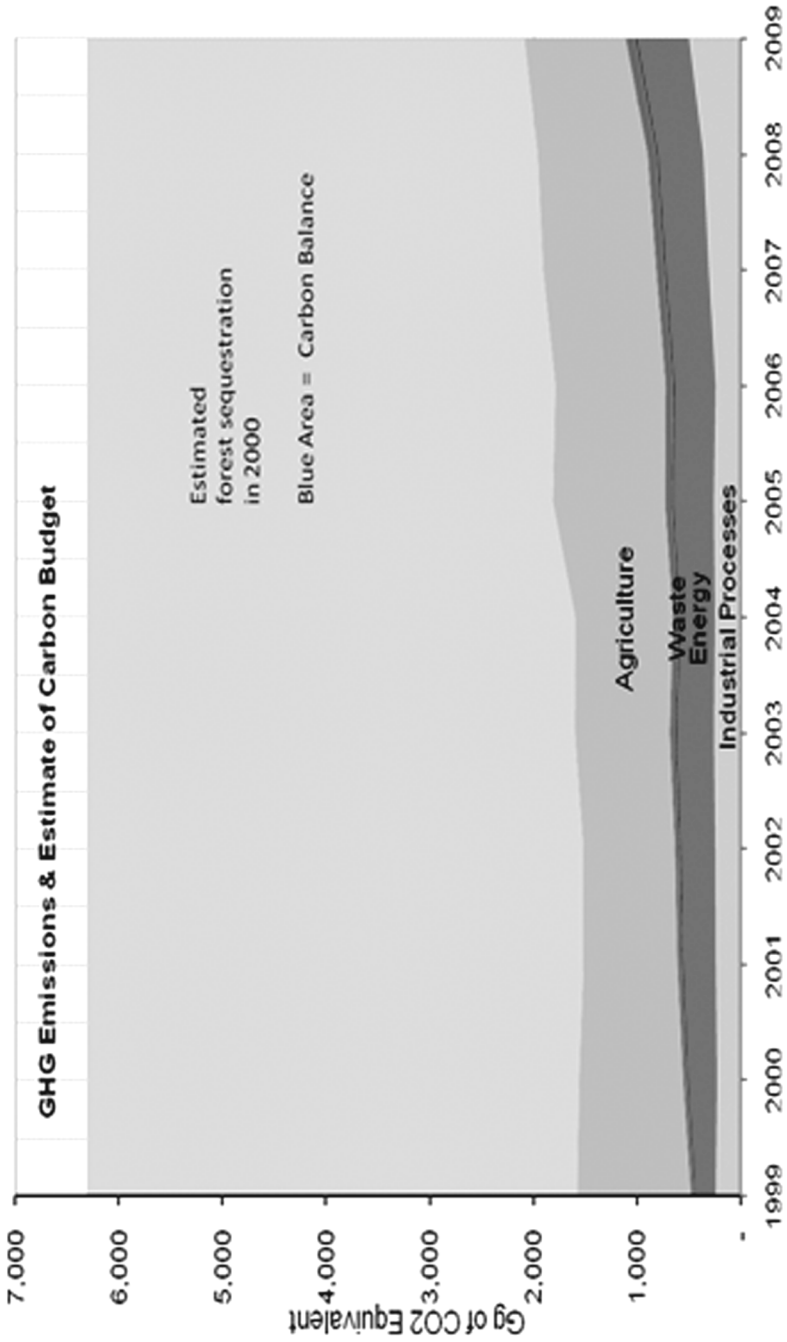
Bhutan is a net Carbon sequester at the moment. Bhutan's "Carbon Neutral Budget", emissions in 2008, was 1.9 million tons³ of CO₂ equivalent, against forest sequestration capacity of 6.3 million tons of CO₂ (sink capacity based on year 2000 estimates), meaning a third of Bhutan's carbon budget is used up as of 2008 (NEC, 2011) as given in Figure 12.11. Bhutan's highest emissions are however from the agriculture sector which is mostly from subsistence livestock rearing. This pattern was different from global averages as Bhutan's emissions are still dominated by "survival emissions" with electricity from hydropower, and fossil fuel emissions (transport industry and household) being lower than survival emissions from agriculture.

Water Resource of Bhutan

Bhutan's water resources are mainly in the form of rivers, glaciers and permanent snow. There are three major river basins, the Wang Chhu (Raidak), the Punatshang Chhu (Sunkosh) and the Drangme Chhu (Manas) (Figure 12.12). Most river systems originate within the country except three rivers of Amo Chhu, Gamri and Kuri Chhu.

The north-south rivers are the larger rivers, running from the high mountains of the country down to the lowlands near the Indian border. These rivers have steep longitudinal gradients and narrow steep-sided valleys, which occasionally open up and provide broader valleys with small areas of flat land for cultivation.

Figure 12.11: GHG Emission of Bhutan



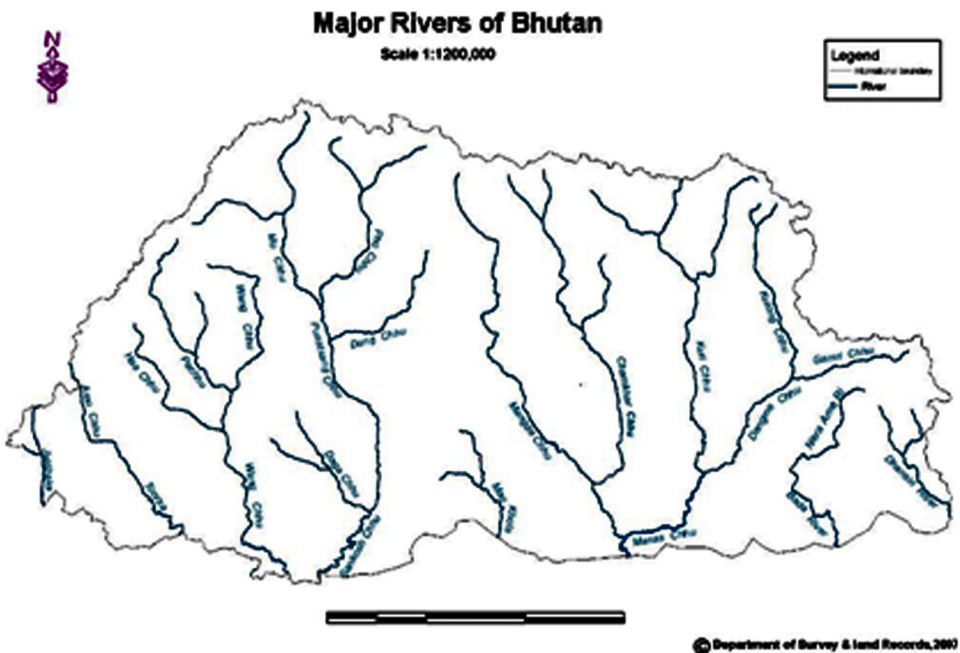
The second main category of rivers, designated as the east-west tributaries, include all the minor streams that flow as tributaries into the north-south rivers. These minor streams are mainly rain-fed. In terms of water supplies to both the rural and urban areas, the east-west tributaries are of greater importance (NEC, 2011). Groundwater in Bhutan has not been studied in detail.

There are 2,674 glacial lakes, but most of them are small and mainly located in the remote high altitude alpine areas. The outburst of some of these lakes from time to time has resulted in enormous flash floods and damage downstream (NEC, 2011). Understanding of the dynamics between climate, glaciology and hydrology is vital but in-depth research and analysis has not been conducted except for a small inventory in 2001 of glaciers and lakes.

The majority of the valleys are narrow V-shaped valleys indicating that water erosion has been the main cause in their formation. Due to the existence of distinct rainy and dry seasons, there are large seasonal variations in the river flows. They carry large volumes of flow and sediment during the monsoon season, whereas the flow is relatively low during the dry season due to the limited base flow from insufficient groundwater recharge. Snowmelt from the high altitude alpine areas in the north contributes to the flow at the end of the dry season.

Bhutan has a very rich water resource with long term average annual flows of 73,000 million cubic metres per year, which is perhaps one of the highest per

Figure 12.12: Major River Basins of Bhutan



capita mean annual flow availability of water at 109,000 cubic metres (Table 12.1).

Table 12.1: Gross National Land Area, Runoff and Minimum Flow
(Norconsult and DOE, 2003)

<i>Sl. No.</i>	<i>Characteristics National Features</i>	<i>Value</i>
1	Land area for entire country	38,394 km ²
2	National population	634,982
3	Long term mean annual flow for the entire country	2,325 m ³ /sec =73,000 million m ³ /year
4	Per capita mean annual flow availability	109,000 m ³
5	Minimum 7 days flow of 10 year period	427 m ³ /sec=13,500 million m ³ /year
6	Per capita minimum flow availability	21,207 m ³

Erratic rainfall patterns and the associated hydrological flows will have a huge impact on the overall water resource system in the country. The major rivers provide water for hydropower and tourism/recreation. The proportion of population without access to safe drinking water declined from 55 per cent in 1990 to less than 12 per cent in 2008 (NEC, 2011).

Energy in Bhutan

Bhutan relies on renewable energy sources and the main source of primary energy is wood. The country has a hydropower potential of 23,765MW as techno-economically feasible. The total installed capacity as of December 2009 was 1505.32MW (DOE, 2011). Of the total installed capacity, hydropower constitutes 98.7 per cent and 1.3 per cent is diesel based. The country has an ambitious programme of generating 10,000 MW by 2020. To meet this target 11 hydropower projects have been identified for development. Presently Punatsangchhu I (1050 MW) and Mangdechhu (720 MW) are under construction (DOE, 2011).

According to the Royal Monetary Authority of Bhutan, in the fiscal year 2008-09, Bhutan earned Nu. 11B from hydropower export to India, while in 2009-2010 it decreased to Nu. 10B. In 2009-10, a sum of Nu. 218M was spent on importing electricity from India during the lean winter season, when the generation was not sufficient to meet domestic requirements. The share of electricity and water sector to nominal GDP was 21.1 per cent in 2008 and 19.3 per cent in 2009 (RMA, 2011).

Currently, the total lean season/winter generation (January-March) is about 288 MW while domestic winter demand has already reached 237 MW (of which 66 per cent comes from the industrial sector). Domestic demand is expected to rise further to 308 MW by 2011, resulting in a shortfall of 20 MW in 2011.

Winter power shortages are expected to continue until 2016 when Punatsangchhu I Hydropower project is expected to be commissioned, with Bhutan even possibly becoming a net importer during winter until then. It was projected that winter import requirement would be 718 MU during the next six years at a total cost of Nu.1.3 billion (Figure 12.13).

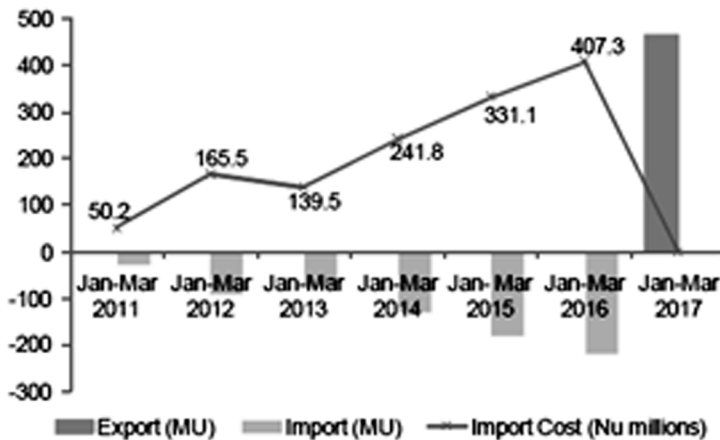
Climate Change in Bhutan

Atmosphere-ocean general circulation models (GCM) remain the primary source of information for regional information on the possible future climate scenarios. According to the IPCC, warming in the 21st century is likely to be well above the global mean in Central Asia, the Tibetan plateau and Northern Asia, above the global mean in Eastern and Southern Asia, and similar to the global mean in Southeastern Asia.

It is very likely that summer heat waves in eastern Asia will be of longer duration, more intense, and more frequent. It is very likely that there will be fewer very cold days in Eastern Asia and Southern Asia. Winter precipitation is very likely to increase in Northern Asia and the Tibetan plateau, and likely to increase in Central Asia, Eastern Asia and Southeastern Asia, whereas it is likely to decrease in Southern Asia.

Summer precipitation is likely to increase in northern Asia, the Tibetan plateau, Eastern and Southern Asia and most of Southeastern Asia, but it is likely to decrease in Central Asia. An increase in the frequency of intense precipitation events is very likely in parts of Southern Asia, and in Eastern Asia (Christensen, et al., 2007). Bhutan is situated in the northern part of the South Asian region, to the south of the Tibetan plateau.

Figure 12.13: Electricity Import and Export in Bhutan (RMA, 2011)



Climate Change Model Study for Bhutan

An impact study was done for the Department of Energy (DOE), Bhutan to understand the effect of Climate Change on the hydrological regime of the rivers of the country and its impact on hydropower development (Stein & Vokso, 2011) (See Appendix 1). Results from the Max Planck Institute atmosphere-ocean general circulation model ECHAM5/MPIOM (henceforth denoted Ecam) have been used for assessment of climate change impacts on water resources in Bhutan. The hydrological model used for the study is Hbv. Two emissions SRES scenario of the IPCC A2⁴ and B1⁵ were used for comparison.

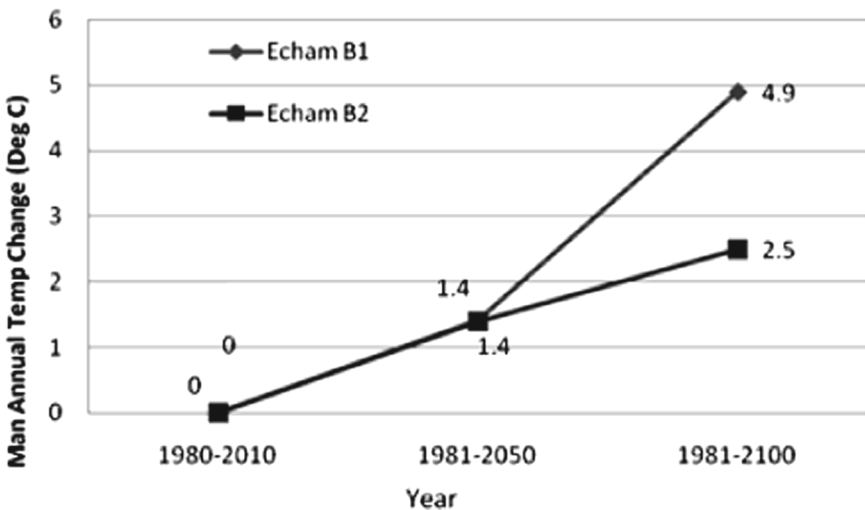
The Key Results from the DOE Study

1. Temperature

The change in mean annual temperature from 1981 to 2050 averaged over all 17 sub-catchments studied is approximately 1.4°C for both climate projections. The change in mean annual temperature from 1981 to 2100 averaged over all sub-catchments is approximately 4.9°C for climate projection Ecam A2 and 2.5°C for climate projection Ecam B1 as shown in Figure 12.14.

This temperature increase will be accompanied by changes in meteorological elements such as cloud cover, precipitation, air humidity, radiation and wind. These changes are expected to lead to changes in the land phase of the hydrological cycle with impacts on glacier mass balance, snow storage, soil

Figure 12.14: Mean Annual Temperature Change in Bhutan



moisture in the unsaturated zone, groundwater storage, evapotranspiration and runoff.

2. Precipitation

Mean Annual precipitation for 1981-2010 is 5000 mm in the southern part and below 500 mm/year in the north. The change in precipitation given in Figure 12.15 is mostly negative in the range from below 300 mm to zero. The changes are larger by the end of the century than by the middle.

During the control period 1981-2100 there is no snow storage in low-lying areas in the historical or present-day climate, whereas mean annual maximum snow water equivalent is larger than 500 mm of water in high-altitude areas. Temperature increase and reduced precipitation will lead to snow coverage decrease whereby the annual maximum values for snow water equivalent by the end of the century are only one third of the values in the control climate for climate projection Echam A2 (Figure 12.16).

Figure 12.15: Precipitation Change 1981-2010 to 2021-50 and 2071-2100 (Echam A2)

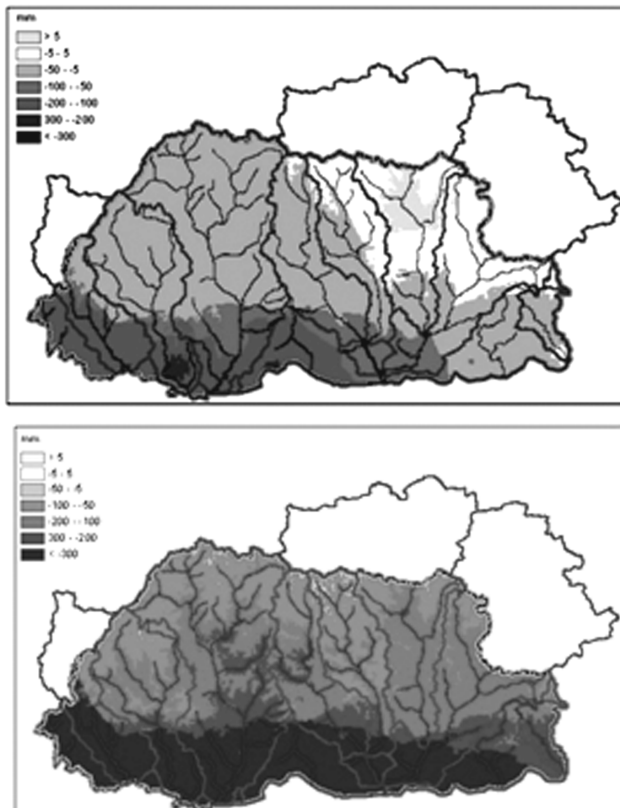
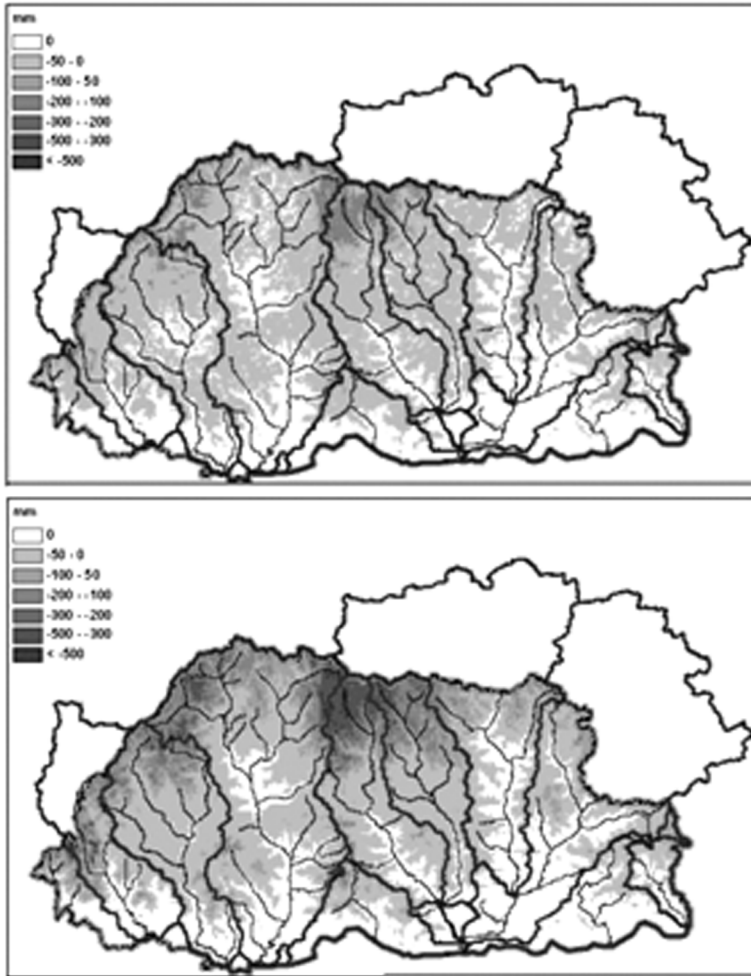


Figure 12.16: Maximum Snow Water Equivalent Change 1981-2010 to 2021-50 and 2021-2100 (Echam A2)



Increasing temperatures result in a positive trend in evaporation in spite of reduced precipitation, while the combined effect of increasing temperature and reduced precipitation leads to increased soil moisture deficit, and a negative trend in groundwater storage. In areas without glacier ice that melts, less water will be available for infiltration in the soil profile, whereas more water will be lost through evaporation, increasing soil moisture deficit and decreasing groundwater storage.

3. Hydrology

The glacier covered areas of the catchments were treated in two ways by the hydrological model: (1) as constant, assuming an inexhaustible reservoir of ice;

and (2) as time-variant with initial ice volumes and glacier covered areas modified by model glacier mass balance. (See Appendix 1)

The mean annual runoff for 1981-2010 varies from above 5000 mm/year in the southern, low-lying parts of Bhutan to below 500 mm/year in the northern, high-altitude parts with glacier areas having higher runoff than surrounding areas.

For most catchments, streamflow is not changing much from 1981-2010 to 2021-2050. However, as a result of smaller precipitation amounts, there is a reduction in streamflow for catchments with small glacier covered fraction, since they will not receive a contribution to runoff from melting ice. The two catchments with largest glacier covered fraction, 1458 Bjizam and 1650 Sumpa, will experience increased streamflow caused by increased contribution to runoff from glacier ice melt.

Hydrological model simulations with constant glacier covered areas result in larger streamflow for the period 2071-2100 except for catchments 1235 Chimakoti, 1249 Damchhu and 1740 Uzorong, which have a small glacier covered fraction and will experience unchanged or slightly reduced streamflow.

The changes in mean annual runoff sums from 1981-2010 to 2021-50 and 2071-2100 are mostly negative, in the range from below 300 mm to zero as given in Figure 12.17. However, for glacier covered areas, the runoff will increase as a result of negative glacier mass balance. The changes in runoff are larger by the end of the century than by the middle.

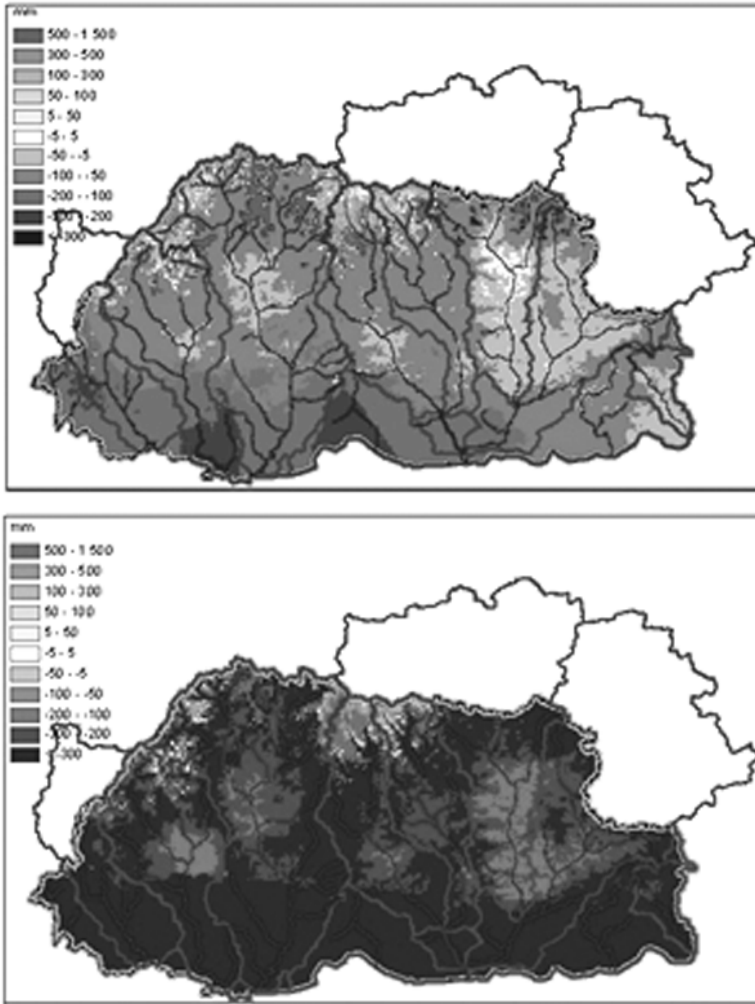
Hydrological model simulations with time-variant glacier covered areas for periods 2021-2050 and 2071-2100 result in a decline in mean annual minimum streamflow. The reduction is larger for the period 2071-2100 than for the period 2021-2050 as a result of negative mass balance and reduction in glacier ice volume and area.

Hydrological model simulations for periods 2021-2050 with time-variant glacier covered areas and 2071-2100 with constant glacier covered areas result in increasing mean annual maximum streamflow for most catchments and there is a tendency for larger increase for catchments with a large glacier covered fraction. Hydrological model simulations for period 2071-2100 with time-variant glacier covered areas result in a decline in mean annual maximum streamflow for most catchments as a result of negative mass balance and reduction in glacier ice volume and area.

4. Impact on Hydropower Development

The change in mean annual discharge available for hydropower production from 1981-2010 to 2021-2050 varies between 9 per cent decrease and 6 per cent increase for climate projections Echem A2 and between 13 per cent decrease and 7 per cent increase for climate projection Echem B1. For the period 2071-

Figure 12.17: Hydrological Model Results for Change in Mean Annual Runoff (mm) from 1981-2010 to 2021-50 and 2071-2100 based on input from climate projection Echam A2. The glacier covered areas are treated as time-variant



2100, decline in mean annual discharge available for hydropower production compared to the period 1981-2010 varies from -76 per cent to -4 per cent, the rate of change depending on the initial ice covered fraction. For catchments with a large fraction of the area covered with glacier ice, there is an increase in mean annual discharge available for hydropower production. The increase in mean annual discharge available for hydropower production for catchments with large proportion of glacier covered area is larger for climate projection Echam A2 than for climate projection Echam B1.

Model results for the end of the 21st century with constant glacier covered areas are not realistic since glacier ice volume and area are expected to decrease, but they show that streamflow and hydropower production potential in the rivers of Bhutan are sensitive to the presence of glaciers and that smaller or larger change in glacier covered areas would have a large impact on projections of streamflow by the end of the 21st century.

Observed Data Analysis

Basic meteorological and hydrological data for past 14–20 years is available with the Department of Energy, Bhutan. However, this is indeed too little for any significant analysis and inferences. The Hydro-Met network was established to support Bhutan's hydropower and other development plans with 84 meteorological stations throughout Bhutan and 20 river gauging stations. Basic analysis report of few selected field observations are below:

1. Temperature

By using the physical temperature data collected by Hydromet Services Division of the Department of Energy, annual maximum temperature data from 3 stations in the Wangchu basin with 2010 information were analyzed for trends. It is observed that there is an increase in the mean maximum temperature for all these places (Figure 12.18).

Another study using a similar data set has also confirmed that maximum temperatures are increasing all throughout the country with more increase at

Figure 12.18: Trend for Mean Max Tem in Selected Places of Bhutan

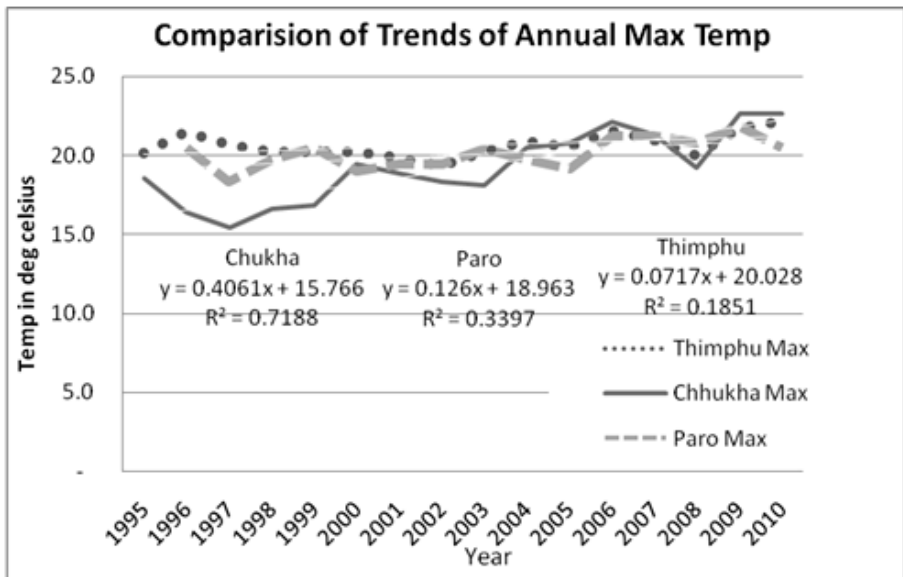
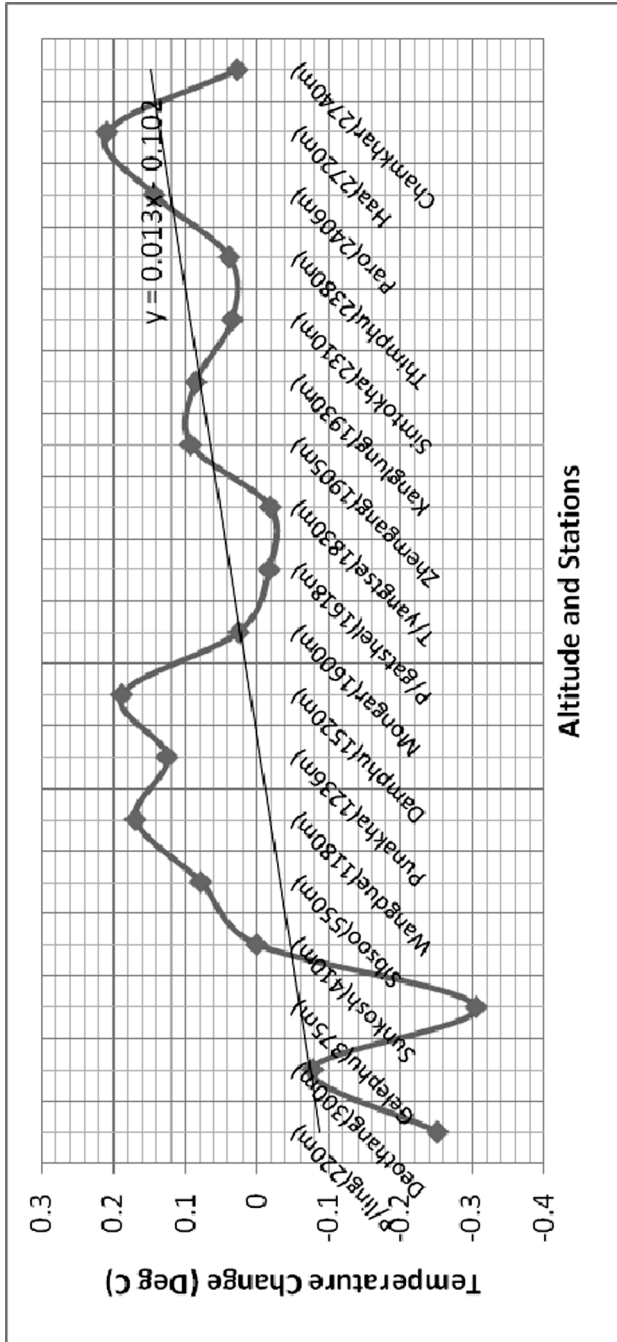


Figure 12.19: Max Temperature Change for Different Places (1996-2009)



Altitude and Stations

higher altitudes (DOE, 2011). At low altitudes, a cooling trend is observed (Figure 12.19).

2. Hydrological Flow

According to the analysis of the data from Chukha dam site that has the longest data series, the annual average discharge for the period 1987-2009 shows a decreasing trend. The average decrease is 2.468 m³/s per year. Similar is the case with Tamchu Station. The data from Paro shows yearly fluctuation. A decreasing trend of 2.051 m³/s per year is noticed in the case of Paro and 0.295 m³/s per year in the case of Thimphu (DOE, 2011).

Figure 12.20 shows the monthly flow trends in the three stations. The summer months show a decreasing trend, indicating decrease in rainfall during these months. Winter flows in Paro, Haa and Chukha show an increasing trend. The increase is highest in April and May, indicating more glacial contribution.

3. Precipitation

Comparison of rainfall at the three meteorological stations shows that there is an increasing trend in the total annual rainfall. Meteorological stations in Bhutan are mostly located on valleys or hill bottoms in between the high mountains, so it is likely that there is a topographic effect on the data (Figure 12.21).

Field Survey Results

A study was conducted by WWF Bhutan in the Wangchuck Centennial park of Bhutan to assess the vulnerability of the local people to climate change and gauge their perceptions. This is probably the first vulnerability assessment of livelihood in Bhutan. Observations of people, actions, and situations, participatory rural appraisal (PRA) tools, key informant household interviews (KIHIs), and focus group discussions (FGDs) were used to determine local communities' perceived changes in climate and weather patterns. From the total of 578 households in the park area 68 respondents from the respective households were interviewed and 192 participated in the discussions (WWF, 2011). Some of the important results from the study are as below:

1. Perception of Climate Parameters

Ninety-six per cent of the respondents said they felt that the climate is changing, with 89 per cent indicating they feel a perceptible increase in temperature (Figure 12.22). Analysis shows that local communities observed changes in other climate parameters; including rainfall, snowfall, and frost, that affected their livelihoods. They claimed that heat waves are more intensive, rainfall is erratic and snowfall timings have changed.

Figure 12.20: Flow Trend at the Three Stations

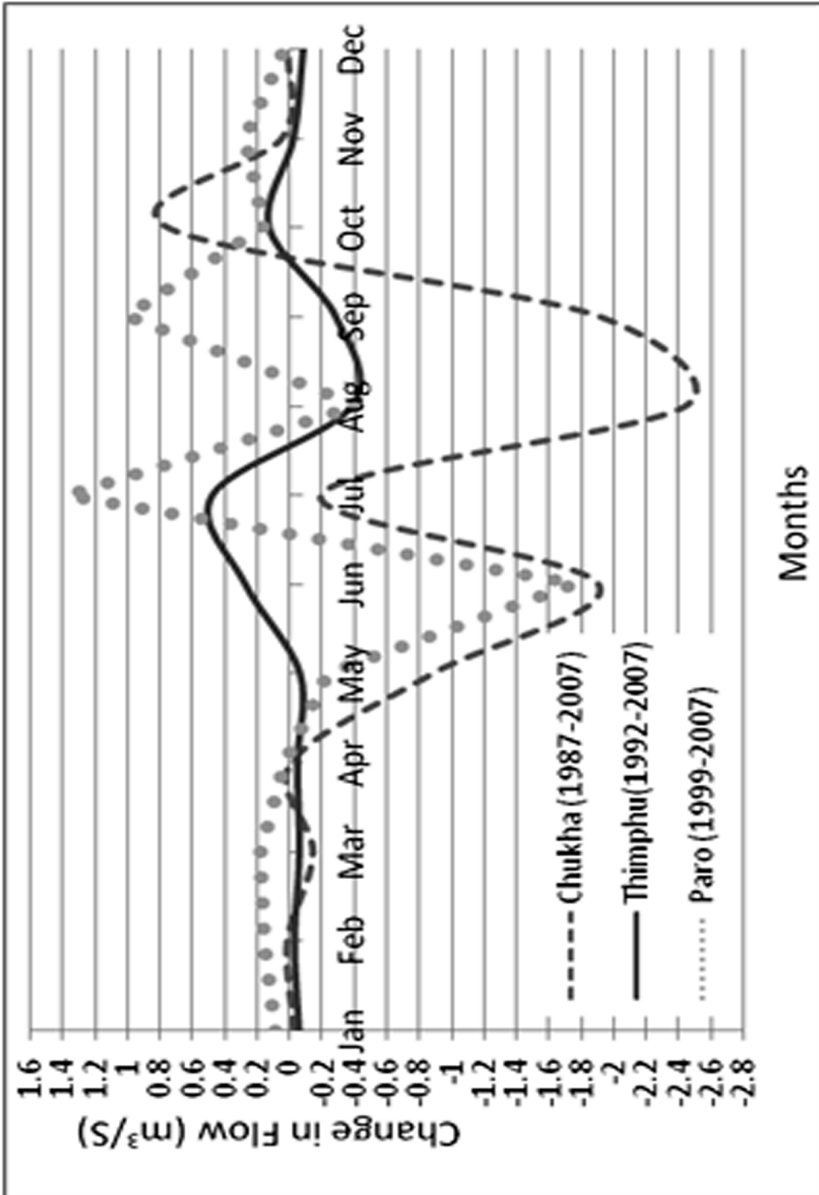


Figure 12.21: Comparison of Total Rainfall

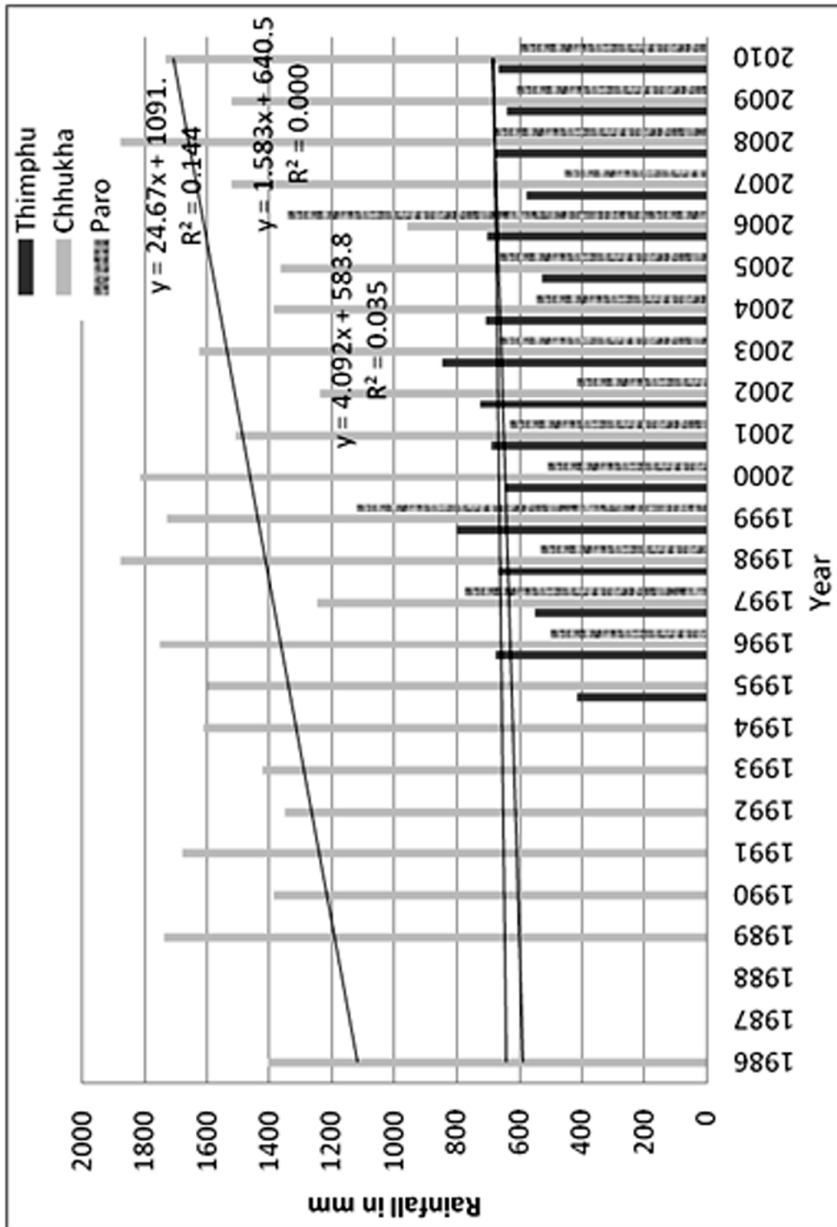
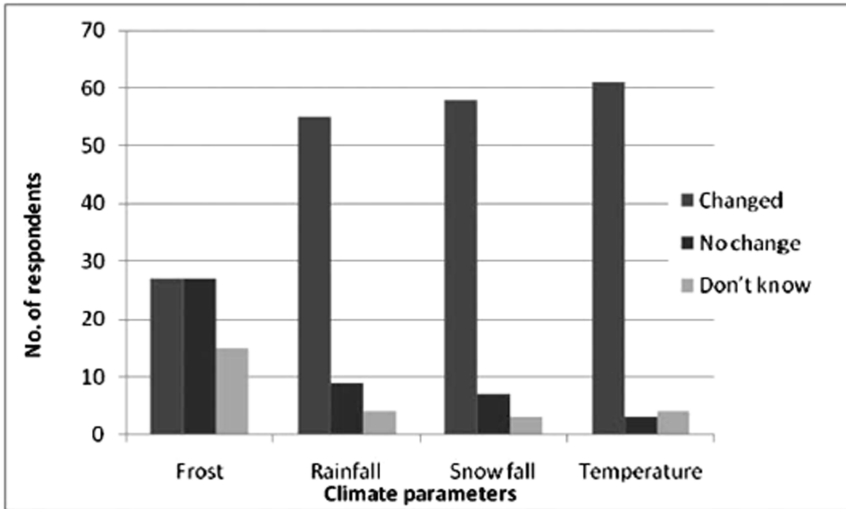


Figure 12.22: Perception of Climate Parameters (N=68)



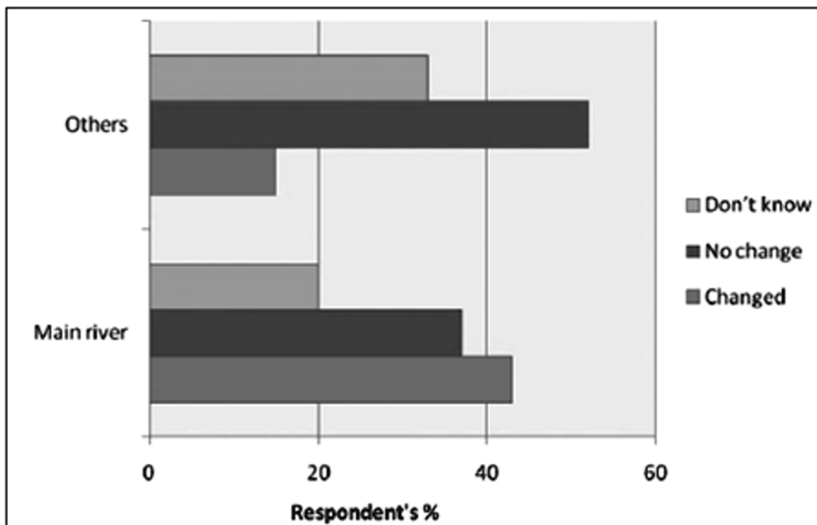
2. Effect on Water Resources

Water resource in the survey area mainly consisted of the main rivers, streams, springs, ponds, and seepages. Respondents did not face a significant change in their drinking water sources. (Figure 12.23)

3. Forest and Wildlife

About 10 per cent reported that the forest composition was changing, with an upslope shift in the tree line. Yak herders in all the blocks reported that the

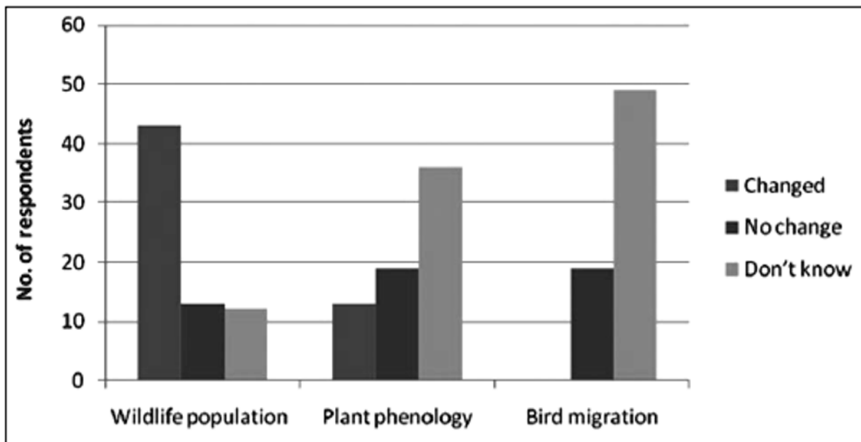
Figure 12.23: Perception of Change in Water Resources (N=68)



juniper scrub forest line is gradually moving into the alpine areas and some alpine herbs are declining. Warming temperatures have caused yak herders move to alpine zones three weeks earlier and return later than they do earlier. Thus, the yak grazing season in the alpine zone has become longer which could harm the fragile alpine grasslands.

Sixty-three per cent indicated that wildlife populations have increased in the last 10-20 years. While 19 per cent of the respondents reported changes in plant flowering phenology, 28 per cent indicated no change and the majority had no knowledge of change. Most local people had no idea about any changes in bird migration (Figure 12.24).

Figure 12.24: Perception of Change in Wildlife (N=68)



Vulnerability to Climate Change in Bhutan

The farming community is the most vulnerable group as farm productions are highly dependent on weather patterns. The rugged and steep terrain makes it difficult to both expand productions and market any surplus that may be produced. The main cash crops of the farmers (rice, potatoes, chilies, apples and oranges) are all highly sensitive to water and temperature variations. Dry land crops such as wheat, buckwheat, maize and barley are the major food source for the farmers and are also entirely dependent on rainfall thus making it even more vulnerable to climate risks.

The most important climate change impacts for Bhutan would be floods from glacial lake outbursts (also called glacial lake outburst flood or GLOF) and flash floods, landslides, disruption of the hydrological flow and rainfall patterns, mismatch of hydropower development, decrease in agricultural productivity, sedimentation, more vector borne diseases, loss of bio-diversity, increased forest fire etc (NEC, 2007). Some of the vulnerabilities in each sector are listed below in Figure 12.25 and Table 12.2.

Figure 12.25: Impacts of Climate Change in Bhutan (Tshering, 2011)

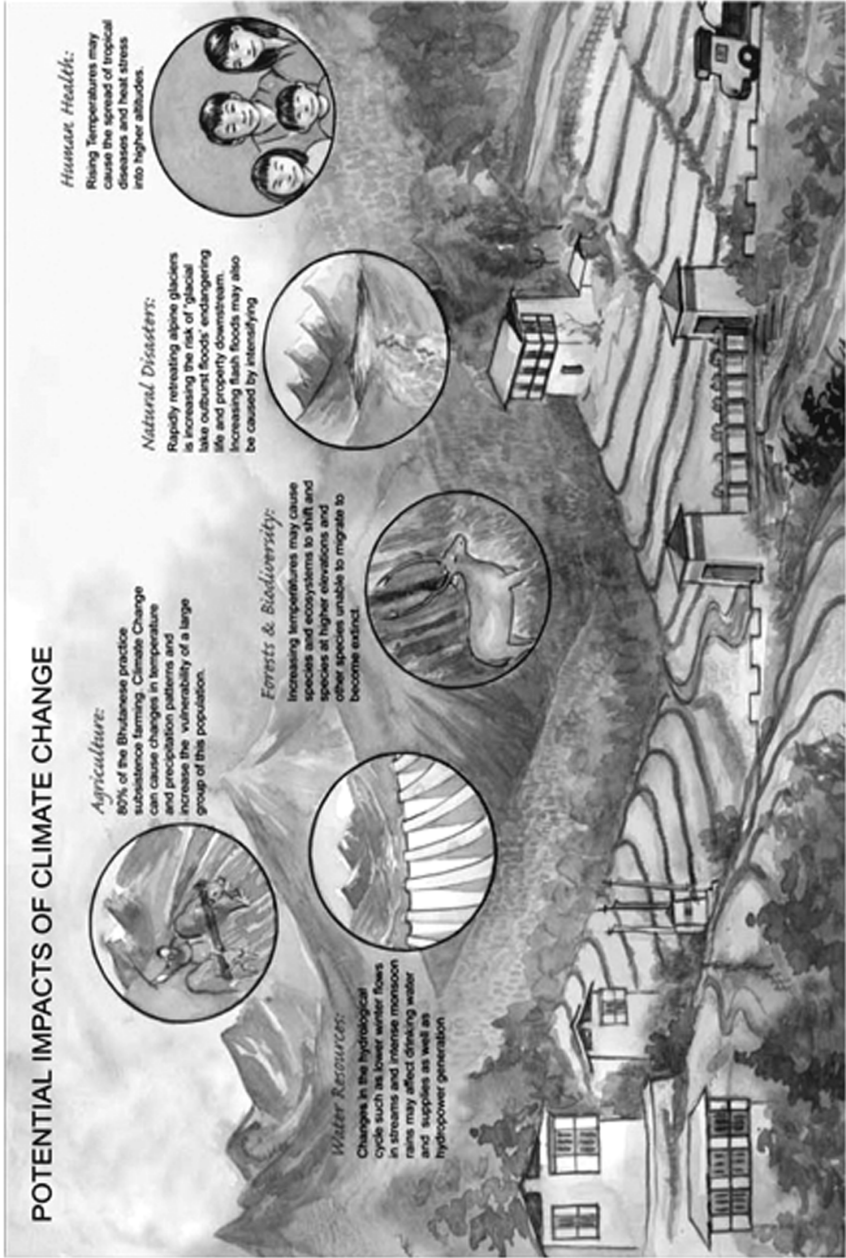


Table 12.2: Vulnerability of Climate Change in Bhutan

Sector	Vulnerabilities
Bio-diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drought in combination with increased lightning risks, higher temperature and less rainfall triggering forest fires • Change in phenological characters of plants/ Loss of endemic species • Change in migratory pattern of the trans boundary wildlife, (All resulting in loss/degradation of forest ecosystem and reduction of alpine range lands. Furthermore, possible increase of vector-borne disease in wildlife due to warming)
Forestry & Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crop yield instability. Loss of production and quality (due to variable rainfall, temperature, etc.). Decreased water availability for crop production. Increased risk of extinction of already threatened crop species • Loss of soil fertility due to erosion of top soil and runoff. Loss of fields due to flash floods, landslides and rill & gully formations. Soil nutrient loss through seepage • Crop yield loss (flowers & fruit drop) to hailstorms. Deteriorated produce quality (fruit & vegetables) by untimely incessant heavy rains and hailstorms • Delayed sowing (late rainfall). Damage to crops by sudden early spring (paddy), late spring (potato) and frost • Outbreak of pests and diseases in the fields and during storage where they were previously unknown • Damages to road infrastructures (food security)—see also Natural Disaster & Infrastructure sector.
Natural Disaster & Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debris-covered glaciers forming huge moraine dam lakes that ultimately lead to GLOFs (i.e. flash floods and landslides, heavy siltation of the rivers, and other geotechnical hazards) GLOF will affect 'essential' infrastructure): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hydropower systems (generation plants, transmission and distribution infrastructure)—the main export product, and furthermore: - Industrial estates/infrastructures - Human settlements: urban, sub-urban and rural settlements. - Historical and cultural monuments: <i>dzongs</i>, monasteries, <i>chortens</i>, etc. - Public utilities: roads, bridges and communications. - Receding debris-free glaciers lead to reduction of water resources (possible shortages/variations)—see also Water Resources sector
Water Resources (& Energy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporal & spatial variation in flow, affecting notably electricity production/ exports due to disruption of average flows for optimum hydropower generation • Increased sedimentation of rivers, water reservoirs and distribution network, affecting notably irrigation schemes' productivity/agricultural crop yields • Reduced ability of catchment areas to retain water/increased runoffs with enhanced soil erosion • Deterioration of (drinking) water quality (see also Health sector)
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of life from frequent flash floods, GLOF and landslides • Spread of vector-borne tropical disease (malaria, dengue) into more areas (higher elevations) with warming climate • Loss of safe (drinking) water resources increasing water borne diseases

Bhutan Strategy on Environment and Climate Change

The impacts of climate change are likely to be magnified by future economic and environmental changes in Bhutan. Increasing population, rural-urban migration and rapid urbanisation pose a threat to future food security and water supply, increasing the vulnerability to vector-borne diseases. It is thus essential to study the enhanced stress on physical and socio-economic systems as a result of climate change coupled with non-climatic changes and plan accordingly.

It is in the interest of the government of Bhutan to remain a Carbon Neutral Economy as declared at the Conference of Parties (COP 15) (NEC, 2011). The declaration has nine strategies, which covers mainly the green sector, and there is a need to focus on the brown sector as well. The government is currently working on the Carbon Neutral strategy for Bhutan.

The Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan (RGOB, 2008) also mandates that 60 per cent forest coverage shall be maintained for all time to come.

There are also many strategies being implemented/ developed in Bhutan to ensure the “The Middle Path” of development to ensure sustainability since the early 1990s. Some of the highlights are:

- Restriction on raw timber export from the country
- Restriction on export of minerals without any value addition
- High Value Low Volume Tourism
- Accelerating the growth of hydropower development
- Restriction on import of re-conditioned cars
- Subsidy on import of steel as a substitute for timber
- Tax exemption on import of bicycles, public buses and electric vehicles
- Marketing Bhutan as a destination for service industries (BPOs and Education City)
- The Economic Development Policy of Bhutan 2010 is hugely in favour of green growth
- GLOF—Early warning systems, artificial lowering of Glacial Lakes, and Hazard Zonation
- Bhutan Climate Summit for A Living Himalayas: In Thimphu on 19 November 2011, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal and India agreed on a common 10-year roadmap for adaptation measures to climate change. The themes are: securing the natural fresh water systems of the Himalayas; ensuring food security and livelihoods; securing biodiversity and ensuring its sustainable use; and ensuring energy security and enhancing alternative technologies (Climate Summit Secretariat, 2011).

Conclusion

Climate Change is caused by GHG emissions which trap solar radiation and increase the global temperature. GHG emissions are sourced from our use of

fossil fuels and coals in transportation, industries, energy generation, agriculture and land use change. The GHG concentrations have been increasing exponentially since the 19th century with industrial revolution. Currently the CO₂ concentration in the atmosphere has reached an all-time high of 390ppm. The current trend of emission by countries does not necessarily indicate the true responsibility of the GHG concentration in the atmosphere due to their cumulative effects.

Higher GHG concentrations in the air leads to higher temperatures, increase disease prevalence, cause droughts, increase intensity and frequency of cyclones, increase sea surface temperatures, lead to sea level rise, cause ocean acidification, melting the snow and glaciers and worsen the air quality which have tremendous effect on the society.

Bhutan is a small landlocked Himalayan country with net carbon negative emissions. There are adequate water and energy resources at the moment for the less than one million-strong population. But it is very likely that climate change impacts shall not spare Bhutan. In fact, various IPCC reports claim that adaptive capacity of human systems is generally limited in mountainous developing countries, such as those of Bhutan, and vulnerability high. Furthermore, one of the most important consequences of climate change in mountainous countries with glaciers is climate-driven glacial melt and GLOFs, which in turn can severely impact upon inland waters and ecosystems and infrastructure well into the future.

According to models and studies, the annual cycle of meteorological processes in Bhutan will not change during the 21st century in the sense that the largest amounts of precipitation will still occur during summer and the smallest during winter. At high altitudes, temperature will remain below freezing point during the winter and precipitation will accumulate as snow. But the maximum temperature is likely to increase, which could lead to cascading effects to other parameters and systems.

The annual cycle of streamflow follows the same pattern as in the present climate with low flow during winter and high flow during summer, as a result of the combined effect of snowmelt and larger amounts of precipitation in the summer season than in the rest of the year. There is a relatively small change in the magnitude of streamflow until the middle of the 21st century, whereas changes are larger by the end of the 21st century due to melting of glacier ice. It is also possible that the glaciers will disappear altogether some day. None of the studies or models are, however, significant enough to validate the glacier disappearance phenomenon. However, it is highly evident that glacier melt contribution is significant for some rivers.

With less than 15 years of local observed data available, modelling climate change in Bhutan will remain a difficult task. Mountain regions are characterised

by complex topography and rapid changes in temperature and precipitation over short distances which are difficult to model, predict or even record due to local conditions.

The poor are the hardest hit by climate change impacts. For the poor and vulnerable, water and energy security further complicate their lives. As agriculture, forest systems, and wastelands face greater pressures in a changing climate, local communities become increasingly vulnerable especially as water and energy supplies are linked directly to the ecosystem. Bhutan, as a least developed, mountainous country, is highly vulnerable to this effect. It is hoped that some of the moves made by the government could make the future of the country a bit better. It is, however, too early to conclude if the sacrifices made are worth the effort or it is not significant or it is simply a no-regret initiative.



Notes

1. Radiative forcing is a measure of severity a parameter has in altering the balance of incoming and outgoing energy in the Earth-atmosphere system. Positive forcing tends to warm the surface while negative forcing tends to cool it.
2. CO₂ equivalents are based on 100-year global warming potential (GWP) estimates produced by the IPCC. 2005 is the most recent year for which comprehensive emissions data are available for every major gas and sector.
3. 1Gg= 1000 tons
4. A2 SRES; Heterogeneous world with continuously increasing population. Technological change is fragmented and slower. A2 has higher GHG emissions than B1 scenario.
5. B1 Special Report on Emission Scenarios (SRES); It considers the same global population that peaks in mid-century and declines thereafter, rapid economic structure toward a service and information economy, clean and resource efficient technologies. Global solutions without additional climate initiatives.

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APPENDIX 1

Climate Change Impacts on the Flow Regimes of Rives in Bhutan and possible consequences for hydropower development. By Stein Beldring and Astrid Voksø, Norwegian Water Resources and Energy Directorate, June 2011.

Important Considerations for the Study

Climate model projections Echam A2 and Echam B1 downscaled to a 0.5 degree grid for the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region by the Water and Global Change project (WATCH) funded by the European Union were used as input to the hydrological model.

Historical or present climate was represented by a control period 1981-2010, while future climate for the projection periods 2021-50 and 2071-2100 were considered. The hydrological model simulations are transient, i.e. the hydrological model was run from 1981 until 2100, while results for the control and projection periods were extracted from the transient simulations.

A statistical bias correction method for global climate simulations developed were used to downscale daily precipitation and temperature output from the global climate model Echam with emission scenarios A2 and B1 to a 0.5 • 0.5 degree grid in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan region as part of the WATCH project.

The observed meteorological data and the downscaled global climate model results were used for driving a spatially distributed version of the HBV hydrological model, yielding results for hydrological variables and fluxes for present and future conditions.

The HBV model used in this study performs water balance calculations for 1 by 1 km² grid cell landscape elements characterized by their elevation and land use. Due to the absence of directly measured catchment characteristics, natural variability and non-linearity of the processes involved, calibration is necessary to adjust the model parameters to improve the model's ability to reproduce the observed hydrological data.

For the period 1981-2010 the model was run with constant glacier covered areas, whereas for the period 2011-2100 the model was run in both manners; with constant glacier covered areas, and with time-variant glacier covered areas allowing the elevation of the ice surface to increase or decrease due to net accumulation or ablation. It is not realistic to apply fixed glacier covered areas since model results for glacier mass balance are negative for most elevations in Bhutan during the entire period 1981-2100. However, until the middle of the 21st century negative glacier mass balance is not sufficiently large to melt more than small fractions of the glacier covered areas completely. The hydrological model did not change ice covered areas at all for the period 1981-2010 when time-variant glacier covered areas were applied and consequently it was run with constant glacier covered areas for this period, assuming that information about initial ice volumes and glacier covered areas apply for the year 2011.

13

Non-Traditional Security Issues in Afghanistan

Saifullah Ahmadzai

The last thirty years of war in Afghanistan has seriously affected its socio-economic and political future. After ousting the Taliban from power, much reconstruction work was done by the new government with the support of international community; but still much more needs to be done to ensure welfare of the people, which involves provision of security understood in the non-traditional sense. Non-traditional security (NTS) threats are interconnected: poverty, illiteracy and disease which are often the root causes of conflicts. At the same time, environmental problems and droughts can threaten the livelihood and health of the populace leading to forcible migration. These threats can spread from one region to another and even can cross international borders, resulting in negative impacts on global security. The spread of such threats increases the need for regional cooperation on non-traditional security.

Countries with weak statecraft are more vulnerable to non-traditional security threats because of lack of efficient delivery mechanisms. The strength and weakness of a government should be considered not only on the basis of its capacity to tackle the problems that threatens state security but also on the basis of its willingness and capacity to handle non-traditional security issues. In order to improve the delivery of basic services, it is important for the government of Afghanistan to strengthen the capacity of its institutions. The objective of this chapter is to explain the status of non-traditional security in Afghanistan. It will focus mainly on food and water security, small arms and light weapons and organised crime, and suggest some measures to handle these issues in an effective manner.

An Overview of Non-Traditional Security issues

Non-traditional security (NTS) is defined in various ways. According to United Nations Development Program (UNDP), “people should be able to exercise their choices safely and freely, while being relatively confident that the opportunities they have today are not lost tomorrow”;¹ in other words, people must be free from both want and fear. Peace is not the lack of war but maintenance of an atmosphere where people can live in dignity. The citizens of Afghanistan are faced with non-traditional threats like inequality, job insecurity, poverty, lack of education and health facilities, food and water shortages, organised crimes and illegal armed groups. NTS should therefore become the top priority of both the Afghan government and the international community.

Even before these years of turmoil, Afghanistan was one of the poorest countries in the world with little access to health facilities, education, water supply, employment opportunity and so on. Geo-strategic jockeying of the super powers during the Cold War led to the introduction of communism and the Soviet invasion of the country and the rise of the Mujahideen and Taliban, supported overtly and covertly by western powers interested in shaking the Soviet hold in the area resulted in the fragmentation of the society. The country was divided along ethnic lines, with even regional neighbours getting into the act and turning a blind eye to the violation of human rights. The Soviet withdrawal in turn, led to the eventual takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban. During the Taliban regime, the international community imposed economic sanctions on Afghanistan, which harmed civilians more than the officials of the Taliban regime. After the 9/11 attacks in the US, the intervention of international community in Afghanistan was not for the welfare of the Afghan people but to fetch al Qaeda leaders, believed to be hiding in Afghanistan. The security approach was based on the interests of the government, some specific groups in the country and the international community’s vested interests. However, in its aftermath, the people of Afghanistan have been more threatened by poverty than terrorism, and clearly the solution cannot be only military intervention.

In the last ten years, efforts have indeed been made for the reconstruction of the country, but more often than not, public interest has been overshadowed by military, political, and sometimes personal agendas. Confusing and contradictory approaches in utilizing international assistance has not reached the main beneficiaries; the people of Afghanistan continue to suffer while decisions are taken or delayed on issues like whether to implement long-term or quick impact projects; whether Afghan government should adopt a top-down or bottom-up approach; or whether developmental plans should be implemented through the Afghan government or the international community or the private sector. More money has been spent on warfare—the war against terror costs the US more than one billion dollars a month, while a minimal fraction of it is spent on eliminating poverty, providing education and healthcare to the people.

It is increasingly being felt in Afghanistan that international assistance is not helping them much.

The NTS threats are mainly seen in weak states run by governments more interested in their own survival than welfare of the people. Afghanistan has historically been a victim of misgovernance, with leaders appropriating the resources which should have been allocated for the economic upliftment of the people. The tales of corruption in high places are so common in Afghanistan today and the ruling elite uses power as a means for perpetuating their control over the resources whereby they can exploit these for their own good. There has also been a rise in the lucrative drug trade in Afghanistan, in which some political leaders are said to be involved. This disparity in the distribution of wealth has made the country vulnerable to extremist organisations, which in turn prevents effective regional cooperation to combat these problems.

Corruption is a growing challenge in Afghanistan that affects the reconstruction process, and the delivery of basic services. Bribery, nepotism, and ethnic discrimination are the main forms of corruption within the Afghan government institutions. Some of the main contributing factors to the growing corruption are: the weak capacity of government institutions in providing basic services, weak accountability mechanism, unequal implementation of law and the intervention of influential people in government affairs. There are many cases of nepotism leading to a large network of likeminded people which provide them excellent opportunities for corruption. Once a network is created, even a cleanup at the top levels has no effect on the already vitiated atmosphere down the line. Inefficiency and incompetence among top government officials has encouraged subordinates to turn a blind eye to cases of corruption. The lack of punitive measures against corrupt officials has not helped. In the last ten years no government official has been brought to justice and tried in any court of law for corruption or misuse of authority. Implementing a carrot and stick system would be very helpful in cleaning up the system and strengthening government institutions.

At a result of corruption the people of Afghanistan have lost their trust in the government. At the beginning of the Interim Administration, the people of Afghanistan were very cooperative; they expected the government to provide them with basic amenities and infrastructure, especially in view of the fact that billions of dollars were being poured into Afghanistan. However, with the passage of time there no sense of optimism left in the people—large amount of money taken by the corrupt officials has led to socio-economic disparities in Afghanistan. Many government officials follow a luxurious lifestyle disproportionate to their salary. Corrupt officials have thus not only weakened the state's capability to design and implement effective poverty alleviating policies but they have also blamed international aid agencies when short- and long-term development projects either fail to take off or are delayed. Furthermore, corruption and state

weakness does not help create a safe environment for foreign investors, negatively impacting the creation of employment opportunity.

It must be mentioned here that one reason for corruption has been the abysmal salary levels for government officials. Currently, a government employee in Afghanistan gets very low salary, and that is sometimes handed over after months. Currently, emoluments for ordinary employees is around 100 US dollars per month, which is certainly not enough for even one family member, especially in these days of rising prices, leading them to adopt illegal means of making money. On the other hand, those working for local and international NGOs, are paid higher salaries and on time. Competent individuals, therefore, prefer to work with NGOs rather than the government, further weakening the quality of administration.

In order to overcome these problems, it is crucial for the Afghan government to maintain consistency and coordination in spending international assistances, improve the capacity of government institutions, eliminate corruption and implement merit-based appointments and initiate a human security approach to promote the empowerment of the people and their livelihood.

Small Arms and Light Weapons

Afghanistan has one of the highest concentrations of guns per person in the world. There might be up to 10 million small arms² circulating among a population of 25 to 30 million: that means at least one weapon for three persons. This has worrying implications for democracy, development, and security in a country where people are suffering from unemployment.

There is no weapon manufacturing industry in Afghanistan. Many of these weapons arrived during 1979-1989, after the Soviets occupied Afghanistan. In the immediate aftermath of the Soviet invasion in 1979, a large number of small arms came from Dara-e-Adam Khel weapons market, located in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan. Throughout the subsequent decade Russia supplied weapons to the communist government in Afghanistan. The US and its allies, who were tacitly supporting the Afghan resistance efforts, also played their role in arming up the Mujahedeen against the Soviet forces. The US provided five billion dollars' worth of weapons to the Mujahedeen during the 1980s while the former Soviet Union provided around 5.7 billion dollars' worth of weapons to their proxy government in Kabul.³

The Panj River Bazaar, which opened in 2006 in the Northern Province Badakhshan of Afghanistan, serves as the border between Afghanistan and Tajikistan. The majority trade at this bazaar is of Russian made weapons and heroin. There are reports that Taliban insurgents, militants and suspected al Qaeda members are involved in small arms and light weapons business here. They routinely bribe the police and government officials to run their business.

Moreover, the government forces not only turn a blind eye to this business but also have their stakes in the arms smuggling operations. According to Christian Willoch of the Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG), pro-government networks carry on the trade and the local commanders are directly involved in this business.

Heroin is the preferred currency of trade here; selling drugs for arms is more profitable than drugs for money. The demand for guns is higher in the south while the demand for drugs is high in the north. This vicious cycle keeps the poppy cultivation going. NATO claims that the Taliban get 40 to 60 per cent of their income from drugs sales.⁴

The US Government Accountability Office (GAO) recently said in a report that a large quantity of weapons given to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) by the US, are missing—nearly 87,000 weapons including rifles, pistols, machine guns, grenade launchers, shotguns and mortars. Besides weaponry, the report also mentioned an inadequate oversight of sensitive equipment such as night vision goggles issued to the Afghan National Army (ANA). Out of the 87,000 missing weapons, the serial numbers of 46,000 weapons have not been recorded. American military officials have no idea where the remainders are. The report also said that the US military has also failed to keep records of about 135,000 weapons donated by allies to the ANSF.⁵ Amnesty International in 2008 indicated that the total number of Afghan security forces was 182,000 personnel while the number of small arms imported and redistributed to the Afghan security forces since 2002 amounts to 409,022—this is in addition to a large number of arms which were already present in the country.⁶

Overall, the loss of 87,000 weapons would have more serious consequences especially if these were to fall into the hands of illegal manufacturers in Pakistan's tribal areas. They could reproduce these weapons through local reverse engineering. An increase in the number of such sophisticated weaponry in the hands of militants not only poses risks to Afghanistan but also to the entire region. The greater number of missing weapons is bound to find its way to the Taliban as well as other groups operating in the region while others may have found their way to the private militias of various Afghan warlords. Locals living in the areas affected by insurgency have claimed to have seen Taliban fighters with weapons and materials that are generally used by NATO, coalition forces, and Afghan security forces. This will not only cause further suspicion of foreign forces in the eyes of Afghan civilians, but also significantly affect the morale of the Afghan security forces.

The proliferation of these weapons has helped fuel the war that has raged on in Afghanistan for the past thirty years. Therefore, after ousting Taliban from power, the Afghan government, with the support of the international community took some measures to mitigate the supply and circulation of weapons in the country. The Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) and

Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups (DIAG) programmes were designed to address this issue. However, these programmes have not been able to achieve its goals; many leaders of armed groups still possess weapons and use these weapons in illegal activities. Intractable warlords, weak security institutions and regional terrorist networks hamper the programme. Even as weapons are collected under these programmes, terrorist networks simultaneously re-arm insurgents and other criminal groups. Insecurity and instability contribute largely to the failure of the programme. Bureaucracy and corruption in the government administration and other non-governmental organisations have also had a significant role in impeding implementation of the programme.

A variety of other factors fuel the demand for arms in the country:

- The lack of security which means people must protect themselves and their property, farms and cattle, which are the economic backbone of these communities;
- Clan feuds and personal enmities, compounded by weak protection from the government security forces encourage people to keep themselves armed;
- Politically-motivated violence as an important factor in rearming groups of people in some parts of Afghanistan;
- Poverty and lack of job opportunities for youth leading them into criminal activities;
- Easy availability of arms makes their possession a temptation for the people who have grown under a war culture;
- Areas where disarmament and disbandment have been implemented come under control of the Taliban;
- The lack of confidence in the government and security forces among those who have surrendered their arms; security forces have in many cases detained and tortured individuals who had been disarmed.

Lessons Learned

- The disarmament process should focus more on armed groups who engage in violent activities rather than armed individuals. In most cases, individuals arm themselves for self-defence, and do not pose a security threat to the state or community while armed groups may use weapons for activities that threaten security and social harmony. Disarming individuals, especially when the state is unable to provide security to them, has also led to the killing of these individuals while others have opted to re-arm themselves for self-defence.
- Weak governance, the lack of law and order and corruption pave the way for weapons trafficking. The government should take confidence building measures to remove the necessity for keeping the weapons.
- A carrot and stick approach should be used while enforcing the

regulations on possessing weapons. Action should also be taken against local commanders involved in this business.

- Before the Russian invasion, one policeman could detain anyone even in a far-off village. This was not because the central government was strong but because people did not have weapons to challenge authority. However, at present even an ordinary person cannot be detained that easily because the proliferation of weapons has led to the fear that a detainee could be armed and pose a danger to the security forces.
- Regional level coordination is imperative if the import of new arms to Afghanistan is to be avoided. The country has no weapons manufacturing facility so it will help reduce weapons proliferation not only in Afghanistan but also all over the region if stringent action is taken in this regard. However, political differences among the countries of the region could scuttle the process of disarmament.

Organized Crimes—Kidnapping

Kidnapping has become an increasingly significant and important part of the Taliban insurgents' strategy to destabilize Afghanistan. If this issue is left unaddressed, it could lead to serious consequences: these include a deteriorating economy because of the reluctance of businessmen to operate in Afghanistan, increased political pressure on foreign governments to withdraw troops and further loss of confidence of civilians in the Afghan government.

Kidnappings are nothing new in Afghanistan; however, there have been some changes in the way the kidnappings are being conducted lately. In the past, the Taliban used to release the kidnapped if they proved they were not part of groups they deemed as a threat to them. Now, the Taliban are using kidnapping as an important source of revenue. Most of the victims are aid workers, businessmen or construction engineers working for the reconstruction and development of the country. Although kidnapping locals does not generate as much income as targeting internationals, it helps achieve many of the destabilizing aims of the insurgents.

The political dimension of kidnappings has put increasing pressure on foreign governments to withdraw their troops from Afghanistan. On March 2007, when the Taliban kidnapped Italian journalist Daniele Mastrogiacomo, the opposition parties of that country protested and the Italian government was under heavy pressure to withdraw their troops.

In the last couple of years the Taliban have realised the profitability of abductions. According to the Asian Age website, just the reported ransoms paid for the highest profile kidnappings have reached a total of more than 10 million US dollars a year.⁷ However, since many of the abductions and payments are never publicized, the real figure is likely to be much higher.

The Taliban have realised that kidnapping is a more profitable source of

income than the sale of opium: it is not dependent on any season and it is a year-round business. The money helps the Taliban to equip themselves with weapons to fight the government and international community.

Kidnappings have crippled reconstruction efforts; the militants target aid workers and engineers. These attacks mostly are against foreigners, but it has also created fear among Afghans who have returned to the country as well as wealthy businessmen.

However, the Taliban are not the only ones participating in kidnappings—criminal gangs and mafias have also taken advantage of the insecurity in the country to participate in this crime as well. The kidnappers use various tactics and usually disguise themselves as guards for high level government officials, UN guards and Afghan security force personnel. The kidnappers also use some of the corrupt elements of Afghan government security forces to carry out their activities and reach their target which further complicates the problem.

This nexus between the kidnappers and some officials in the government at whatever level has gone a long way in preventing the capture and punishment of kidnappers. Due to corruption in the police and justice sectors, many kidnappers are able to roam freely and go unpunished for their crimes—further hurting the population's sense of trust in the government. If we want to put a stop to this increasingly dangerous crime in Afghanistan, the Afghan government will have to become proactive in tackling this issue.

Children as Human Bombs

An increasingly dangerous trend worth mentioning here is use by the Taliban of children in suicide bombing incidents. In August 2011 President Hamed Karzai had a meeting with around 20 children would-be suicide bombers who had either been arrested or had surrendered to Afghan security forces before they could carry out the suicide attacks. They said they were recruited by the Taliban in the tribal areas of Pakistan at religious madrassas and promised paradise if they blew themselves up.⁸ It is reported that Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan's (TTP) fighters go around towns in the Pakistani tribal areas, encouraging boys and young men to volunteer for suicide attacks. In the economically backward areas from where they recruit children, access to education is almost absent. It is thus easy for the Taliban to indoctrinate and brainwash the children to suit their purpose. Sometimes they even pay the parents money to hand over their children for suicide bombings in the tribal areas; it has been reported that they buy disabled children because they can easily reach the target posing as beggars.⁹ The Pakistani Taliban has a training centre in the tribal areas of Pakistan to prepare these children for suicide bombing. After training them they sell them to Afghan Taliban groups (including Afghan Taliban leader Mullah Omar) for 6000 to 12000 dollars per child.¹⁰

This new pattern of recruitment will have serious implications for the region. It will strengthen the nexus between criminals and the militants because they would find kidnapping mutually beneficial. It may also result in an increase in the kidnapping of children because of a ready demand for such children among the insurgents. And, finally, it will increase fear and uncertainty among people. The local communities would subsequently expect more security from the local government and if the government is not able to provide it, it will further distance itself from the population.

Food and Water Security

In Afghanistan, food insecurity problem covers both access to and availability of food. Currently food availability is relatively good because imported foods can be found in most parts of the country. However, high prices coupled with low employment decrease the purchasing power of the people. According to the human rights report of the United Nations on Afghanistan, “poverty kills more Afghans than those who die in a direct result of the armed conflict.”¹¹ This report also says that Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world; 36 per cent of the Afghan population lives in absolute poverty. Even though more than 35 billion US dollars in aid was poured into Afghanistan from 2002 to 2009, little change was brought into everyday life.¹²

The main causes of food insecurity in Afghanistan are lack of employment, low income, inadequate agricultural and livestock products (many people choose poppy cultivation over farming because it is more lucrative), and drought—added to that, the ubiquitous and rampant corruption. There is also the vicious circle of increase in population without increase in resources, coupled with mass migration to areas already pressured by the scarcity of food, water and employment.

People living in both urban and rural areas are exposed to food insecurity. In urban areas people are highly dependent on mainly imported and low domestic products therefore; here they suffer from high prices. People in the rural areas rely on local products, which are greatly affected by drought, particularly in rain-fed areas. And those who live in remote areas are at very high risk, particularly during winter, since Afghanistan does not have a tradition of cold storage facilities to store the food. The immediate result has been rampant malnutrition.

As a consequence of the last three decades of war, many families have lost their parents who were their earning members, forcing small children to join the workforce. Even though Afghanistan is a signatory of the UN Convention on Children’s Rights, child labour is widespread. Many poor families feel compelled to sell their children to survive.¹³ The government of Afghanistan does not seem capable of stopping this dangerous trend. As the former Secretary General of UN, Kofi Annan, stated in his millennium report 2000, “every step

taken towards reducing poverty and achieving broad-based economic growth is a step taken towards conflict prevention".¹⁴

People in Afghanistan rely on agriculture as their main source of income. However, since the last three decades of war and instability, drought coupled with damaged irrigation systems has seriously impacted the productivity of the farmers. Recently it has been reported that there is 15 per cent decrease in wheat production—3.3 million tonnes in 2010-2011 as compared to last year's 4.5 million.¹⁵ The main reason for the decrease in wheat productivity is a decline in rainfall in the country.

The Hindu Kush Mountains are a natural source of water storage and account for the bulk of Afghanistan's water resources. Despite drought during the last few years, the use of water has increased, but without proper water reservoirs and dams to store water to use it in the time of need for the irrigation purposes. Changes in weather, like an early and rapid snowmelt, could cause floods and water shortage in rest of the year. The shortage of both drinking and irrigation water affect cultivation and thereby local economy based on agriculture, causes migration, and increases the possibility of conflict among the people competing for scarce resources. Afghanistan has little control over water-flow from its river systems into neighbouring countries, underlying the importance of improving irrigations systems and building water reservoirs within its borders. There is a saying in Afghanistan that it is better to be a servant in an upstream area than to be a king in a down-stream area.

Access to clean drinking water is a serious challenge for the people in all parts of Afghanistan; most of the people drink water from the open canals, which results in the spread of various diseases. Because of continuous droughts during the last 10 years, the water levels have fallen drastically. For instance in Kandahar province, wells now have to be dug up to 50 metres as compared to the 5-10 metres deep a decade ago.

Other factors that contribute to poor water facilities are damaged irrigation infrastructure, unsustainable canals and plumbing system, population increase, poor knowledge of farmers regarding water management and lack of a watershed system. In order to address these threats there is a need for afforestation and prevention of deforestation, building a watershed system, sustainable urban sewage system, more investment in water storage facilities, in addition to the need to encourage private sector investments in irrigated agriculture and regional cooperation.

Afghanistan is a land-locked country that shares the water of its four main rivers with other neighbouring countries without using it sufficiently itself. The demand for water use in Afghanistan as well as in its neighboring countries is increasing at the same time there is no water treaty between Afghanistan and its neighbours.

Conclusion

The future peace, stability and prosperity of the Afghan people all depend on resolution of non-traditional security issues. In order to overcome non-traditional security threats, it's important for the Afghan government to maintain security and stability, further strengthen the capacity of Afghan security forces, control the drug trade and provide alternative livelihoods to the farmers, provide basic services to the public and eliminate corruption. More attention should be paid on increasing people's livelihood.



Notes

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14

A Cooperative Security Framework: Environment and Climate Change

P.K. Gautam

In this chapter, I first provide a state-of-the-art theoretical framework for regional cooperation. I then show what has been done so far on environment and climate change and attempt to show why progress is not up to the desired mark. I conclude by identifying some issues that need to be addressed through governments to achieve a viable cooperative security framework in South Asia.

Is South Asia secure from impacts of environmental degradation and climate change?¹ No. Then why is there no cooperation when there is a common challenge? One of the reasons could be a lack of institutions. Realists argue that institutions have minimal influence on state behaviour.² Of course, they argue with hindsight and give examples such as the failure of the League of Nations among others. In spite of such arguments, however, cooperation through institutional mechanisms is possible in South Asia. Institutional analysis identifies a set of conditions required for formation of international environmental regime. First is the concern which rests on scientific understanding. The second is the capacity and the third is cooperative environment.³ In South Asia we see an overlap of all three coupled with a weak foundation.

For cooperation to take place, states need sufficient concerns about the issue, capacity to undertake domestic and international effort to address it, and a contractual environment in which commitments will likely be honoured.⁴

Concerns and Scientific Understanding

Work probably will never end on a scientific understanding. Most scientist end by saying we need more research. The issue is that we must get the science right to get the social science right. Is climate science in danger of being drowned by

noise of climate change controversies? P. Balaram answers this question by quoting James Lovelock:

We seem to have forgotten that science is not wholly based on theory and models: more tiresome and prosaic confirmation by experiments and observation plays just as important a part. Perhaps for social reasons, science has in recent years changed its way of working. Observation in the real world and small-scale experiments on Earth now take second place to expensive and ever-expanding theoretical models.... Our tank is near empty of data and we are running on theoretical vapour.⁵

Capacity

Do the South Asian countries have the capacity? Probably not enough and much more work on this is needed.

Cooperative Environment

This is the core of the issue. Nothing can succeed without cooperation. If mercantilist thinking continues with the idea of “beggar thy neighbour”, then it will be a very long journey. Surely none of the people who generate the social capital will favour this approach. This will demand a labourious journey to change attitudes. It is one opinion that in South Asia, ecology, like culture, crosses political boundaries. No one can argue otherwise. So probably ecological thinking may lead to cooperation in the long run. Another way to see how cooperation is possible is to see how the whole discourse of environmental degradation further worsened by climate change is known to be shaping. The first is the concept of a regime complex and the second is the need to focus on a region.

The Regime Complex

Robert O. Keohane and David G. Victor have argued that in the case of climate change, the structural and interest diversity inherent in contemporary world politics tends to generate the formation of “regime complex” rather than a comprehensive, integrated regime. They argue that climate change is actually many different cooperation problems, implying different tasks and structures.⁶

Three forces—the distribution of interests, the gains from linkages, and the management of uncertainty—account for the variation in institutional outcomes, from integration to fragmentation.⁷ Several clusters of institutional clubs have emerged like Asia Pacific Partnership (seven countries), Major Economic Forum on Energy and Climate Change (sixteen states and EU), Group of Eight (G-8) and G-8+5, the Group of 20 (G-20). Besides, bilateral deals also have shown an increase like the UK-China partnership on coal combustion technologies, Chinese bilateral deals with the US, Australia, and France on coal and nuclear power, and the Indo-US nuclear deal.⁸ The bilateral deal between Norway and

Indonesia on “reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD)” is a new trend. It is also pointed out that besides the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Montréal Protocol on the ozone layer has actually had a much bigger impact by way of mitigation than the Kyoto Protocol, because the gases that are the chief cause of ozone depletion are also extremely warming agents. Finally, it has been pointed out that black carbon, which is known to be cause of climate change, has propelled Asian and Arctic countries to regulate it. It also leads to regional impact leading to melting of ice packs and glaciers.⁹

Regime complexes offer the advantage of flexibility across issues and adaptability over time. Pledge and review and bottom up rather than the top-down approach is now preferred.

Regional Focus

The second slab of theoretical work that could be used is in regional focus. Political and strategic security concerns arising out of an impact of environmental insecurity have been separated into four general categories:

- (a) General system weakening including economic cost of damage to critical infrastructure;
- (b) Boundary disputes such as those hotting up over Arctic melt;
- (c) Threat of resource war due to decline in availability of food and water further complicated by climate change; and
- (d) Threat multiplier effect on fragile states.¹⁰

The most pressing need identified is a greater focus on particular regions and specific and more immediate threats, rather than extreme worst-case scenarios. This means detailed case studies. Being a European, the author of this regional idea suggests the Arctic to begin with.¹¹ In the case of South Asia, systems such as Tibet and Himalayas fit the case studies.¹²

In South Asia, institutions, regime complexes and regional issues swing from one side to the other. Much can be achieved with a new framework for cooperation keeping the theoretical framework in mind.

The Reasons for Underachivements

Below I list some unique reasons for slow or no progress in the case of South Asia.

(a) *Inadequacy of tools for research on social, physical and life sciences in South Asia.* In the two largest South Asian countries, India and Pakistan, social science research and teaching about each other is absent.¹³ Theoretical frameworks within which social sciences are taught and researched in the non-Western world are still based on irrelevant European models.¹⁴ South Asian universities and

academics have not developed theories and original ideas on environmental security including methodologies.¹⁵ The debate and idea on environmental security (barring the human security dimension of the United Nations Human Development Reports) are borrowed from European or North American perceptions. The Hadley climate model does the data crunching for South Asia. Ideas, knowledge and data of South Asian conditions needs more conceptual clarity. In its absence, artificial structures imported to South Asia rarely resonate with traditional ecological knowledge (TEK). Water war thesis, resource scarcities leading to violent conflict are then assumed to be given as a premise. This may be termed as a third world academic syndrome.

(b) *Non-availability of data.* Yet another reason is non-availability of environmental data. All agree that environmental degradation has set in. Absence of time series satellite photos of ecosystems makes it very difficult to express this anxiety to readers. Narratives are not enough. Extensive field work is needed. Mass balance studies of glaciers are only rare samples on which much hullabaloo has been created. Sensational items for realist impact are generally picked up by scholars and public from shallow media stories. Glacier melt contribution in an ICIMOD paper shows the Brahmaputra basin with about 12 per cent of glacier melt in river flow, about 9 per cent for the Ganga and 50 per cent with the Indus system.¹⁶ In 2007, out of 9,575 glaciers in India, research had been conducted only on around 25 to 30.¹⁷ Groups of scientists working in different departments have also researched and found that “small glaciers and ice fields are significantly affected due to global warming from middle of last century. In addition, large glaciers are being fragmented into smaller glaciers. In future, if additional global warming takes place, the processes of glacial fragmentation and retreat will increase, which will have profound effect on availability of water resources in Himalayan region.”¹⁸ According to a 2011 Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) study of 2,190 glaciers, 75 per cent glaciers have retreated, 8 per cent have advanced and 17 per cent are stable.¹⁹

Water flows are also securitized or not easy to monitor in river basins that cut across regions. This sharing of data is one issue that may take a long time to be realised. With climate change current and projected data will further change. That change must be established by joint studies and understanding so that countries do not blame each other on flow data.

(c) *Lack of early warning and response capacity: Disaster-based evidence.* July-August 2010 witnessed an unprecedented cloudburst at Leh in Ladakh region of Jammu and Kashmir (August) and the worst floods in Pakistan's history.²⁰ Yet, not much work seems to have been done in South Asia to study the reasons and mitigation or adaptive measures. Was it just climate change or climate variation? For the floods in Pakistan, the initial reaction was that weather extremes are getting worse,²¹ making climate change the usual suspect.²² Unusual jet stream was the

provisional finding of the intense rainfall.²³ From a disaster management point of view, a study established that catastrophe would have been less if European weather forecasts had been shared with Pakistan.²⁴ Perhaps the most apt finding shared was of Prof. J Srinivasan, Centre for Atmospheric and Oceanic Sciences, Indian Academy of Science, Bangalore who wrote in August 2010:

The recent Pakistani floods could have been predicted a few days in advance. This requires high resolution short weather forecasting model that can assimilate the large amount of satellite data that is available now. You will see a lot of papers in the next few years that will hindcast this event. In addition to good weather forecasting, we need a good decision support system. Most people in South Asia will not leave their houses and farms even if the local officials issue a flood alert. Hence, there is a need for local shelters that people can rush to at a few hours notice. This has been provided in coastal Andhra Pradesh and Bangladesh for those exposed to storm surges during cyclones.²⁵

Coordination within South Asian countries also needs to be attended to. The Pakistani Meteorological Department's three divisions gave different forecasts. The Flood Forecasting Division issued no forecast till 27 July 2010. Only real time flood data were available. No mention was made of super floods. The National Weather Forecasting Centre started issuing forecasts mid-July on unusual weather in the Bay of Bengal. The Research and Development Department had not produced any worthwhile work on climate change and changing monsoons.²⁶

(d) *South Asia specific scientific research not yet world class.* Research in South Asia on climate change and environment related natural and life sciences is not yet world class. In the past, false data on methane from cattle and paddy fields, generated by West, was refuted as a reaction.

(e) *Ignoring traditional ecological knowledge and anecdotal evidence at our peril.* It is said today that children do not listen to their parents and grandparents. The same is happening in the field of knowledge on ecology and climate. Wisdom cannot be junked. Two instances will be shown how a turnabout is taking place. First is work on local knowledge about climate change in eastern Himalayas where it has been found that the knowledge of local communities conforms to the findings generated by modern science in different parts of the world.²⁷ The second is studies on Tibet. Michel Zhao and Orville Schell argue convincingly for the need to preserve the health of glaciers, grasslands and the nomadic way of life, in a very delicately balanced ecology.²⁸ Scientific knowledge is now challenging the earlier (and wrong) assumption that traditional lifestyles as practised by Tibetans are backward, irrational and unsustainable.²⁹ Here it is worth pondering on the narrative on hydro-politics as it relates to the Indus Water Treaty and climate change. Instead of an overt emphasis on technical and

technology based approaches, run with the narrow expertise of engineers and state negotiators, a new compact has been suggested drawn on river community, fisher folk, river ecologists, water historians, sociologists and aquatic specialists.³⁰ Rather, it could be said that these inputs besides those of civil engineers be considered as TEK. The Fukushima nuclear accident in Japan of March 2011 reminds us on the perils of scientific and technological arrogance. This is the new multi-disciplinary challenge.

Policy Suggestions

Expand on recent work done on science of climate change for the region. The Indian Network for Climate Change Assessment (INCCA) has been conceptualized as a network-based scientific programme designed to assess the drivers and implications of climate change through scientific research; prepare climate change assessment every two years; develop decision support system; and build capacity towards management of climate change-related risks and opportunities.³¹ Its report—“India: GHG emission 2007, and Climate Change and India: a 4×4 assessment—a sectoral and regional analysis for 2030s”³² shows that there are significant gaps in the data on the subject. Multiple data sets are required for climate, natural ecosystems, soils, water from different sources, agricultural productivity and inputs, and socio-economic parameters. It further suggests that systematic observation on a long term basis must be undertaken in India. It suggests going beyond the Hadley Centre model of the UK. Regional models should be developed, by building capacity.³³ Cooperation is the key word. This network also needs to get integrated with that of the neighbouring countries.³⁴ A regional report compiled with similar research articles both by individuals and government departments from neighbouring countries will be of immense use. The work could be like that of IPCC, which only compiles state of knowledge. India may take the initiative in this project and provide a standard format.³⁵

A three-track approach is suggested. The first track is to begin studies on the impact of climate change on river flow on treaties such as Indus Water Treaty (between India and Pakistan over the Indus basin), Ganga Water Treaty (between India and Bangladesh on the Ganges at Farakka barrage) and the Mahakali Treaty (on Mahakali/Sarda River between India and Nepal). In the second track, common understanding must be reached on rivers on which there is no treaty like the Brahmaputra (China, India and Bangladesh) and the Kabul River in the Indus system between Afghanistan and Pakistan. In the third track, pollution of rivers like Yarlung Tsangpo needs consideration (besides concerns of damming and diversion). In South Asia as much in China, rivers become sewage drains. Proper waste disposal and technologies can prevent this from happening. It is also suggested that SAARC sets up a regional centre for Himalayan ecology.

Meteorological departments, the real centres of action, need to freely exchange information. According to Pakistan Meteorological Department, the centre of precipitation is no longer Punjab, but it has shifted to north and west to Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province (KPK).³⁶ Weather data of India, indicating current patterns, show the monsoons were shifting westwards making central India drier. The number of rainy days is decreasing and the amount of rainfall in a single day is increasing.³⁷ This single day increase in rainfall prediction is corroborated by evidence as witnessed in Delhi in September 2011 and episodes of bursts of heavy intensity short duration rains in the erratic Monsoon of 2012. The projections for the last quarter of 21st century show more variations in northern India and over Himalayas that puts the Himalayan glaciers at threat.³⁸ Much more cooperation and coordination among South Asian Met Departments needs to be done in establishing changing pattern of rain and snowfall. Setting up a regional centre for Himalayan climate and ecology in addition will be vital.

Glacier melting and river-flow. According to a new study, the Ministry of Environment and Forests with Department of Space in India has assigned a study of inventory and monitoring of these glaciers in the India Himalayan Region (IHR) to the Space Application Centre (SAC), and ISRO, Ahmedabad. India has 16,627 glaciers, covering an area of 40,563 square kilometres. There are 32,392 glaciers in the Indus, Ganga, Brahmaputra basins draining into India.³⁹ Regional countries also can now get integrated as IHR represents a portion of the Himalayan ecosystem.

Abnormal glacier melt will impact river flows. According to one estimate, snow and glacier melt contribute about 50 per cent to western Indus basin which reduces to 10 per cent in the case of the eastern Brahmaputra.⁴⁰ A joint Sino-India presentation on the Indian government website gives percentage share of glacier melt for the Ganges as 9.7 per cent and Indus River as 40.4 per cent.⁴¹ As the Tibetan and Indian Himalayas are interrelated, glacier studies must be done immediately to understand how much of the water budget is contributed by Tibet. River flow information will also facilitate any bilateral or multilateral negotiations on transboundary river flows including impact if any due to climate change. India and China are expected to reach an agreement soon on research into melting of glaciers.⁴² India has positioned itself second to none in the area of research on aerosols and black carbons. These are now known to cause glacier and ice melt. India launched the “Black Carbon Research Initiative” in March 2011.⁴³ This knowledge can be shared with neighbours as the emission of soot is on similar lines in the region.

Climate related disasters and extreme weather events. The picture is grim: the frequency and intensity of natural disasters is expected to increase; floods and drought will be more common—extreme weather events such as in Ladakh in August 2010 and record breaking floods in Pakistan uprooting 20 million people

are still fresh in our memory. Greater cooperation in creating a common scientific understanding and disaster preparation between countries will benefit all nations in the region. The draft SAARC Agreement at Male in May 2011 to establish a mechanism for Rapid Response to Natural Disasters is an important step.⁴⁴ The next challenge is how to reduce and provide early warning of disasters. An integrated dialogue in managing and reducing disasters needs to be carried out. Watershed restoration and bioshield restoration of coastal areas by planting suitable ecologically friendly trees is a step that must be taken on an emergency war-footing. Current studies show economic losses have increased, the period 2000 to 2008 had maximum disasters and, the most vulnerable suffered the most. This meant that exposure of people and assets to risks are increasing. It is argued that even without climate change disaster risks will increase as vulnerability of assets will increase. Greatest impact will be on sectors that depend on climate like agriculture and water management system. However one must be careful in making blanket statements. Most vulnerable suffer and besides low GDP or poverty governance also matters. This is clear in case of cyclone Sidr of 2007 in Bangladesh and Aila in Myanmar in 2008. Both were similar but loss in Myanmar was 30 times higher.⁴⁵

Climate refugees. A recommendation of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) working group in 2009 suggested:

For inter-country migration, so far “environmental migrants” or “climate refugees” are currently not provided for in international law. [A] case may be initiated to have a protocol for the same, especially in the light of future influx from Bangladesh and Nepal. Diplomatic initiatives within SAARC need to be taken to deliberate the issues before it becomes [a] flashpoint of conflict.⁴⁶

This must be discussed further between countries. Some attempts to have a protocol have been suggested and these must be studied by governments.⁴⁷

Generation and sharing of data. Managing the energy situation, water economy and protection of the environment are also the key features of the approach to the forthcoming 12th five-year plan (2012-2017) for India.⁴⁸ In the case of water, the plan suggests “the first step in evolving a rational water policy is to make a scientific assessment of available water resources in each basin in the country and then define basin-specific strategies for water management. This mapping exercise should be undertaken on a priority basis, with involvement of science departments, and should be completed in the 12th Plan.” This logic is also applicable at the regional level. Data on water continues to be securitized and is not made public. This must be reversed. Due to lack of data differences of opinion persist. For example, Kaiser Bengali and Nausheen Wasi, in an output from the 3rd South Asia Conference, show that India violated the treaty during

the construction and commissioning of the Baglihar Dam on the Chenab. According to the authors, the Indus Treaty allocated the entire flow of 55,000 cubic feet per second (cusecs) of water across the de facto boundary line in Kashmir. In August-September 2008, India began to fill the Baglihar reservoir. As a result, river flow recorded at Marala Rim station showed a decline to 48,000 cusecs on 25 August and 25,000 cusecs on 04 September. Pakistan lost about 2 MAF of water during the critical rabi (winter) wheat crop sowing period.⁴⁹ This contrasts with the data in a speech by the High Commissioner of India at Karachi on 03 April 2010, in that he shows that any increase and decrease at Marala is reflected in the flow at all the points on the Indian side, implying that when Pakistan receives reduced flows, it is because of reduced flow available on the Indian side, too, and not because of any diversion of water by India. The data according to the High Commissioner in respect of flows in all three western rivers clearly demonstrates that these flows have followed a curve moving up and down, depending upon climatic factor from year to year, rather than showing progressive decline. India and Pakistan exchange daily data on about 600 gauge and discharge sites.⁵⁰

This snapshot indicates that scholar friendly data must be made more frequently and freely available, for example on a joint website redesigned to report data being measured and being fed to the Indus Commission. It must be said and celebrated that in the history of water related work, this type of information has been made available to the public for the first time.⁵¹ Probably Kaiser Bengali and Nausheen Wasi still may not be convinced. One suggestion would be the same authors who participated in the Asian security seminar, forming a joint task force with Indian scholars⁵² and other regional scholars to revisit the issue and place their new findings in the open domain. Truth and reconciliation is important. This episode should be a closed chapter in the spirit of future cooperation.

Oral ecological history and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). This is one aspect which has lot of potential. Though all festivals are agriculture- or season-based, with urbanisation people are losing their relationship with their roots. Traditional knowledge is important and must be recorded and preserved, like biodiversity. Countries in the region need to share common knowledge—like Bhutan, Nepal, India, Afghanistan and Pakistan on issues related to the mountains and Sri Lanka, Maldives, Pakistan, India and Bangladesh on maritime matters including fishing.⁵³

Putting an end to water intensive crops in semi-arid two Punjabs. The political economy of water intensive crops in water short regions needs to be given a fresh look for a change. Virtual water embedded in rice now needs to be done away with. The Indus Water Treaty's survival is more dependent on the agricultural and irrigation communities. Wrongly named 'coarse' grains such as

jowar (sorghum) and *bajra* (pearl millet) are less water intensive. Internal crop adjustments can reduce water demand. It is now well established that these millet crops are not junk food and are healthier. Nutrition rich barley is used for lowering blood sugar, blood pressure, cholesterol and promoting weight loss. Unlike polished white rice and maida made from refined wheat (unfortunately so very popular in commercial biscuits of multinational brands and also the Punjabi nan), consumption of barley, sorghum, pearl millet and finger millet (*ragi*) does not lead to lifestyle epidemics of urbanisation such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart attacks and obesity. The challenge for policy makers is to change food habits by people's involvement and matching income to farmers. The Indian Agricultural Ministry has asked the States to include millets in the mid-day schemes in schools to increase its demand.⁵⁴ This is a good initiative. In the long run if transformation at the regional level takes place then there may be no quarrel over shared river and ground water.

Maritime South Asia. The maritime neighbours need to be engaged in pollution response measures. All coastlines are vulnerable to oil spills. Greater military to military cooperation and planning for contingencies would make our maritime neighbours more responsive. Presently, the Indian Coast Guard has the capacity to handle 10,000 tons of oil spills. The grey area remains the labour intensive task of clean up on shore. There is a limit to collect volunteers for such sustained work. Joint strategies need to be worked out for dealing with oil spill spreading to neighbouring country's coastal region.

South Asian waters have also become the convenient dumping ground of derelict and obsolete and obsolescent boats. Taking advantage of lax insurance and monitoring mechanisms, it becomes easy to abandon derelict and sinking ships with polluting or hazardous cargo. Coast guards and navies of the region need to gear up to prevent the Indian Ocean being treated as a dumping ground.⁵⁵ As single hulled ships get phased out in developed countries, they are most likely to head to South Asian waters. Also, with growth of world economy shipping increasing, the threat grows of more oil spill disasters in the region, impacting both the marine and coastal zone.

More the 80 per cent of sea pollution (manifest as coral dead zones caused by algal blooms feeding on fertilizer rich run-off) is due to pollution from land based activities. Sewage and industrial run-off adds to the waste. Global Warming will further damage the sensitive marine ecosystem and its biodiversity. Trawlers using large nets destroy small marine life and the natural food chain. Pollutants like fertilizer and pesticide runoff, sewage, and industrial waste has made the South Asian coastline next to metropolitan cities like sewers. The ocean must not be seen any longer as a waste material basket. This consciousness must be used positively to save the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea from further pollution.

More cooperative research needs to be done to adapt and mitigate this by practical policies.

South Asian University. It must be mentioned that a sound climate change strategy must be informed by climate science, environmental engineering, energy systems, economics, ecology, hydrology, agronomics (plant breeding), infectious diseases control, business and finance.⁵⁶ The new South Asian University (SAU) will also provide academic rigour to policy.⁵⁷ It is hoped that the multidisciplinary field of environmental security gets started and cuts across disciplines of arts and science. The mandate of the South Asian University, as set out in the Agreement of the SAARC Member-States envisages that the University should:

- enhance learning in the South Asian community that promotes an understanding of each other's perspectives and strengthen regional consciousness;
- provide liberal and humane education to the brightest and the most dedicated students of South Asia so that a new class of quality leadership is nurtured; and
- enhance the capacity of the South Asian nations in science, technology and other areas of higher learning vital for improving their quality of life.

SAU aims to become the focal point for research for common ground and socio-economic development of the region. The SAU, therefore, aims to provide for programmes of studies which:

- have the potential to promote regional understanding, peace and security which ultimately enhances the wellbeing of the people of the region;
- reach newer, common and challenging frontiers in various disciplines, and inter-disciplinary outfits, usually not available in individual countries.
- lead to creation and sharing of knowledge that has the potential of creating a South Asian Community of intellectuals, endowed with expanding mutual trust and appreciation of one another's problems

The SAU can be another pillar of cooperation with scholar-to-scholar contact. What is important is that this endeavour may also help South Asia develop its own unique theory, models and discourse on cooperation. Probably this is the most difficult part—South Asian academic institutions are not generators of knowledge but rather are consumers. This self confidence has now to be established.

Conclusion

The political boundaries pale in comparison to the ecological and civilisational overlap between South Asian countries. Yet, worldly political issues of the

moment inspired by sovereignty are the dominant discourse. The chapter has argued for the need to further boost and develop the regimes and mechanisms on environmental issues that are slowly getting policy focus within the region. The suggestions for common understanding need further work by think-tanks and policymakers. Ideas matter. It is hoped that visionary policymakers of present and future generations will also take these into consideration now in a more focused manner.

* * *

APPENDIX

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE ON ENVIRONMENT

World Level

The decadal (ten year) *kumbh mela*-like event began with UN Conference on Human Environment in 1972 at Stockholm which led to the birth of United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP). In 1985-87 ozone depletion (due to man-made chemicals which were wrongly thought to be benign) expanded this problem of environmental health. In 1987 the World Commission on Environment and Development published *Our Common Future* (Brundtland Report) which conceptualized and then popularized the idea of 'sustainable development'. In 1988 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was set up with a mandate to assess scientific information related to climate change, to evaluate the environmental and socio-economic consequences of climate change, and to formulate realistic response strategies. IPCC has so far produced four reports of which the 4th was released in 2007 and work on the 5th is in progress. In 1992, the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also called the Earth summit, was held at Rio de Janeiro, and where the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was signed (its outcome now is in public domain such as the last climate convention at Durban in 2011, Cancun in 2010, and the ones before at Copenhagen in 2009 and Bali in 2007). The Rio summit also provides a forum for addressing a number of major global environmental concerns such as biodiversity, deforestation, and desertification.

In 1994 the UN Development Programme interjected its famous *Human Development Report* on human security with linkages to environmental security. It needs to be appreciated that it was led by the Pakistani economist Mahbub-ul-Haq. In 2001, the Convention on Certain Persistent Organic pollutants was adapted (of which in May 2011, it was agreed to by India to phase out endosulphan). In a way, the idea of Raphael Carson, the author of *Silent Spring* on the ills of over chemicalisation, has been realised, but costs are still very high

for replacement. In 2002, the World Sustainable Summit or Rio + 10 was held at Johannesburg, South Africa. Five areas of water, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity (WEHAB) were shown to be interlinked. Here *Global Environmental Outlook 3* report was released which warned that unless urgent action is taken to protect land worldwide, over 70 per cent of Earth's surface could be affected by roads, mining, cities and other infrastructure development in the next 30 years. In 2005, the *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment* (MA) was released which assessed the consequences of ecosystem change. One key finding of the report, on the challenge of reversing the degradation of ecosystems while meeting increasing demands for their services, can be partially met under some scenarios that the MA has considered, but these involve significant changes in policies, institutions, and practices that are not currently under way. Many options exist to conserve or enhance specific ecosystem services in ways that reduce negative trade-offs or that provide positive synergies with other ecosystem services. In 2010, the Economics of Ecosystem and Biodiversity (TEEB) study, built on *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment*, demonstrated the economic significance of biodiversity loss and eco-system degradation in terms of negative effect on human well-being.

During the last two decades, biotechnology has divided opinions. Genetically Modified (GM) crops according to one view can solve all the problems of food security in spite of population rise. The other is that after having destroyed traditional seeds and biodiversity due to green revolution based technologies of monoculture farming, GM seeds will spread unknown impacts on ecosystem while giant western corporate capture the seed market, making it difficult for the small farmer to subsist. In a landmark event in August 2012 the Indian Parliamentary Standing Committee on Agriculture in its report "Cultivation of Genetically Modified Food Crops" has recommended that the government must not allow field trials of GM crops till there is a strong, revamped, multi-disciplinary regulatory system in place. Few of its sound arguments were to reject the siphoning of profits to multinational, that food security is not about production alone but it also means access to food to the poorest, and risk of it to ecosystem. Perhaps the most convincing evidence that the committee put forth was that without GM crops, the total food production rose from 197 million tons (MT) in 2000-01 to 241 MTs in 2011-11.

As far as energy goes, it is the main cause of climate change due to fossil fuel use. No consensus has been reached on how future energy may look like under conditions of excess carbon in atmosphere and continued availability of fossil fuel. Renewable energy is gaining ground, yet dams remain controversial due to ecology, environmental flows in river, risks to human and livelihood of the displaced, though nuclear energy got a huge setback with the nuclear accident in Japan in March 2011. Wind and solar have a good future although strategic and rare earth materials for their mass production are in short supply. Biomass

is in trouble due to competing land scarcity to grow energy crops or food, feed and fiber. Another complication is the charge that black soot or Atmospheric Brown Cloud (ABC) causes rapid warming and glacier melt. This contested phenomenon is mainly due to biomass burning besides other unburned fossil fuel of inefficient machines. In South Asia, we all know that the poor cook using biomass, and though respiratory diseases have been reported, it is one silent area of energy insecurity. After the Japanese nuclear accident, planners only concentrated on the issue of energy for cities, industries and infrastructure. The plight of biomass burning households persists.

Some Important Events in 2012

During the publication process of this volume from the conference in November 2011 till October 2012 some important events related to climate change, environment, sustainability and biodiversity have been:

- (a) The 17th Conference of Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC and the 7th session of the Meeting of Parties to Kyoto Protocol was held at Durban, South Africa in December 2011. There is immense pressure on developing countries like China, India, Brazil and South Africa to accept legally binding cuts. Developed countries are adamant that all current major ‘polluters’, which include countries like India and China, be included in any future emissions cut agreement. As pointed out by DG IDSA with Akash Gauda, in their comment of 21 December 2011: “While complex negotiations can be expected, stronger action to limit CO₂ emissions will have to await 2020 when a new climate treaty is expected to come into force. Furthermore, mobilising \$100 billion per year in Green Climate Fund at a time when the world is facing the threat of serious economic slowdown will be difficult. At Durban, the parties managed to buy time but failed to show the urgency to tackle climate change issues.” Presently the European Union is again in driving seat besides the “axis of polluters” like the US and Canada who are not members of Kyoto Protocol and Russia and Japan showing their unwillingness as countries which were mandated to take the lead in mitigation by emission reduction. It is clear that the biggest gainers may be the fossil fuel-driven industries of the North and other major polluters. Some advanced economies also want sectoral identification and not all technologies or gases combined under one basket. Black carbon, soot and smog also is part of this idea.
- (b) In June 2012 the UN Conference on Sustainable Development was held at Rio de Janeiro called “Rio + 20 Summit on Sustainable Development”. The summit adopted a 53-page document “The Future We Want”. It reaffirmed or recalled the Agenda 21 of 1992 and the Johannesburg Summit of 2002 which produced a Plan for

Implementation. The principle of common but differentiated responsibility (CBDR) was reaffirmed with the need to eradicate poverty. Overall it must be said that a fatigue of sorts has set in. There is a proliferation of many reports and issue and policy briefs so much so that many environmental and climate change researchers now are getting drowned in elegant reports but see little political commitment by the developed world. For example *Our Common Future* (Brundtland Report 1987) which had stressed sustainable development, has not been followed with any political will. That report has been further reinforced in January 2012 by United Nations Secretary General-inspired report *Resilient People Resilient Planet* which states that by 2030—for a population of nine billion—the world may need 50 per cent more food, 45 per cent more energy and 30 per cent more water.⁵⁸

- (c) The Special Report on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation (SREX), commissioned by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) which was written over two and a half years and compiled by 220 experts, claims to provide the best scientific assessment of the risks and disasters emanating from climate change from an Asian perspective. The report was released in May 2012. It examines how climate extremes, human factors and the environment interact to influence disaster impacts and risk management and adaptation options. It also considers the role of development in exposure and vulnerability, the implications for disaster risk and the interactions between disasters and development as well as human responses to extreme events and disasters could contribute to adaptation objectives and how adaptation to climate change could become better integrated with Disaster Risk Management (DRM) practice. According to Dr Prodipto Ghosh the report is of little policy relevance to India's known position on priorities of poverty alleviation first rather than adaptation. A new definition of climate change is variance to that of UNFCCC's, which now includes natural variations and is no more pure anthropogenic.⁵⁹ It appears that insurance industry is keen to make a killing here. Disaster is treated as another business opportunity and a cottage industry, human security is incidental. Dr Zafar Iqbal Qadir, Chairman, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) of Pakistan on the other hand was for the report. It seems it was in convergence with new practice in Pakistan on Disaster Risk Management (DRM). Pakistan has shifted from practice of DRM to disaster risk reduction (DRR) at all levels. Institutions are being strengthened for this. The new thinking has been triggered by massive floods and loss of 2010 and 2011. The future on agreeing or disagreeing on this within South Asian nations may be an important issue.

- (d) Signed by 150 government leaders at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is dedicated to promoting sustainable development. Conceived as a practical tool for translating the principles of Agenda 21 into reality, the Convention recognizes that biological diversity is about more than plants, animals and micro organisms and their ecosystems—it is about people and our need for food security, medicines, fresh air and water, shelter, and a clean and healthy environment in which to live. Governments are meeting in Hyderabad, India, in October 2012, at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 11) to the Convention on Biological Diversity to agree on the next steps in support of implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-20, agreed at COP 10 in 2010 in Nagoya, Japan.⁶⁰ India has started the process ratifying the Nagoya Protocol—which prevents biopiracy and ensures that local communities will benefit from commercial exploitation of their natural genetic resources. India has been a victim of misappropriation or biopiracy of genetic resources associated with traditional knowledge.⁶¹ The key message is to avoid the tendency among countries to wait till disasters strikes and yet expect species to survive and agriculture to remain unaffected.⁶² There is a rebound on the need to honour and respect traditional knowledge which was junked by the government scientists/policy makers in the past. Also in the exuberance to grow in GDP terms a lot of traditional knowledge, wisdom, common sense and ecosystems have been lost. Ancient cultivars of drought or saline tolerant variety have been lost and now research is being planned to reinvent it for the crisis forthcoming due to salt water intrusion and droughts across the region.

Overall, the outcome is not difficult to see. In climate change slowly the developing countries are getting sucked into adaptation while mitigation on climate change is getting sidelined in the discourse to the advantage of the industrialized countries.

The South Asian Think-Tanks' Efforts

IDSAs has held four annual conferences since 2007 on this issue and its effect on South Asia.⁶³ In the first conference Peljor Dorji, Advisor to the National Environment Commission, Kingdom of Bhutan, was optimistic on individual behaviour, combined with civil society action, and motivated private sector. He suggested initiatives such as paying for carbon offsets associated with travel to such meetings, renewable energy for our homes and vehicles powered by renewable fuels, living in passive solar houses, recycling and composition of green waste, and using public transport, cycling and walking.⁶⁴

The second conference, in November 2008, also picked up certain important environmental issues. Speakers drew attention to environmental issues such as food, water, climate change, energy security⁶⁵ and the need to cooperate from human security perspective on issues such as food security, water, and climate change.⁶⁶ To increase farm productivity, it was pointed out that a shift was essential to reduce vulnerabilities resulting from climate change and inadequate attention to cross-boundary water management.⁶⁷ The most dramatic speech was by Aly Shameem from the Maldives, where he presented Maldivian soil in a jar as a souvenir to commemorate his island nation going under water in the near future due to sea level rise induced by climate change.⁶⁸ Perhaps the most innovative suggestion was the need for research on the cost of non-cooperation by quantifying the economic losses that accrue to the states because of their unwillingness to cooperate with each other.⁶⁹ This is difficult to quantify but is an important future research agenda for think-tanks.

By the time of the third conference, held in November 2009, the environmental consciousness had shown a marked increase. When facing common challenges, single country mentality was urged to be replaced by a regional one, particularly on issues such as harnessing of joint rivers, energy, flood control and sharing of flow data.⁷⁰ Speakers as a ritual spoke on the need to address common issues such as food security, climate change to including glacier melt and inundation of low lying areas.⁷¹ The bulk of critical drivers in future scenarios were related to environmental issues such as demography, economic growth, energy, climate change, food and water security.⁷² The most fundamental question that was raised was whether SAARC has a future. It was argued that environmental issues will propel countries to make a common cause by thinking regionally.⁷³

As the crescendo for the Cancun summit in December 2010 increased, South Asian scholars, fellows and policymakers met in a IDSA-PRIO (International Peace Research Institute, Oslo) Conference on “Climate Change: Political and Security Implications” in Nepal in November 2010.⁷⁴ The conference examined the interface between state security, societal or human security, and climate change in South Asia. As global warming impacts on glaciers, waterways, oceans and weather patterns, the conference conceptualized that there has been a growing realisation that climate change as a global and trans-boundary challenge can only be addressed by enhanced regional cooperation and knowledge sharing across countries. To tackle climate change and water disputes in South Asia the following steps were suggested:

- An international treaty may not be successful. Regional level cooperation will be more useful and meaningful;
- Network of dialogue;
- Capacity building and sharing knowledge;

- Regional coordination and funding;
- Formation of a regional climate change model;
- Strengthening of existing institutions;
- Private and public participation;
- Strengthening and sharing of database;
- Use SAARC structure as template; and
- Inclusion of China in the discussion.

Likewise, many think-tanks in South Asia have been attempting cooperative dialogue on environmental matters. The Consortium of South Asian Think-Tanks (COSATT) organised a conference in June 2011 on “Energy and Environmental Security: A Cooperative Approach in South Asia.” The message from the Secretary General of SAARC was important: she highlighted some initiatives of SAARC in both energy and environment.⁷⁵

Thus, in the think-tank community, it appears there is sufficient overlap on environmental issues and also overlap of scholars interchanging and presenting papers in various seminars. The academic train is chugging on, albeit slowly. Fruits are ripe to be plucked or there is a need to be proactive

Within India

A number of initiatives within India on climate and environment are in progress. At the national level there is the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) with its eight missions. The ninth mission has now been added in 2012 called “National Clean Coal Mission”.⁷⁶ There has also been a mid-term appraisal of the 11th Five Year Plan followed by the release of an approach to the 12th Plan (April 2012 to March 2017). Although these are national documents, the issues and policies are of concern and interest to the neighbourhood.

Institutes of Learning and NGOs

Research conferences on climate change within the country are routine. Climate research networks include the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) with non-governmental organisations (NGO) such as the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE).⁷⁷ Major topics on scientific, technical, economic, and policy aspects of climate change relevant to India are deliberated here. The conference intends to further strengthen a network of climate researchers in the South Asian region. The main goals of this series of conferences are to enhance capacity for climate research and action in India by:

- (a) Developing an arena for promoting interaction among researchers, analysts, and practitioners from across the country;
- (b) Enhancing understanding of the current state of activities and research capabilities in the country and thereby identifying key lacunae;
- (c) Deepening and broadening engagement on the climate issue with a

particular focus on smaller academic institutions, NGOs, and younger scholars;

- (d) Strengthening a sense of ‘community’ among researchers; and
- (e) Exploring ways to more effectively link climate research and action programmes.

The next step must be to pursue regional studies in sync with country-specific ones.



Notes

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The second conference was held from 6-7 November 2011. The full report and presentations can be downloaded from <http://www.cseindia.org/content/second-nationalresearch-conference-climate-change-report>
Good news is that in third edition the conferences being held in November 2012 at the Indian Institute of Science at Bangalore, researchers from all over South Asia are also invited for the first time. This is progress, slow but very important.

15

Water Issues in South Asia: Is Cooperative Security Plausible?

Medha Bisht

Geographically contiguous to each other, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Nepal and Pakistan form the epicentre of hydro-politics in South Asia. Dissected by meandering transboundary rivers, the basins which support life in this geographical landmass are the Indus River Basin and the Ganga, Brahmaputra and Meghna Basin. While the former includes countries such as China, India and Pakistan, the latter constitutes China, Nepal, Bhutan, India and Bangladesh as the primary co-riparians. This chapter is an attempt to situate these two basins within the literature available on water-war thesis. The primary motivation for doing so is to follow cautious optimism, i.e. preempt/identify certain vulnerabilities which can be metamorphosed into contested geo-political spaces at a later stage, thus endangering the reliability, accessibility, affordability and shared use of water resources.

The available literature on the linkages between water and conflict is theoretically and empirically enriching, but two distinct contentious strands can be discerned. The first is termed as scarcity perpetuators and the second as scarcity adaptors. While both these perspectives acknowledge the potential of conflict, they differ on the variables that could shape the trajectory of conflict or cooperation. Both these strands are significant due to their relevance and are pointers towards identifying prevention strategies and facilitating frameworks which can be rewarding in the long term.

There are two research questions which this chapter seeks to address. First, what are the potential hot-spots for the outbreak of water-related conflicts in South Asia and what will be the nature and relation of these conflicts at the inter-state level? This question will help assess the strategic weight of water in

South Asia. Second, why is a cooperative security framework important and what should be its key determinants? This question, supporting the views of scarcity adapters, will lay out the pillars of cooperative security in South Asia. The first section provides a review of the global debates on water scarcity and conflict. The second section focuses on the strategic weight of water. The third section focuses on the nature and relevance of cooperative security in South Asia.

Water Scarcity: Conflict Perpetuator

While the linkages between water and conflict go back to seventh century BC, this section offers a classification of conflicts on the basis of units of analysis. According to various scholars the indicators for conflict lie in the units—either the river basin or the nation-state.¹ While the first perspective employs the *river basin* as the unit of analysis, the second identifies *nation-state* as the basic unit of analysis. The third perspective meanwhile considers the *size of the basin* most important as it proposes that the greater the availability of the resource in the region, the higher the probability of conflict. The main argument is that the length of the shared river traversing a particular country can potentially impact resource use and give rise to conflicts. The primary emphasis of this perspective is on endogenous factors, unlike the first perspective which underlines exogenous factors contributing to conflict. The second perspective, which focuses on nation-state, can be called the mediatory link between endogenous and exogenous factors, through which the conflict interacts.

River Basin—Unit of Analysis

Aaron Wolf, Yoffe and Giordano are the main proponents of this view. Also known as the Oregon School, Wolf et al. consider exogenous factors as most important for perpetuating conflict.² The basic argument proposed by them is that, as institutional capacity of the river basin weakens in response to rapid external changes, conflicts become inevitable. The exogenous indicators for triggering conflict in the region are: (a) emergence of a new management structure in newly created international basin, and (b) physical changes which are a product of policies directed towards unilateral development projects, which are taken in the absence of a cooperative regime. According to this view, there is no direct correlation between conflict and climate change, economic growth, population density and government type. The supporters of this view argue that these factors can influence conflict but are not causally related to it, because the adaptive capacity of institutions in a cooperative regime can help mitigate conflict. Thus size and nature of the basin is irrelevant to the outbreak of conflict.

Offering another perspective, Homer Dixon traces the causality between environmental scarcity and violent conflict.³ Dixon argues that decreasing

supplies of physically controllable water resources, such as clean water and good agricultural land, would provoke interstate “simple scarcity” conflict or resource wars. He considers population growth and unequal social distribution of resources as main factors for perpetuating environmental scarcity. Dixon’s main argument is that reduction in the quantity and quality of a resource shrinks the resource pie, while population growth divides the pie into smaller slices for each individual. Meanwhile, unequal resource distribution means that some groups would get disproportionately high slices, thus creating social discontent and conflict. This supply and demand pattern thus gives rise to two patterns of interaction—resource capture and ecological marginalisation. While Dixon, unlike Wolf, considers resource scarcity to be the primary factor in explaining conflict, he broadly endorses the latter view that the capacity of the state and institutions can give rise to adaptive strategies.

Nation State—Unit of Analysis

Peter Gleick is the main proponent of this perspective and primarily focuses on the potential misbalance between the demand and supply side of water in coming years.⁴ Given the historical precedent of water-induced conflicts, Gleick argues that if resource is the defining factor for determining power (political and economic) of a nation, water can become a potential tool for military action. The behaviour of the state is the primary thrust of analysis and Gleick considered four specific indicators for determining the causal relationship between water and conflict. These are: (a) annual water withdrawals with respect to annual water availability; (b) annual per capita water availability; (c) dependence on exogenous water; (water supply originating from outside the borders of the country); and (d) high dependence on electricity as a fraction of total electricity supply. Highlighting a number of traditional and non-traditional threats which interact at the level of the state, Gleick proposes that access and possession of headwaters can be the primary factors for perpetuating conflicts. While Gleick’s analysis is very similar to that of Homer Dixon, his main focus is on preferences and interests of the states which are vulnerable to the water supply flowing from outside territorial boundaries and the growing water demand which stems from within the territorial boundaries.

Kent Hughes Butts on a similar note, emphasizes the possibility of re-evaluating the concept of strategic resources in the twenty-first century.⁵ Given the rise in population growth, change in climate conditions and the imbalance of water resource supply and demand, Butt argues that water would continue to be a source of tensions, thereby becoming a key variable in future international conflict. He argues that while conflict generally has multiple causes, water will serve as the catalyst to ignite an existing flammable mixture of ethnic, religious or historical enmities. He cautions that from a strategic perspective, competition over scarce water resources could occupy increased importance due to

proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Thus any competition over regional water resources could escalate quickly from noteworthy to significant.

Size of the Basin-Unit of Analysis

The greater the resource, the more conflict it invites, is the view advanced by Gleditsch.⁶ Considering the size and nature of the basin as an important factor in perpetuating conflict, this view argues that the overall size of the basin makes it attractive for the use of military means. The heightened conflict risk is explained through three factors. These are (a) amount of water resources; (b) resources or the production of goods indirectly based on the availability of water and water transportation; and (c) absolute size of the available resources rather than the disparity in distribution. Thus, the length of the river in a particular country or region can potentially impact the resource use of upstream or downstream riparians.

On a similar note, Arun Elhance proposes that physical geography of the basin plays an important role in exacerbating conflict, as it defines the nature and degree of dependence of each riparian state on water resources.⁷ He argues that while by itself unequal distribution or scarcity of natural resources does not necessarily lead to acute inter-state conflict, it is only when severe scarcities of an essential and non-substitutable commodity are experienced or anticipated by one or more states that conflicts take place. Resource conflicts, according to him, can also take place when a water resource is rightly or wrongly perceived as being over exploited or degraded by others at a cost to oneself. He further argues that in the presence of debilitating scarcities, conflict among states may arise from the belligerent, resource expansionist claims of one or more states.

The size of the basin also determines the political equation between the upstream and down-stream riparian. Thus, power asymmetry and the relative power of water resources can be said to influence cooperation and conflict between nations. Some authors argue that cooperation on river basins is more likely to ensue if the hegemon is located in strategically inferior position (i.e. downstream) and if the hegemon's relationship to the water resource is that of critical need. Conversely, cooperation will not be forthcoming if the hegemon is upstream since it holds the strategic geographical position. Thus the primary argument is that the likelihood of cooperation decreases when the hegemon is downstream and is more vulnerable to the action of upstream state.⁸ On the contrary, conflict is likely to increase when the downstream hegemon perceives itself to be more powerful than the upstream country and when the river water is being used to the detriment of the downstream country.

South Asia and the Water War Thesis—A Fragmented Cooperation?

While most of the characteristics outlined above are present in different degrees

in the South Asian hydro-political environment, the tipping point for water conflict is yet to arrive. In fact, on the contrary, “frameworks” on water have been negotiated and South Asia can be identified as a region marked with institutionalized cooperation. While one might debate the effectiveness and nature of these frameworks, there is hardly any dispute on the fact that the bilateral mechanisms have provided some case, even though it is for a fragmented cooperation of sorts. Though in most cases, South Asian states have chosen cooperation vis-a-vis conflict, one has to be nevertheless aware that changes are setting in and there is no guarantee that the future would replicate a similar path dependent behaviour. Brahma Chellaney argues that the security-related dimensions of water need to be viewed against the larger Asian strategic landscape and the sharpening resource-related competition among Asian economies. As Asia is in flux, and power equations between the major players are still evolving, water, according to Chellaney, will emerge as a key determinant on the Asian strategic landscape. In this context, he also writes “managing inter-state water disputes in Asia is likely to become increasingly challenging.”⁹ Similarly, Steven Solomon writes, “just as oil conflicts played a central role in defining history of the 1900s, the struggle to command increasingly scarce, usable water resources are set to shape the destinies of societies and the world order of the twenty-first century.”¹⁰

Given the evolving nature of debates, the following section identifies certain indicators which symbolize the strategic weight of water in the coming years. It is assumed that variables such as climate change, economic growth, and leadership will play a defining role in determining the strategic weight of water and the potential trajectory of conflict and cooperation.

The Strategic Weight of Water

This section is based on the likely impact of water in the coming years. It is assumed that water will be a scarce commodity, thus increasing its strategic weight in the coming years. Both traditional and non-traditional challenges will determine the trajectory of water conflict in South Asia. Some hot-spots which will be most vulnerable to water conflicts are: Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh and Tibet. Other issues of relevance, primarily of a non-traditional nature, which could be a catalyst to water-induced conflicts are: unilateral water resource development policies, migration, economic growth, food security, a state’s water dependence, climate change and iniquitous social development. As food and water are intertwined with climate change, energy, and demography, these factors will interact at multiple levels.¹¹ The potential impact of these issues—as indicators of conflict—are studied under three categories viz., (a) geo-political hotspots; (b) the demand-supply equation of water; and (c) social inequalities within states.

Geo-Political Hotspots

The geo-strategic hotspots which will be of strategic relevance in South Asia are: Tibet, Arunachal Pradesh and Kashmir. Water assets located in these areas might accelerate conflict thereby freezing or sharpening postures of the concerned riparians (Pakistan, China and India). The strategic importance of these territories will stem from the location of headwaters or the presence of major rivers flowing through them.¹² While Kashmir and Tibet fall in the former category, Arunachal Pradesh, due to the claiming tactics of China, will witness a spate of reactive dam building activities. Though China has officially abandoned the idea of diversion, given the domestic constraints, such a possibility cannot be entirely discarded.¹³

Tibet, also known as the roof of world, is the source of major rivers flowing into South Asia (Indus, Sutlej, Brahmaputra, Arun, Kosi). China's privileged position as an upstream riparian makes it a water hegemon, thus creating political anxieties for downstream riparians, particularly India. Concerns over water in Tibet have been raised on grounds of water diversion, mismanagement and quality of water.¹⁴ While the ecological impact of upstream activities in Tibet would raise a significant alarm, the spillover could have strategic resonance. As China turns rigid on claiming Arunachal Pradesh, it could well be possible that India revisits its Tibet policy.¹⁵

Dam-building activities have already gained tempo in Arunachal Pradesh. While it has evoked a strong response from the Indian civil society, given the strategic linkages to "existing use", voices and the rationale of the anti-dam groups have failed to influence policymakers on ecological costs embedded in these activities. In the coming years, as water becomes a scarce commodity, Arunachal, with its water abundance and low population density could invite significant immigrants from neighbouring states. Apprehensions such as these are already being anticipated by the local Arunachalis. The local Adi population in East Siang is against building of mega dams for fear of outsider influx and environmental degradation.¹⁶ The age-group of Arunachalis opposing such dams ranges from 20 to 40 years, which is a significant issue, as the views of this young population will impact a generation of both the young and the old in the next 20-30 years. Goswami further adds that the young people are ready to pick up arms in order to protect their land and rivers.¹⁷

In India's western flank, political rhetoric in Pakistan on water, which elevates the topic as a core issue at par with Kashmir, also needs attention. It was during the rule of President Pervez Musharraf that the linkage between water and Kashmir gathered pace. As early as 1959, F.J. Fowler wrote that for Pakistan the most important question relating to Kashmir was the threat of interference with vital water supplies, and that there were concerns that the construction of reservoirs in the Upper Valleys of Chenab and Jhelum could be used to store

surplus summer flow for use in autumn and winter, but then the linkage between Kashmir and water remained a minority view.¹⁸ This was most apparent, when Radcliffe had suggested before Partition, that the Punjab water system be run jointly by both countries. While Jinnah responded by saying that he would rather have the Pakistan deserts than fertile fields watered by courtesy of Hindus, Nehru retorted by saying that what India did with its rivers was India's affair. An assessment of the political discourse within Pakistan reveals that the army, jihadists, politicians and other hardline groups, farmers' organisations, and retired engineers are the most vociferous groups articulating concerns about the dam building spree in the Indian side of Kashmir.¹⁹ If such voices become central in Pakistan, prospects of India-Pakistan rapprochement would be minimized, paving way for water-induced conflicts.

Pakistan occupied Kashmir is another potential flashpoint in the coming years. China's role in building and financing physical infrastructure and highways has led to an influx of 7000-11,000 soldiers of the People's Liberation Army into the Gilgit and Baltistan areas.²⁰ Handing over de facto control of this strategic region in the northwest corner of disputed Kashmir to China, as Selig Harrison points out, would give China a grip on the region and an unfettered road and rail access to the Gulf through Pakistan. He also points out that 22 tunnels are being constructed, which can serve a dual purpose, viz., importing gas from the Gulf region and second the potential use of tunnels as missile storage sites.²¹ Aware of these concerns, India for its part, has raised objections on the construction of Bunji and Diamer-Bhasha dam in a disputed territory.²² However, Pakistan has rejected such objection from India. The diplomatic stalemate could continue, with such issues getting a sharper focus in the coming years.

Supply-Demand Equation

The supply-demand equation is another conflict perpetuator when it comes to water issues. While the supply side of water will be impacted by climate change, limited infrastructural capacity in water-dependent states combined with dependency on water inflow from beyond the territorial boundaries, the demand side will be impacted by demographic pressures, rapid industrialisation and growing concerns vis-à-vis energy and food security. As most of the states share contiguous boundaries, spill-over effects of the supply-demand chain are inevitable and would be most visible in migrant inflow to areas which are water abundant and have low density of population. Public health will be another area of concern, putting pressures on public health infrastructure. Given the nature of South Asian politics, such issues will have a bearing on democratic accountability, and given its trans-boundary dimension it will assume an inter-state dimension. Thus, political rhetoric on national security in this case will elevate water at par with national interest. Some key elements of national interest

will be reliability, accessibility and quality of water. This supply-demand equation, in other words, will give rise to riparian tensions, and could impact regional stability by giving rise to inter-riparian disputes thus accelerating the strategic weight of water in South Asia.

A recent study by Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) reveals that 75 per cent of the Himalayan glaciers are on the retreat, with the average shrinkage being 3.75 km during the 15 years under study (1989-2004). The project was commissioned by the Union Ministry of Environment and Forests, India. The study included the basins of the Indus, Ganga and Brahmaputra, as well as parts of China, Nepal, Bhutan and Pakistan.²³ As a consequence of glacial melting, while the initial impact could be manifested in seasonal variations of river flows, later rivers at lower altitudes could dry up, leading to the occurrence of frequent droughts in the region. Given that the vegetation coverage in the Ganga Brahmaputra-Meghna and Indus Water Basin is just 20 per cent and 39 per cent respectively, it will be further pressured by the pace of the construction of hydel projects and water mismanagement. In addition, problems related to sedimentation and waterlogging could get further aggravated. This could have significant impact on the lives and livelihood of people inhabiting Northern and North-Eastern India, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal and Bangladesh.²⁴ Studies on the impact of climate change also propose sea-level rise which would extend areas of salinization of groundwater and estuaries, thus leading to a decrease of freshwater availability for humans and ecosystems in coastal areas. Southern parts of Pakistan and Bangladesh and coastal areas of India will be most affected by this. A Climate Change Vulnerability Index, 2011, puts South Asian countries Bangladesh (1), India (2), Nepal (4) and Pakistan (16) in the highest/extreme risk category.²⁵ The associated risks in the region, it points out, would be due to climate-related natural disasters, resource security and conflict.

Water dependency in South Asia is high. The most water dependent nations in South Asia, which get their water flows from outside their territorial boundaries, are Bangladesh—91 per cent and Pakistan—75 per cent. While the relative dependence of India on exogenous water supply is low, water scarcity in both countries will rope India into riparian disputes. Another way to gauge water dependence is by assessing the overall rate of water withdrawal. Primarily agricultural economies, in South Asian nations use water proportionately more in the agricultural than the industrial sector. In fact, withdrawal of water for agricultural purposes is the highest in South Asia.²⁶ For China and India, which alone produce and consume about half of global rice supplies,²⁷ the total withdrawal rates are 426.85 cubic km and 558.39 cubic km respectively.²⁸ This pattern and pace of withdrawal is a growing concern as it put pressures on the water demand. This is quite different from the water withdrawals for industrial purposes, as the withdrawn water comes back to their source after cooling the plant. The cause of concern thus in industrialized countries is about the quality

of water, unlike Asian countries where the rate of withdrawal puts a direct impact on the quantity of water.²⁹ With water scarcity, the pace of withdrawals will come under great pressure, thus making water abundant regions a strategic resource.

The nexus between water and energy and quality and quantity of water will also become sharper, given the pace of industrialisation. While this is at the heart of the water challenge in China, such problems are also being witnessed by Bhutan, India and Bangladesh. In China the Hai, Huang (Yellow) and Huai basins are most affected, prone to rising environmental pressures as well as limited availability of additional water supply.³⁰ The Huang, Hai and Huai basins also form the part of larger agricultural region constituting the North China plain.³¹ The Huai river basin has come to epitomize the over-exploitation and contamination of water resources: the basin is clogged with toxic effluents from industries along its banks, and some of its fishing villages are troubled by exceptionally high cancer rates.³²

Meanwhile, mining activities in Bhutan are being opposed by lower riparian Assam on account of the deteriorating quality of the Brahmaputra.

Exploitation of Tibetan natural resources also poses an ecological threat to downstream riparians. While extraction of mineral resources is leading to the contamination of river waters, deforestation, which has weakened the ecological health of the subcontinent, has found linkages to floods in Arunachal Pradesh and Bangladesh.³³

Bangladesh for its part has expressed concerns on contaminated ground water, due to extensive industrial activities undertaken in India. As low water availability leads to further extraction of ground water resources, an IPCC report points out, some regions of India, China and Bangladesh could suffer from arsenic poisoning and fluorosis (a disease of the teeth or bones caused by excessive consumption of fluoride in drinking water). Further, in densely populated coastal areas of Bangladesh and India, desalination costs may be excessive.³⁴ Bangladesh will be the most affected in terms of public health impact as, according to one estimate, the natural occurrence of arsenic in the groundwater is posing a problem, particularly in rural areas where contaminated groundwater sources are extracted for drinking and cooking. A programme of testing wells showed that millions of people are consuming water with higher than recommended levels of arsenic, and that more and more people are facing the visible health effects of this. Already, the presence of arsenic has led to reduced crop productivity, contributing to food shortages in Bangladesh.³⁵ As these symptoms find familiarity in other water stressed regions of South Asia, the overall impact of contaminated water will be a potential threat to public health and human security, posing a significant national security concern for countries.

Social Inequalities within States

Social inequality within South Asian states will be the third indicator for exacerbating water conflicts. The gap between the haves and the have-nots will increase pressure on resources. While the rich will be able to pay the price, the poor will suffer due to resource constraints. Although the rate of poverty in South Asian countries has shown sharp decline since the 1990s,³⁶ it has not been enough to reduce the total number of poor people. According to Ejaz Ghani, Economic Advisor at the World Bank, South Asia is home to the largest concentration of people living in debilitating poverty and social deprivation.³⁷ Reduction of inequality is often associated with pro-poor growth. While China, India and other South Asian countries show an increase in growth they also indicate an increase in inequality.³⁸

As water scarcity in the face of growing population leads to a decline in grain exports, food prices would rise. The rising grain prices can lead to widespread strikes, even jeopardizing regime stability in various countries. Further, the rise in food prices, will mostly hit the have-nots, and people living in rural areas.³⁹ Given that the vast majority of poor people live in South Asian countries, the environment will be more conducive for violent outbursts. As rising discontent takes roots, the capacity of the state to absorb opposition from the masses will be tested. While vandalism, riots and strikes will become a common feature, coalition politics will be a bane for democracy leading to political instability. In order to facilitate the interests of the constituencies, vote bank politics will be played out. Domestic linkages to resource scarcity will thus play a spoilers role in inter-state water negotiations, often freezing the position of various states on water rights. There have already been instances of riots in Pakistan and Bangladesh and India. Such instances would only increase in the coming years. The most direct impact of domestic water woes can be seen in India-China, India-Bangladesh and India-Pakistan relations.

These accounts reveal that while water and food security is important, equally important is the linkage between social inequality and its relation to political stability. Domestic instability will feed into regional water politics, making engagement and negotiations over water difficult and complicated. Given that the strategic weight of water is a reality, conflicts could be of various kinds—military,⁴⁰ economic⁴¹ and diplomatic stalemate. The hot spots for diplomatic stalemate will be the Indus water river Basin, military conflict could arise in Arunachal Pradesh, while Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Bhutan could witness economic conflict.

The gravity of these plausible futures thus requires a framework on cooperative security. This framework can be used as a preemptive tool to transform conflict into cooperation.

Engaging Water in South Asia

Is cooperative security plausible in South Asia? While the basic thrust of this question indicates that cooperative security is absent in South Asia, there have been some remarkable efforts by the co-riparian states to negotiate agreements with each other.⁴² However, the lacuna with the current approach is that they are primarily bilateral rather than multilateral. The reason for a bilateral rather than a multilateral approach lies in the nature of geographical location and bilateral relationship between riparians. For instance, India is sensitive to its lower riparian location when it comes to construction of hydel projects in Nepal.⁴³ However, this is not the case with Bhutan, where many projects overlooking the Indian states have been built in the last three decades

In the case of Pakistan and Bangladesh, India is an upper riparian country. While the nature of water agreements negotiated between both countries are different, the issues which feed disputes are familiar. The issues which are a centre of political traction are construction of physical infrastructure and the quantity of water inflow. As noted before being water dependent on external flows, the issue of contention is water supply. While in India-Bangladesh it is water allocation, in India-Pakistan it is interference in water supplies due to construction of dams upstream.

A study by Ken Conca revealed that agreements in Asia were much more likely to invoke sovereign reservations of rights than agreements in Europe and the Americas, where the basin level cooperation had a longer institutional history. It was found that in the basin treaties concluded during 1980-2000 (case studies by Wolf) and 1980-2000 (case studies compiled by Conca) there was a pattern of fragmented cooperation and the most common agreement by the ratio of two to one in multilateral basin was a bilateral agreement.⁴⁴ Such assertions have political explanations and, as such patterns are common in multilateral basins, South Asia can be considered no exception.

If basin level consensus is difficult in negotiating agreements, how can a cooperative security framework be actualized in South Asia?

The answer to this perhaps can be situated by identifying the norms of cooperative security required for river basin cooperation. According to the 1997 UN Convention on the Law of the Non-Navigational Use of International Watercourses, the principal reference points for basin level cooperation are: equitable use, avoiding significant harm to other water course states, sovereign equality and territorial integrity, information exchange, consultation, prior notification, environmental protection and peaceful dispute resolution. If one assesses the applicability of these norms to South Asian environment, cooperation on some of the issues already exists. The effort thus needs to be directed on broadening the participation of member-countries and deepening the nature of cooperation on specific issue areas. The issues most conducive to cooperation

would be those areas which have already received some consensus from the riparian states. Such a cooperative framework can help the building of trust and management of riparian perceptions as they arise in future. In other words, such an approach can be used to create a framework conducive for engagement and improvement of political relations.

Charting a cooperative security framework is important in South Asia, primarily because of the conflict potential. As mentioned, this strategic weight of water can put pressures on the South Asian countries. Also, the existing approach on focusing bilateral agreements has become fragile and prone to domestic sensitivities and operational procedures. It's a sensitive issue in bilateral relations, raising questions of reliability, security and quality of water.

Cooperative security can be broadly understood as a preventive measure, where states engage through institutionalised consent rather than through threats or physical coercion. While it assumes that disputes between states in international politics are expected to occur, they are expected to do so within the limits of agreed upon norms and established procedures. The concept also emphasizes that conceptualizing cooperative security is not a radical departure from the past, but is a conscious recognition and elaboration of existing trends.⁴⁵

Given this understanding, it is important to underline the urgency of working towards a cooperative security framework on water issues. The motivations could also be drawn from global and regional level uncertainties. While the global level developments indicate a shift of power to Asia, the rise of China, and interference of external powers, at the regional level a cooperative security framework becomes important due to its linkages to regional peace and security and geographical contiguity and ecological interdependence.

The rise of Asia has given rise to an interesting debate on the nature of changing power equations (both political and military) at the international level.⁴⁶ Brahma Chellaney, in his latest book *Water—Asia's New Battleground*, questions this assertion by stating that "the rise and fall of powers in Asia could be influenced by water in much the same way that oil in the past century played a key role in determining the ascent and decline of states."⁴⁷ Water scarcity, he argues, will be the major reason for straining inter-riparian relations, thus making the region volatile in the coming years. As the rise of China will play an important role in the rise of Asia, a water hegemon China can cause unease in the South Asian region,⁴⁸ thus paving the way for riparian competition and uncertainty, rather than conflict. Economic development has been identified as China's core foreign policy interest. Important for China's social stability, resource stress can not only derail its rise, but also force it to adopt policies which are detrimental to the interests of the downstream neighbours.

Due to the asymmetry of power relations between countries and the absence of water agreement or conflict resolution capability, the smaller states will resort

to internationalising the water issue. Whether it is Bangladesh or Pakistan, such moves will make the international rivers in South Asia prone to external power interference, an issue which can have potential impact on Chinese behaviour and diplomacy in South Asia. In order to avoid such scenarios, it is important that a framework on consensual understanding on trans-boundary water issues be discussed and identified.

As far as the regional level factors are concerned, a cooperative security framework can play an important role in fostering regional peace and stability. Confidence building and improved political relations to a great extent depend on the gravity of water politics in South Asia. Moreover, the water ecology is interdependent and any change in high glaciers impacts the flow of the river into the delta below. This inter-dependence is not only visible in surface water resources but also ground water, as the land area is contiguous. Over-exploitation of ground water resources in India will have an inevitable impact in Bangladesh and Nepal both in terms of quantity and quality. Groundwater level has already been depleting in Pakistan due to the massive use of tube wells. Sources claim that the rise in the number of private tube wells in Pakistan, particularly Punjab, as a preferred source of water, has given rise to intensive aquifer mining, so much so that mining of groundwater has reached to a point that the aquifers would be lost in 5-10 years.⁴⁹ Also, over a period of time, due to evaporation, tube well usage has proved costly to downstream states like Sindh, leading to a deterioration of soil quality. Some figures claim that over 50 per cent of land in canal command areas in Sindh is affected by salinity.⁵⁰

Important and urgent as these concerns are, cooperative security framework in South Asia should consist of three basic pillars. These are:

Regional: In various empirical studies, institutional capacity to mitigate conflict has been considered an important factor in building confidence and providing certainty. While South Asian nations have been engaging each other on a bilateral basis, a regional forum to discuss issues related to flood management, afforestation, data sharing on river flows, dredging and siltation should be undertaken on periodic basis. Review meetings should be held to monitor the progress in the area. Constituting a regional mechanism on this issue will not be a problem, given that bilateral cooperation between countries on issues such as flood management is in progress and has deepened. India's engagement with countries such as Pakistan and Nepal should pace up on this front. China should be invited to participate in such forums.

National: The countries should focus on research and development and technological innovation. Technological development will be a major tool which could minimise water stress and enhance water availability and quality in South Asia. Facilitating effective use of water through sprinkler and drip irrigation

method rather than fixed allocation of water, it could be an effective antidote to solving problems regarding the supply side of water equation. Technological ingenuity would also help in desalination and the construction of coastal and flood defence infrastructure in coastal areas of India, Bangladesh and Pakistan could contain threat of sea level rise. Technological ingenuity would also mitigate adaptation mechanisms for glacial lake outburst flooding Nepal, Bhutan and North-East India. Countries and corporations which have an edge over water technology like Israel, Japan and the European Union could become important players in South Asia. Technology could also be employed towards repowering existing plants with more powerful and efficient turbine designs, which would be cost-effective. Meanwhile, the development and application of technological advances could change many people's lives for the better. For example, a simple, effective and affordable arsenic removal technology could help protect the health of millions of people. In addition, water detecting technologies for exploring water availability is an area which will gain ground and should be a focus area of investment in South Asia.

Local: Social ingenuity can play a significant role and should be emphasized along with technological ingenuity.⁵¹ Technology cannot solve all problems, as solutions to water scarcity lie in the management of water sector, water management challenges need to be undertaken seriously in individual South Asian countries. Management challenges can be focused on rectifying transmission and distribution losses—leakage checks, implementation of water pricing, strengthening of community groups, farmer and user associations and implementation and monitoring of equitable water distribution practices. Local community groups should be linked with local governance structures. The bureaucratic machinery could play a major role in social ingenuity. As local actions have been considered the most effective way of managing water woes, governance over water related issues and inclusive economic development which emphasizes a level playing field in social and development policies can be considered a prerequisite for enabling social ingenuity. Social ingenuity can also be considered the first step to sustainable growth.

The framework for cooperative security thus needs to be operationalized at multiple levels. The reason for this is the interdisciplinary nature of water. While the effect of water mismanagement can have regional and even international ramification, the causes for such ramifications indeed lie at the national and the local level.



Notes

1. In the seventh century B.C. Ashurbanipal of Assyria seized control of water wells as part of his strategy for Desert Warfare in Arabia. See, Peter H. Gleick, "Water and Conflict," *International Security*, Vol. 18 (1), Summer 1993, p. 85.

2. Aaron T. Wolf, Shira B. Yoffe and Mark Giordano, "International Waters: Identifying Basins at Risk," *Water Policy*, Vol. 5 (1), 2003.
3. Thomas F. Homer Dixon, "Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflicts: Evidence from Cases," *International Security*, Vol. 19 (1), Summer 1994.
4. Peter H. Gleick, "Water and Conflict," *International Security*, Vol. 18 (1), Summer 1993.
5. Kent Hughes Butts, "The Strategic Importance of Water," *Parameters*, Spring 1997.
6. Nils Petter Gleditsch, Kathryn Furlong, Havard Hegre, Brthany Lacina, Taylor Owen, "Conflicts over shared rivers: Resources scarcity or Fuzzy Boundaries?," *Political Geography*, No. 25, 2006.
7. Arun P. Elhance, *Hydro-politics in the Third World*, United States Institute for Peace, Washinton D.C., 1999, pp. 4-6.
8. Dinar Shlomi, *International Water Treaties: Negotiation and Cooperation Along Transboundary Rivers*, Routledge, London & New York, 2008, pp. 17-18.
9. Brahma Chellaney, *Water: Asia's New Battleground*, HarperCollins, 2011, p. 2 and 16.
10. Steven Solomon, *Water: The Epic Struggle for Wealth, Power and Civilisation*, HarperCollins, New York, 2010, p. 367.
11. National Intelligence Council, *2025 Global Trends: A Transformed World*, 2008. p. 60.
12. Brahma Chellaney, no. 9, p. 48.
13. Ananth Krishnan, "China rules out Brahmaputra Diversion," *The Hindu*, 13 October 2011, at <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/article2532283.ece>
14. China's development programme in Tibet include logging its forests, extraction of its minerals, expansion of urban areas, sizeable population transfer, building of dams and hydro power plants, and construction of military roads and railways. All of these policies were designed to benefit the Chinese Government and the Eastern industrial provinces, at a heavy cost for the Tibetan people and the Plateau's fragile ecosystem
15. See Sujit Dutta, "Revisiting China's Claim on Arunachal," *Strategic Analysis*, 32(4), 2008, pp. 549-581; Uttam Kr Sinha, "Tibet's Watershed Challenge," *Washington Post*, 14 June 2010, at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/06/18/AR2010061805187.html>
16. Namrata Goswami, "China's Claim on Arunachal Pradesh: Local Perspectives," IDSA Issue Brief, 7 July 2011, at http://www.idsa.in/system/files/IB_ChinasClaimonArunachalPradesh.pdf, p.12.
17. Ibid.
18. F.J. Fowler, "Some Problems of Water Distribution between East and West Punjab," *Geographical Review*, Vol. 40(4), October 1950, p. 598.
19. For more details on such concerns in Pakistan, see, Medha Bisht, "The Politics of Water Discourse in Pakistan," ICRIER Policy Brief, August 2011, at http://www.icrier.org/pdf/Policy_Series_No_4.pdf.
20. Selig Harrison, "China's Discreet Hold on Pakistan's Northern Borderlands," *The New York Times*, 26 August 2010, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/27/opinion/27iht-edharrison.html>
21. Selig Harrison, "China's Discreet Hold on Pakistan's Northern Borderlands," *The New York Times*, 26 August 2010, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/27/opinion/27iht-edharrison.html>
22. See: "Pakistan throws out Indian Protests," *The Nation*, 12 September 2009, at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2009-09-12/news/28421043_1_india-objects-protest-note-pok; "India to verify reports of Chinese Reports of PoK: MEA," *The Economic Times*, 30 August 2010, at http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2010-08-30/news/27603366_1_gilgit-baltistan-high-speed-rail-and-road-ormaraejects-indian-protest-gilgit-baltistan-bunji-dam.html; "India objects to China's involvement at PoK," *Live Mint*, 14

- October 2009, at <http://www.livemint.com/2009/10/14233250/India-objects-to-China8217s.html>
23. SANDRP, Dams, River and People, Vol. 9(8-9), September-October 2011, at http://www.sandrp.in/drp/Sept_Oct_2011.pdf.
 24. The impact of these changes will however vary in the respective countries.
 25. "Big economies of the future—Bangladesh, India, Philippines, Vietnam and Pakistan—most at risk from climate change," *Maple Croft*, 10 October 2010, at <http://maplecroft.com/about/news/ccvi.html>.
 26. South Asia withdraws 895 cubic kilometres of water for agricultural purposes followed by East Asia-693 cubic km, Near East and North Africa—274 cubic km, Latin America-187 cubic km and Sub-Saharan Africa—97 cubic km, at http://www.fao.org/nr/water/aquastat/water_use/index5.stm
 27. Brahma Chellaney, no. 9, p.34.
 28. http://www.fao.org/nr/water/aquastat/water_use/irrwatuse.htm (accessed 11 October 2012).
 29. Ashok Swain, "Water Wars: Facts and Fiction," *Futures*, No. 33, 2002, p.3.
 30. *Ibid.*, p.111.
 31. Lillian M. Li, *Fighting Famine in North China: State, Market and Environmental Decline*, Stanford University Press, Stanford, 2007, p. 22.
 32. Brahma Chellaney, no. 9, p. 105.
 33. *Ibid.*, p. 120.
 34. "Climate Change and Water, Technical Paper VI," IPCC, June 2008, at <http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/technical-papers/climate-change-water-en.pdf>.
 35. DFID, Bangladesh in 2030, A DFID Horizon Scan, DFID, Bangladesh, 2007, p. 3, at http://s3.amazonaws.com/zanran_storage/www.dfid.gov.uk/ContentPages/25286844.pdf.
 36. India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan have been termed as "great improvers", making it to the top ten movers list in the Human Development Index, at <http://www.ftkmc.com/newsletter/Vol1-47-feb7-2011.pdf>.
 37. The number of poor people in South Asia has increased from 549 million people in 1981 to 595 million people in 2005. Ijaz Ghani, "Is growth incomplete without social progress? South Asia's development paradox", 13 March 2011, at <http://www.voxeu.org/index.php?q=node/6204>
 38. Indicators for social progress which is a pointer to the South Asian grown paradox, reveals that health infrastructure is weak in South Asia as India, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan are worst affected by tropical diseases. Also South Asia has the highest rates of mal-nutrition and the largest number of under nourished children in the world. Thus human development in all South Asian countries has lagged behind. Ejaz Ghani, "The South Asian Development Paradox: Can Social Outcomes Keep Pace with Growth?," No. 23, at <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPREMNET/Resources/EP53.pdf>.
 39. Food Price Increases in South Asia, 2011, at http://siteresources.worldbank.org/SOUTHASIAEXT/Resources/223546-1269620455636/6907265-1287693474030/South_Asia_Regional_Food_Prices_Final.pdf.
 40. Military conflict generally occurs when two opposing nations revert to the use of violent force to dispute conflicts through fighting. The nation or state with the most powerful military uses the nation's military as leverage in negotiations to reach a compromise or understanding.
 41. Economic conflict occurs when there is a disagreement over the distribution of wealth of a state or nation-state. There is often conflict within a state when resources are scarce and must be rationed across its population. When resources become scarce, especially in wartime, the government or other special interests that have power in a state or nation-state control the distribution of wealth and resources of the state. As the government has the power to appropriate and distribute goods, it leads to struggles by other minority groups, the results could manifest in strikes, violence against public property, and lockouts.

42. The water agreements between India and her neighbours are governed by bilateral treaties and frameworks. While partitioning of rivers into Western and Eastern rivers prominently defines the framework for Indus Water Treaty, sharing of river waters is the defining element of the Ganges Water Treaty and Teesta water sharing between India and Bangladesh. Meanwhile, development of water resource projects to meet irrigation and energy needs have largely shaped India-Nepal relations. Similarly, India-Bhutan relations are largely determined by an element of “diffused” reciprocity directed towards generation of hydel projects. India and China do not share any bilateral water agreement, though both countries have a joint expert level mechanism in place, established in 2003, to discuss issues relating to trans-boundary rivers. A Memorandum of Understanding for providing hydrological information (water level, discharge and rainfall) on the Brahmaputra was also signed by both countries in 2002.
43. This is one of the primary reasons that proposals from Bangladesh in the past have been rejected. Bangladesh for its part has expressed interest in multilateral water cooperation between India-Nepal and Bangladesh. Its main concerns stem from flood control and augmentation of the river flow during the lean season. Bangladesh considers dams in Nepal an attractive option, as it is argued that they could store water, which could be released during the dry season, thus augmenting the inflow of water into its territory.
44. Ken Conca, Fengshi Wu, Joanne Neukirchen, “Is there a global rivers regime?”, A Harrison Programme Research Report, September 2003, p.13.
45. Janne E. Nolan, “*Global Engagement: Cooperation and Security in the 21st Century*,” The Brookings Institution, Washington D.C, 1994, pp.8-9.
46. For some interesting strands in the debate see, Kishore Mahbubani, “The Case Against the West,” *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2008; G John Ikenberry, “The Rise of China and future of the West,” *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2008; John Mearsheimer, “The Rise of China will not be peaceful at all,” *The Australian*, 14 November, 2005.
47. Brahma Chellaney, no.9, p. 8.
48. John Mearsheimer, “The Rise of China will not be peaceful at all,” *The Australian*, 14 November 2005, at <http://mearsheimer.uchicago.edu/pdfs/P0014.pdf>.
49. Simi Kamal, “Pakistan’s Water Challenges: Entitlement, Access, Efficiency, and Equity”, in Kugelman and Hathaway (eds.), *Running on Empty: Pakistan’s Water Crises*, Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, Washington, 2009, p.28.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 55.
51. The idea is advanced by Thomas Homer-Dixon in “The Ingenuity Gap? Can Poor Countries Adapt to Resource Scarcity?”, *Population Council*, Vol. 21 (3), September 1995. Dixon considers ingenuity an important indicator for adapting to resource scarcity. Ingenuity has been defined as ideas applied to solve practical social and technical problems. While it does not mean innovation, it does emphasize the ability to solve problems. Human ingenuity in particular is considered as the greatest asset for any state to solve scarcity related issues.

PART-IV

The Way Ahead

16

A Consensus Document

A Proposed Cooperative Security Framework for South Asia¹

The Concept

The concept of security has expanded considerably to include a wide range of issues like population, food, energy, information, society, environment (climate change, natural disasters), human and drug trafficking, migration, economic instability, pandemics, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and transnational terrorism, which have their impact on 'security'. Such expansion has given rise to new opportunities for cooperation. Moreover, there is the recognition that, in view of their international linkages in a post-globalised world, no country would be able to deal with them alone. This has made the states in some parts of the world to adopt a cooperative security framework setting aside issues that divide them, and ensure peace and prosperity for their people.

A cooperative security architecture/framework is usually based on common threat perceptions as well as existing frameworks of regional cooperation. Such a framework/architecture enables regular dialogue on security issues among countries at both official and non-official levels and helps to evolve a regional consensus on how to deal with common threats in a cooperative manner. It involves establishment of many institutions or organisations aimed at promoting security—both traditional and non-traditional—across the states, at the regional level.

There are differing views on how states with conflicting security interests can be brought together to discuss hard security issues. In the conference, some analysts held that regular dialogue among states on hard security issues—within any existing regional forum (say SAARC) or outside it—would be helpful in dealing with the basic issue of trust deficit. Without this, they would argue, cooperation in other areas may not be possible. However, there was another view that it would be better to start discussing non-traditional security issues,

where there is mutual understanding among states, and initiate collective action to address these issues. This would prepare the ground for fruitful dialogue on hard security issues later. There is yet another view that in case of regions divided by legacy and identity related issues, initiating sub-regional cooperation and setting up successful examples, can provide the impetus for effective regional security dialogue involving both hard and soft security issues.

The South Asian Case

In the South Asian context, the concept of cooperative security is hardly discussed. Given the complexity of the hard security issues that divide various countries, discussion on these issues at a regional level, especially in a forum like SAARC, has been regarded as inimical to regional cooperation. Therefore, the SAARC charter actively discourages discussion on any controversial bilateral issues. Even outside SAARC, there is relatively little discussion at bilateral or multilateral levels on regional security issues. The absence of such regional dialogue on security issues has created an atmosphere of mutual suspicion and distrust in the region. The reasons for perpetuation of such an environment are several.

The Constraints

There is no meeting of minds on security issues. The countries in the region look at their security from a zero-sum perspective. Moreover, there are foundational problems affecting inter-state relations—historical legacies, problems of national identity construction, overlapping ethnic, cultural and linguistic identities, negative perceptions about each other and use of asymmetric means to weaken the capacity of perceived adversary, absence of a coalition of forces across borders to reinforce the official efforts at integration, and lack of initiative from India, the strongest state in the region to strengthen the process of regional cooperation.

There are also structural reasons like power asymmetry between India and other states, and disruptive role of external powers in the region. The former gives rise to unreasoned fear of India while the latter inhibits the process of regional integration and strengthens authoritarian systems in many states. Consequently, there is an overspending of diplomatic energy in dealing with the negative influence of external powers.

Failure to establish cooperation at the economic level has cost each state dearly. This has had negative impact on efforts at cooperation in other fields. There is no effort at the pan-regional level to assess the costs of non-cooperation in South Asia.

The Enablers

Despite the constraints, there is a growing feeling in South Asia that countries

in the region should discuss soft-security issues like the ones identified above, which concerns all of them, and evolve a way of working together to address them effectively. This has led the countries under SAARC to work in a cooperative manner on common non-traditional security threats like terrorism, drug trafficking, natural disasters and climate change. They are trying to find a way of working together to ensure food, water, environmental, human and energy security for their people.

Another welcome change has been regular holding of bilateral discussions at the highest level on the sidelines of the SAARC summits. The growth of Indian economy at a relatively consistent pace has brought about yet another positive change in the regional economic scenario. It has translated into a new found confidence in India's approach to the neighbourhood. India now has the ability and it has displayed its intent to play a leading role both inside SAARC and outside it. In fact, India's bilateral relationship with its neighbours has undergone a qualitative change. India is inviting its neighbours to participate in its growing economy and benefit from it and at the same time emphasising on regional economic cooperation.

There is the realisation that the South Asian region is well placed to take advantage of the demographic dividend with its high density of younger population, if they choose to work together. This will require political will and change of mindsets. These issues were discussed at length in the conference and following recommendations were made.

The Way Forward: Recommendations

The participants in the conference agreed that there was an increasing scope for multilateral cooperation on security matters in South Asia. They believed that progress in cooperation on non-traditional security issues would act as a confidence building measure among countries and this might provide the context for effective dialogue on hard security issues in future.

Some concrete suggestions were offered as to how to build a cooperative security architecture/framework in South Asia. They were as follows.

1. To begin with, there is a need to define the concept of 'cooperative security' in the South Asian context, and identify its scope and limitations. Several speakers suggested setting up of a taskforce to look at these issues in a collective manner. A few leading experts/analysts can be invited to come together and discuss the issues threadbare and bring out a paper on the concept, the agenda of cooperation and possible action plan for future. An inter-sessional meeting comprising of scholars/analysts from different states may be organised sometime in mid-2012 to discuss these issues in greater detail. South Asian University can also be encouraged to take up research on the theme.

2. Some of the areas where cooperation can be initiated were identified as: climate change, food security, healthcare, education, skill developments, river water management, joint study of river basins, science and technology, space and remote sensing, establishment of regional training and research centres and regional disaster management centres, sub-regional cooperation amongst landlocked countries (connectivity, trade and transit rights) and maritime countries (piracy, fishermen and other maritime security issues), strengthening of the SAARC secretariat etc.
3. There should be wider efforts to create general public awareness on such issues of concern through public diplomacy, youth exchange programmes, seminars and conferences, and effective harnessing of public media in all the south Asian countries. The deliberations of the conference should be widely publicised.
4. South Asian countries must think in terms of evolving mechanisms for joint defence exercises like *joint training, peace keeping operations and counter-terrorism efforts*. Institutional mechanisms should be designed in an innovative manner to undertake such joint initiatives.
5. In view of the fact that there are legacy issues which divide countries in the region, it is necessary to initiate healing processes to bring closure to the unfortunate incidents in the past with a sense of forgiveness. There should be emphasis on mutual understanding and recognition of diversity in the region. A common history project reconciling conflicting accounts of past events can be attempted as a measure to dispel mutual hatred and suspicion. Text books can be revised to educate people on complementarities among countries in the region and to throw up common visions of prosperity for the region. Shared values, overlapping identities and common challenges should be emphasised to reduce trust deficit and tensions that exist between different countries.
6. Any such architecture has to avoid being hierarchical in nature. Such architectures evolve and cannot be transplanted. Any possible role of extra-regional players—as contributors to regional security—has to be carefully debated.
7. At present, SAARC has not been able to prepare the grounds for the evolution of a security/strategic architecture in the region, however, it can be part of such a framework/architecture given the steps being taken under SAARC to initiate collective action on non-traditional security issues.
8. A three pronged approach needs to be adopted to make a cooperative security architecture possible in the South Asian context.
 - a) At the intergovernmental level annual meetings of foreign, home and defence ministers can be held where they discuss both

traditional and non-traditional security issues, preferably outside SAARC.

- b) An advisory body or a task force need to be established at Track 1.5 level entrusted with the responsibility to discuss and analyse issues threadbare in separate working groups and suggest recommendations for the ministers to be taken up in their annual meetings.
- c) Networks of scholars, academics and think-tanks should be encouraged to discuss these issues involving common security threats, bilateral issues of importance and possible measures to address them. Inputs from such multi-track engagement at the non-official level can be channelised into the earlier two tracks for consideration by policy makers.

**Note**

1. This document was consensually adopted by the participants of the two-day conference on “Cooperative Security Framework for South Asia”, organised by the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, at New Delhi during 15-16 November 2011.

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