

The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

**THE 1998
INDIAN AND PAKISTANI
NUCLEAR TESTS**

**REPORT OF THE
SENATE FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE
REFERENCES COMMITTEE**

JUNE 1999

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

On 28 May 1998, the Senate referred the following matter (as amended on 29 June 1998) to the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee for inquiry and report:

- i) The implications of India's and Pakistan's nuclear tests, and the nuclear weapon and ballistic missile programs of both India and Pakistan, for regional and international security; and
- ii) The Australian Government's role in international efforts to constrain nuclear weapon and ballistic missile proliferation in South Asia.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On 11 and 13 May 1998, the Indian Government announced that it had detonated nuclear devices in the Pokhran Range. On 28 and 30 May, the Pakistani Government announced that it had followed suit by conducting its own series of nuclear tests at Nilore.

India had refrained from nuclear testing since 1974. Although it had been on the brink of conducting nuclear tests in recent years, the timing of the Indian 1998 tests appears to have been determined largely by domestic political considerations. Although considerable international pressure was put on Pakistan not to follow India's lead, the Pakistani Government eventually succumbed to domestic political and security considerations.

The international community condemned the tests and urged both India and Pakistan to forsake the nuclear path and join the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. Many countries, including Australia, imposed a range of sanctions on both India and Pakistan.

Australia adopted a bipartisan approach to the South Asian nuclear tests, denouncing the tests in forceful terms. A range of sanctions was imposed on India and Pakistan, including a suspension of high-level bilateral dialogue, non-humanitarian aid and various defence relationships. At a hearing on 4 December 1998, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade told the Committee that the Government had resumed high-level bilateral dialogue with India and Pakistan but had not reinstated other measures.

The Committee received considerable evidence supporting the reinstatement of the defence advisers appointed to India and Pakistan and the bilateral defence educational and training programs, which had been suspended by the tests. The Committee recommends the reinstatement of these programs but not other defence-related measures.

The Indian nuclear program was established as a result of a perceived threat from China following a border war between the two countries in 1962 and China's detonation of a nuclear device in 1964. Until recently, relations between the India and China had been improving, notwithstanding Indian perceptions of a Chinese encirclement of India and of Chinese assistance with Pakistan's nuclear, missile and conventional weapon programs. The Indian Defence Minister's anti-Chinese rhetoric prior to the tests and the tests themselves have not provoked any particular reaction from China. The state of the bilateral relationship does not therefore give rise to any particular concerns about possible armed conflict between them.

On the other hand, relations between India and Pakistan have remained tense ever since Partition in 1947. This tension has resulted in three wars between the two states. Two were fought over Kashmir. In the third, India helped East Pakistan to separate from West Pakistan to become Bangladesh.

The enmity and deep divisions that characterise relations between India and Pakistan are not going to be resolved in the short term. The bitterness and political and social differences are too entrenched for that to happen. That is not to say, however, that some amelioration in the relationship cannot be achieved, provided that both sides are prepared to work towards that end. Kashmir is by no means the extent of the differences between the two states but it is a key issue.

Unfortunately, India and Pakistan cannot even agree on the modalities for negotiating a settlement of the Kashmir problem. India maintains that the dispute is a bilateral issue and has refused to accept any attempt at mediation by third parties, including the United Nations. Pakistan, on the other hand, has sought United Nations involvement in the negotiations. This basic disagreement epitomises the difficulties of reconciling differences between the two sides, especially when both territorial and religious issues are involved.

The hardened attitudes on both sides should not deter the international community from at least encouraging them to begin taking steps that might reduce tensions. A settlement was finally achieved in Northern Ireland in 1998 after decades of violence and bitterness.

Australia has played significant roles in multilateral economic and security matters over the last decade, and it should use that experience in discussions with India and Pakistan to try to achieve some reduction in tensions in South Asia and avert a security crisis.

Australia and the international community should also continue to urge India and Pakistan to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. The treaty cannot enter into force until 44 specified states, including India and Pakistan, have ratified it. Both countries have indicated that they support the CTBT in principle.

When tensions run high, there is always the possibility of an incident occurring that might lead to an accidental, inadvertent or miscalculated use of nuclear weapons. The lessening of tensions is therefore a key objective for the international community. High tensions combined with relatively unsophisticated command and control systems, vulnerable nuclear capabilities and short distances to potential targets do not provide any margin for error. Until the political climate between the two sides improves, it is important for measures to be taken to avoid the possibility of inadvertent use.

In discussions with the Indian and Pakistani Governments, Australia and the international community should stress the importance of keeping their nuclear weapons in a non-alert state and not have them deployed. Nuclear warheads should also be kept separate from delivery vehicles. These measures should go along way to minimise the accidental or inadvertent use of nuclear weapons.

In addition to the above measures, both India and Pakistan should re-assert commitments not to strike at each other's nuclear facilities.

At the time the NPT was negotiated, five states had declared their nuclear weapon capability but many others were nuclear weapon capable, threshold states or interested in acquiring nuclear weapons. There was a widespread view that proliferation would increase the risk of accidental, inadvertent or miscalculated use of nuclear weapons as well as the risk of such weapons or fissile material getting into the hands of terrorists or rogue states. The NPT was designed to reduce those risks by stemming proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The non-nuclear weapon states agreed to waive their rights to acquire nuclear weapons on the basis that the nuclear weapon states undertook in good faith to move towards disarmament. Under Article VI of the NPT, the nuclear weapon states are already legally obliged to eliminate their nuclear weapons. The text of Article VI provides that:

Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

No serious moves towards disarmament were expected during the Cold War, but once those constraints were removed, it was expected that the nuclear weapon states would keep faith with their commitments under the NPT. Although some movement towards disarmament has been recorded since the end of the Cold War, it has not been enough to satisfy many non-nuclear weapon states. This disenchantment with the performance of the nuclear weapon states has coalesced into the New Agenda Coalition.

In view of its arms control and disarmament credentials and as an ally of the United States, the Committee believes Australia is well placed to play a creative role in nuclear weapon disarmament. It could play, for example, an innovative brokering type of role between the nuclear weapon states and the New Agenda Coalition as it did in negotiations for the Chemical Weapons Convention and the CTBT. The growing dissatisfaction with the recent lack of progress cannot be ignored. Unless the nuclear weapon states continue to move discernibly towards nuclear disarmament to placate the many dissatisfied non-nuclear weapon states, the NPT itself may come under pressure.

The Committee believes that the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons made such a valuable contribution to the debate on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament that its report warrants further consideration. The lack of a timetable is the key point in the Report as it does not provide an unrealistic and unachievable commitment, which the nuclear weapon states could legitimately use as a basis for not supporting it.

While the nuclear weapon states are perceived by many non-nuclear weapon states as not acting in good faith towards nuclear disarmament, India and Pakistan are given an excuse for not disbanding their nuclear weapon programs. Notwithstanding the renunciation by most states of nuclear weapons for their security, insistence on the

part of the five nuclear weapon states that nuclear weapons are still necessary for their security enables India and Pakistan to mount a similar case.

The Canberra Commission Report provides a framework for universal nuclear disarmament, including possessors of nuclear weapons that are not NPT nuclear weapon states. As all members of the NPT have made a commitment to universal nuclear disarmament, the formal adoption of the recommendations of the Canberra Commission by the United Nations General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament is in line with that commitment. It would send a clear signal to all possessors of nuclear weapons that the international community wants all of them to dismantle their arsenals.

The Committee therefore recommends that the Australian Government seek formal adoption of the recommendations of the Canberra Commission through appropriate resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament.

Recommendation

The Committee recognises the importance in conveying in the clearest and most forthright way the government's disapproval of the nuclear tests but recommends greater circumspection when expressing such sentiments.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government make clear its genuine commitment to global nuclear disarmament and that it clarify its position on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the government work toward creating a greater awareness both in Australia and overseas of the work being done by Australia in the area of nuclear disarmament.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the Australian government presents the Canberra Commission Report to the UN for adoption.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends the government re-establish military links with India and Pakistan as soon as possible and to consider building-up and strengthening exchange programs between military officers from Australia and from India and Pakistan.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends the Australian government provide on-going funding to study and research centres that focus on South Asia.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends the Australian government take measures to encourage information sharing and the building of social, cultural and educational links between Australia and South Asia by supporting cultural and educational exchange programs.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the Australian government take an active part in promoting the work of the IOR-ARC.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government begin to restore normal relations with India and Pakistan, initially reversing measures that hamper communication with them.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends the Australian government make known to the Indian and Pakistani governments that it stands ready to join them in working toward a solution to the Kashmir dispute should they request such assistance.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the government devote funds for research and education programs designed to disseminate information on the use of nuclear weapons, the implications of a nuclear strike and the dangers associated with the production, storage and deployment of such devices.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the government support the call for practical steps, identified in the Canberra Commission Report, the New Agenda Coalition's Declaration and the Communique by the Melbourne Group, be taken by India and Pakistan as appropriate to minimise the risk of serious conflict. These steps include:

taking nuclear forces off alert;

removing warheads from delivery vehicles;

ending deployment of non-strategic nuclear weapons;

ending nuclear testing;; and

reaching agreement on reciprocal no first use undertakings and of a non-use undertaking in relation to non-nuclear weapon states.

Recommendation

The Committee further recommends that the Australian government encourage India and Pakistan to agree to subject their nuclear weapons facilities to IAEA inspection and to find a way whereby they could work with the IAEA or other international bodies to put in place safeguards designed to prevent accidents or inadvertent nuclear strikes.

Recommendation

To prevent the transfer of nuclear weapons and technology, the Committee recommends that the Australian government bilaterally and through multilateral fora encourage India and Pakistan to make more formal their commitment toward safeguarding their nuclear weapons and technology. Furthermore that India and Pakistan engage in technical discussions aimed at improving their command and control system.

Recommendation

To help restore confidence in the non-proliferation regime and to reinforce the existing global norms against nuclear proliferation, the Committee recommends that the Australian government encourage and support international efforts to have India and Pakistan formally agree to place a moratorium on nuclear testing and development. The Committee further recommends that the Australian government join international efforts and work bilaterally with both countries to persuade them that it is in their best interests to follow a policy of cooperative participation in the international community and encourage them to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and the NPT.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends the Australian government endorse the New Agenda Coalition Declaration dated 9 June 1998, which urged the nuclear weapons states to start immediately to make a commitment to the elimination of nuclear weapons.¹

Recommendation

¹ See para 65–9.

The Committee further recommends that Australia in multilateral fora such as the UN maintain a consistent position in urging the nuclear weapons states to keep moving down the road toward the elimination of nuclear weapons and to encourage other countries to join with Australia in supporting this position.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that Australia increase its efforts to encourage the countries of South Asia to open their markets and borders to trade and to work co-operatively toward the economic development of the region.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the Australian government encourage India and Pakistan to reduce their military budget in order to devote resources to the social and economic development of their region.

Recommendation

As a means to help India become part of a community seeking to build an environment conducive to economic prosperity, the Committee recommends that the Australian government take a more active role to invigorate the IOR-ARC.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Establishment of the Inquiry

1.1 On 11 and 13 May 1998, the Indian Government announced that it had detonated nuclear devices in the Pokhran Range in the desert of Rajasthan, thereby removing any remaining ambiguity about its nuclear weapon capability. These nuclear tests triggered condemnatory responses from around the world and the imposition by many states of punitive measures against India.

1.2 On 28 May 1998, the Senate referred the following matter to the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee for inquiry and report by 4 November 1998:

- (i) the implications of India's nuclear tests, and the nuclear weapon and ballistic missile programs of both India and Pakistan, for regional and international security; and
- (ii) the Australian Government's role in international efforts to constrain nuclear weapon and ballistic missile proliferation in South Asia.

1.3 Subsequently, despite strong international pressure and inducements not to retaliate, the Pakistan Government announced that it had detonated nuclear devices at Nilore on 28 and 30 May 1998. The motion to refer the matter to the Committee was passed before it was known that Pakistan had also conducted nuclear tests. Although the terms of reference included the nuclear weapons programs of both India and Pakistan, it was considered that they should be amended to include specific mention of the Pakistani as well as Indian nuclear tests. Accordingly, on 29 June 1998, the Senate amended the terms of reference by including the words 'and Pakistan's' after the word 'India's' in the first line of sub-paragraph (i).

1.4 As a result of the disruption to the inquiry caused by the federal election held on 3 October 1998, the Senate extended the Committee's reporting date to 26 February 1999 and subsequently to 30 June 1999.

Conduct of the Inquiry

1.5 The Committee advertised the inquiry in the *Weekend Australian* on 6 June 1998 calling for written submissions to be lodged by 6 July 1998. The Committee also solicited submissions from people and organisations with a known interest in this topic. In all, 46 submissions were received, details of which are listed in Appendix 1. All of the written submissions were made public documents.

1.6 The Committee held public hearings in Sydney, Canberra and Perth on 20, 21 and 22 July respectively and in Melbourne on 7 August 1998. A further hearing was held in Canberra on 4 December 1998. Details of these hearings are contained in Appendix 2. The Hansard transcript of evidence taken at the hearings was made available on the Internet.

1.7 A Dialogue on Security and Disarmament in the Asia-Pacific, which was organised by the National Centre for South Asian Studies and the Monash Asia Institute, was held in Melbourne, 26-28 August 1998. The Committee was represented at the Dialogue as observers. Referring to itself as the 'Melbourne Group', the participants of the Dialogue issued a communique at the end of the meeting, which is reproduced in Appendix 3.

Committee Membership

1.8 On 24 November 1998, when members were reappointed to Senate committees in the new Parliament, Senator Gibbs replaced Senator Cook. Further changes in membership took place on 3 December 1998, when the Senate amended the *Senate Standing Orders* to reduce membership of Senate references committees from eight to six members. As a result, Senators Eggleston and Gibbs were discharged from the Committee. All three former members were appointed participating members.¹ On 12 May 1999, Senator Bourne replaced Senator Woodley as a member of the Committee.

Terminology and Sources

1.9 In this report, the Committee uses the term 'nuclear weapon states' to refer only to the five nuclear weapon states provided for in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty – the United States, Russia, China, the United Kingdom and France. The term, therefore, does not include India and Pakistan. Where the Committee refers to states that possess nuclear weapons or are capable of producing nuclear weapons, whether or not they are within or outside the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) framework, it uses the term 'nuclear weapon possessors' or 'nuclear weapon capable states'.

1.10 Where information was obtained from an Internet source, the Internet address is included in the footnote.

Acknowledgements

1.11 The Committee wishes to express its appreciation to everyone who contributed to the inquiry by making submissions, providing other information or appearing before the Committee in public hearings.

1 Participating members have all the rights of members except the right to vote. In addition, participating members cannot be used to form a quorum.

CHAPTER 2

INDIA AND PAKISTAN: THE NEW DOMINIONS

‘THE PAST MUST BE BURIED’¹

Mohammed Ali Jinnah, 1947

Introduction

2.1 This chapter provides a brief background to the current issues surrounding nuclear testing in India and Pakistan. It gives an account of the formation of the Indian and Pakistani states following independence from Great Britain in 1947, the animosity between India and Pakistan, and the border dispute in Kashmir that continues to plague relations between the two countries. This chapter also places Indian–Pakistani rivalry in a broader context, briefly outlining their relationships with other key nations. Discussion of these relationships is developed further in later chapters of the report.

India and Pakistan - Nationhood

2.2 The stroke of midnight on 14 August 1947 heralded the formal transfer of power by Britain to the two newly formed dominions of India and Pakistan. The Indian Independence Act, which was passed by the British Parliament on 18 July 1947, provided for the setting up of the independent dominions of India (predominantly Hindu), and Pakistan (predominantly Muslim) from 15 August 1947. *Inter alia*, the Act provided that:

- India would consist of all the territories under the sovereignty of the King which were included in British India, except for those designated as territories of Pakistan.
- Pakistan would consist of East Bengal, Western Punjab, Sind and Baluchistan. If the North-West Frontier Province referendum showed a majority for joining the Pakistan Constituent Assembly, that province too would form part of Pakistan.²

2.3 The division of British India into separate countries was based on the ‘two nations’ theory, which held that the Hindus and Muslims were two distinct nations and therefore should have their separate homelands. Partition on the basis of religion was intended to avert the threat of civil war between Hindus and Muslims on the

1 Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Governor-General designate of Pakistan. Quote taken from *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 16–23 August 1947, p. 8772.

2 Following a referendum in July 1947, the province was incorporated into Pakistan.

subcontinent. With optimism for the future, the Pakistani leader Mohammed Ali Jinnah expressed the hope that India and Pakistan would co-exist in peace. In a farewell message before leaving Delhi he stated, 'The past must be buried. Let us start afresh as the two independent sovereign States of Hindustan and Pakistan.'³ Communal disturbances, however, which had already erupted before partition, warned of deep discord in the new dominions.

2.4 In the months prior to the granting of independence, clashes between Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims resulted in the loss of many hundreds of lives. Communal fighting continued into August with a rising death toll. After partition, a mass migration of people - of Muslims from East Punjab to Pakistan and of Hindus and Sikhs from West Punjab to India - took place amidst rioting and much bloodshed. These disturbances took many months to settle and in some regions residual tension continues to brew and, on occasion, rises to the surface.

2.5 Despite the religious/ethnic basis for partition, the societies of both nations have not been, and are not, homogenous. A diversity of ethnicity, language, culture and religion has created problems of governance in both countries over the years.

India

2.6 Indian society is particularly diverse. Since Independence, India has prided itself on being a secular and democratic state with the ability to accommodate many religious minorities.⁴ This diversity has, however, contributed to internal instability, with a number of groups within India seeking some form of autonomy.

2.7 Kashmir has long been an area where militant groups have fought against Indian rule, and this conflict, which has been the main source of tension and friction in relations between India and Pakistan, is addressed in a later section of this chapter. Another area of conflict is Punjab. Between 1987 and 1992, over 15,000 people were killed in separatist violence in the Punjab.⁵ Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi was assassinated by her Sikh guard in 1984 and, although militancy has lessened in more recent times, tensions still exist.

2.8 In other parts of India, smaller dissident groups have sought some form of autonomy. In the north-east, there have been clashes between Indian security forces and militants from a range of ethnic and religious groups. In the south, Tamils have lent support to Tamil Tigers fighting in nearby Sri Lanka and, at times, there has been talk of a separate Tamil state on the mainland.⁶

3 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 16–23 August 1947, p. 8772.

4 Sumit Ganguly, 'Wars Without End: The Indo-Pakistani Conflict', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, vol. 541, September 1995, p. 169.

5 Robin Jeffrey, *What's Happening to India? Punjab, Ethnic Conflict, and the Test for Federalism* (Second edition), Macmillan, London, 1994, p. xxxv.

6 Hugh Tinker, *South Asia: A Short History* (Second edition), Macmillan, London, 1989, p. 272.

2.9 A large Muslim population (over 110 million people in a total population of 950 million) has increasingly become a focus of rising Hindu nationalism in India. Anti-Muslim riots have resulted in many deaths, the most well-known incident being the attack on the mosque at Ayodhya in 1992, following which about 1,200 people were killed.⁷ The rise in Hindu nationalism has most recently been evidenced by the success of the nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at elections in March 1998.

Pakistan

2.10 Pakistan was conceived as a separate state for the Muslims of British India. It was created to accommodate people who wanted a country of their own because they adhered to a faith different from that of the majority of the population. Pakistan came into being as two distinct and geographically unconnected territories or two wings, West Pakistan and East Pakistan, separated by over two thousand miles of Indian territory. Although Pakistan was established in the name of Islam, religion proved to be a shallow foundation for sustaining its frontiers and for holding the two halves together. In 1971, the eastern wing broke free from the Pakistani Union to form the independent country of Bangladesh.

2.11 Pakistan is also a nation encompassing a diverse society, and where tensions have often arisen as a result. Although founded as a Muslim state (with 97 per cent of the current population being Muslim), conflict between rival Islamic factions has been a cause of escalating violence in recent years. In 1997, hundreds were killed in sectarian disturbances involving the Shiah and Sunni communities.⁸

2.12 Having ruled Pakistan for many years, the military⁹ remains a powerful institution within Pakistan's political framework and, according to many commentators, still exercises considerable influence over recent and current civilian governments. Unlike India, where the military has not intruded into politics, uninterrupted civilian government in the future is not a foregone conclusion.

Conflict between India and Pakistan and the Kashmir Dispute

2.13 The relationship between India and Pakistan since their creation in 1947 has been one of bitter rivalry, marked by three wars and a constant state of military preparedness.¹⁰ A continuing dispute over the territory of Kashmir has been a major source of tension.

7 CRS (Congressional Research Service) *Issue Brief*, '93097: India-U.S. Relations', December 1996, p. 6. Internet site: <http://www.fas.org/man/crs/93-097.htm>

8 'Moslem Scholars Killed in Pakistan', World: South Asia, *BBC News* 3 November 1997 Internet site: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english>

9 Pakistan's three military presidents were General Ayub Khan, 1958-69; General Yahya Khan, 1969-71; and General Zia ul-Haq, 1977-88. For almost half of its history Pakistan has been under a military ruler.

10 CRS *Issue Brief*, '93097: India-U.S. Relations', p. 4.

2.14 The conflict over Kashmir goes back to the partition of British India, when the semi-autonomous 'princely states' integrated with either one of the newly created states of India or Pakistan. At the time of the transfer of power from the British, the princely state of Kashmir, with a large Muslim majority but ruled by the Hindu Maharaja Hari Singh, delayed acceding to either India or Pakistan, leaving its future undecided. Within weeks of India and Pakistan gaining independence, there were signs of growing tension between them over the territories of Jammu and Kashmir.

2.15 From the middle of September 1947, India began to receive reports of armed raiders moving into the western parts of Jammu Province. The Indian Government believed that the invaders came mainly from the tribal areas to the north-west of Pakistan and passed through Pakistani territory to attack Kashmir. Furthermore, it argued that Pakistani nationals as well as tribesmen were taking part in the raids.¹¹

2.16 By October, the invaders had made rapid progress and threatened to overrun the Vale of Kashmir. The Maharaja appealed to India for military help and requested that the Jammu and Kashmir State be allowed to accede to the Indian Dominion. On 27 October 1947, New Delhi officially announced that Kashmir had acceded to the Dominion of India and that India had accepted the accession.¹² Meanwhile, India intervened in Kashmir and by the end of 1947 had halted the tribesmen's advance toward Srinagar and forced them back to Uri, which is near the Pakistani border. Fighting, nevertheless, continued.

2.17 In January 1948, the Indian Government informed the United Nations Security Council that it had no other option but 'to take more effective military action in order to rid Jammu and Kashmir State of the invader'.¹³ In bringing the matter before the United Nations, India declared that it would abide by the verdict of the people in the territory. By the end of 1948, the Indian forces had taken control of the greater part of Kashmir. The invading tribesmen, nonetheless, held their ground in territory adjacent to the Pakistan frontier in the West Punjab, and in north-west and north-east Kashmir.¹⁴

2.18 The United Nations established a commission which obtained from India and Pakistan an agreement to a ceasefire, a withdrawal of troops, and a plebiscite under which the people of the disputed territories would decide their future.¹⁵ The ceasefire took place but the demilitarization did not take effect nor was the plebiscite held.

11 Letter dated 1 January 1948, from the Representative of India to the President of the Security Council (S/628) and Resolution adopted at the meeting of the UN Commission for India and Pakistan on 5 January 1949, Document no. S/1196, para 1S, dated 10 January 1949.

12 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 8–15 November 1947, pp. 8930–31.

13 Letter dated 1 January 1948, from the Representative of India to the President of the Security Council (S/628).

14 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 4–11 December 1947, p. 9661.

15 Resolution adopted by the UN Commission for India and Pakistan on 13 August 1948, Document no. S/1100, para 75, dated 9 November 1948.

Kashmir has remained a disputed territory divided by a ceasefire line ever since. For Pakistan, the fact that Muslims form the majority of Kashmir's population was strong justification for the territory to have been transferred automatically to the Muslim state of Pakistan.¹⁶

2.19 Over the years, sporadic skirmishes between Indian and Pakistani forces across the ceasefire line in Kashmir forewarned of serious conflict. By 1964, the number of clashes greatly increased. In May of that year, members of the United Nations Security Council expressed the hope that India and Pakistan would resume discussions in the near future with a view to settling their disputes by negotiation, particularly over Jammu and Kashmir.¹⁷ That hope soon faded. A crisis in Indo-Pakistan relations developed when large scale fighting between their armed forces broke out on 5 August 1965. On 4 September, the Security Council expressed concern at the deteriorating situation along the ceasefire line in Kashmir and called upon India and Pakistan to have all their armed personnel withdraw to their own side of the line.¹⁸

2.20 Heavy fighting continued despite repeated demands from the Security Council for a ceasefire to take effect.¹⁹ Although a ceasefire in Kashmir finally came into force on 23 September, relations between India and Pakistan remained tense and repeated clashes took place.²⁰ Finally, on 10 February 1966 in Tashkent, the Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan agreed to withdraw all their armed personnel to the position they held prior to August 1965 and to observe the ceasefire terms on the ceasefire line.²¹ They resolved to restore normal and peaceful relations between their countries and to promote understanding and friendly relations between their peoples. The leaders agreed to move further ahead in establishing good relations by agreeing 'to consider measures toward the restoration of economic and trade relations, communications as well as cultural exchanges between India and Pakistan, and to take measures to implement the existing agreements between India and Pakistan.'²²

2.21 The promise of better relations that was the basis of this agreement was short lived. Although East Pakistan had a larger population than West Pakistan, the people from the east felt that they did not receive a fair share of power or privilege. Growing tension between West Pakistan and East Pakistan intensified following general elections in 1970. Despite obtaining a majority of seats, the Awami League, which

16 Robert W. Bradcock, *India's Foreign Policy Since 1971*, Royal Institute of International Affairs, Pinter Publishers, London, 1990, p. 28.

17 Statement of the President of the Security Council made on 18 May 1964, at the Eleventh Hundred and Seventeenth Meeting of the Security Council, Document, no. S/PV. 1117, dated 18 May 1964.

18 Resolution 209 (1965) adopted by the Security Council at its 1237th meeting on 4 September 1965.

19 Resolutions 211 (1965) adopted by the Security Council at its 1242nd meeting, 20 September 1965.

20 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 4–11 December 1965, p. 21103.

21 The Tashkent Declaration, 10 February 1966.

22 *ibid.*

drew its support almost entirely from East Pakistan and with no influence in West Pakistan, was prevented from forming the central government.²³ An angry wave of political militancy built on years of mounting resentment swept through East Pakistan. This widespread agitation and unrest was met by a massive and brutal military crackdown. This military action finally led to a full-scale civil war between East and West Pakistan in March 1971.²⁴

2.22 The disturbance escalated to such an extent that Indian forces intervened. The theatre of war was no longer confined to East Pakistan,²⁵ as fighting between India and Pakistan broke out on India's western border with Pakistan and along the ceasefire line in Kashmir. On 6 December 1971, India announced that it had recognised the provisional government of Bangladesh in East Pakistan, which further damaged relations between India and Pakistan. During this month, the United Nations Security Council demanded that hostilities cease in all areas of conflict.

2.23 India secured a decisive military victory over Pakistan. In East Pakistan, Pakistani forces surrendered on 16 December followed soon after by a ceasefire on the western front. A final resolution to the war was reached in the Simla Agreement signed by the Indian Prime Minister and the Pakistani President in July 1972. Both leaders agreed that the basic issues and causes of conflict, which had bedevilled the relations between the two countries for the last 25 years, would be resolved by peaceful means. In turning to the ongoing conflict in Kashmir they agreed that:

In Jammu and Kashmir, the line of control resulting from the ceasefire of December 17, 1971, shall be respected by both sides without prejudice to the recognised position of either side. Neither side shall seek to alter it unilaterally, irrespective of mutual differences and legal interpretations. Both sides further undertake to refrain from the threat or the use of force in violation of this line.²⁶

2.24 Despite this clear statement of intention and notwithstanding the numerous attempts to improve relations, India and Pakistan have yet to establish a relationship with some degree of normalcy.

23 Hamza Alavi, 'Pakistan and Islam: Ethnicity and Ideology', in *State and Ideology in the Middle East and Pakistan*, F. Halliday and H. Alavi (eds), London, 1988.

Internet site: <http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/sangat/pakisltt.htm>

24 *ibid.*

25 Abbas Rashid and Farida Shaheed, 'Pakistan: Ethno-Politics and Contending Elites', UNRISD (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development) Discussion Paper no. 45, June 1993.

26 Shimla Agreement on Bilateral Relations between India and Pakistan signed by Prime Minister Mrs Indira Gandhi, and President of Pakistan, Mr Z.A. Bhutto, in Shimla on July 3, 1972.

2.25 Since 1984, India and Pakistan have been engaged in military conflict over possession of the Siachen Glacier at the northern end of the 500-mile-long Line of Control (LOC) that separates Indian-controlled and Pakistani-controlled Kashmir.²⁷

2.26 Following a major uprising against Indian rule by Kashmiri Muslims in 1989, tension between India and Pakistan has increased markedly.²⁸ Clashes along the LOC have been characterised by constant cross-border mortar, sniper, and heavy artillery firing. This continuing conflict has resulted in the loss of over 20,000 lives. It was estimated in 1996 that over 200,000 Indian troops were deployed in Kashmir.²⁹ A small United Nations peacekeeping force has been monitoring developments on the cease-fire line/LOC since 1949, and currently comprises 45 military observers.³⁰

2.27 Both India and Pakistan believe they have valid claims to Kashmir. Pakistan questions India's claim to Kashmir, and has persistently pressed for implementation of the 1949 United Nations' resolution calling for a plebiscite of the Kashmiri people. India holds that Kashmir's accession to India in 1947 was legal, and that developments since then have only confirmed that Kashmir remains part of the Indian Union. It is worth noting that for many Kashmiris full independence from both India and Pakistan is the desirable goal.

2.28 Resolution of the Kashmir dispute faces significant obstacles. Both India and Pakistan have strong domestic political motivations for maintaining their existing stances on Kashmir. For both, control of Kashmir is a validation of their existence.³¹ Pakistani nationalists see their nation, created as a Muslim - homeland, as incomplete without Muslim - majority Kashmir. No Pakistani Government can afford to appear half - hearted in assisting Kashmiri Muslims in their fight against Indian control.³² For India, giving up Kashmir would challenge its secularist ideology and, perhaps more importantly, would send encouraging messages to other separatist groups in the Indian Union. As Kashmir is an area of strategic importance to India in maintaining the security of its border with China, its loss would also be considered by India to be detrimental to its security interests.

2.29 Although attempts have been made over the years to find a solution to the dispute, little progress has been made. Agreements were made between Indian and Kashmiri leaders in 1952 and 1975, but their provisions are no longer relevant or

27 The LOC replaced the earlier cease-fire line. See Robert G. Wirsing, 'The Kashmir Conflict', *Current History*, vol. 95 (600), April 1996, p. 172.

28 *ibid.*

29 *ibid.*, p. 173.

30 As of 30 November 1998.

See United Nations Internet site: <http://www.un.org/Depts/DPKO/Missions/unmogip.htm>

31 Mohan J. Malik, 'The Kashmir Dispute: India and Pakistan in Conflict', *Current Affairs Bulletin*, vol. 67(6), November 1990, p. 15.

32 *ibid.*

acceptable to the stakeholders in 1998.³³ While Pakistan seeks to internationalise the issue and pursue a solution at a multilateral level, India strongly resists external involvement in what it sees as an internal matter, and will only consider a bilateral solution. The ‘international community’ has come to accept India’s position on Kashmir, with the United Nations Security Council removing the Kashmir issue from its agenda in 1996.³⁴ Nevertheless, Kashmir’s relationship to India and Pakistan remains a most divisive issue for the two countries.

2.30 Control of the whole area of Kashmir, with a population of around 8 million people, is now split between India (roughly 45 per cent), Pakistan (35 per cent) and China (20 per cent).

2.31 In the meantime, the consequences of ongoing conflict between India and Pakistan are considerable. As already noted, there has been substantial loss of life. Significant harm has been done to the economies of the two countries, with both spending large sums on military equipment. For India particularly, there has been the high cost of maintaining large security forces in a constant state of combat readiness.³⁵

2.32 The hostility between India and Pakistan has retarded trade between the two countries and hindered other commercial links. Overland trading routes along their 1,500 kilometre border remain underdeveloped, and the success of the regional trading organisation (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation – SAARC) has been limited.³⁶

2.33 These two countries with their acrimonious history, punctuated by periods of armed conflict, are locked into a cycle of arms competition, which has taken them down the nuclear weapons path. For over half a century they have been living in an uneasy security environment of mutual distrust and hostility. Apart from the three wars in past decades, Pakistan and India have also edged toward the brink of war at least twice since the mid 1980s - once in the winter of 1986–87 and again in the Spring of 1990 - sparked by on-going conflict in Kashmir. Some analysts suggest that the fear of nuclear weapons use held both countries back from provoking outright war.³⁷

33 Robert G. Wirsing, ‘The Kashmir Conflict’, p. 175–76.

34 Robert W. Stern, ‘Kashmir, Resolution or Dissolution’, *Current Affairs Bulletin*, vol. 74, no. 1, June/July 1997, p 12.

35 Robert G. Wirsing, ‘The Kashmir Conflict’, p. 174.

36 Robert W. Stern, ‘Kashmir, Resolution or Dissolution’, p. 14.

37 Lieutenant Colonel Naeem Salik and Major Maroof Razon, ‘A Minimum Deterrence Regime for South Asia’, *Bulletin*, vol. 6, no. 5, 9 June 1995, Atlantic Council of the United States and Devin T. Hagerty, ‘Nuclear Deterrence in South Asia: The 1990 Indo-Pakistani Crisis’, *International Security*, vol. 20, no. 3, Winter 1995. Internet site: <http://www.mytholoke.edu/acad/intrel/sasianuk.htm>

2.34 In 1985, 1988 and again in 1990, Indian and Pakistani leaders, in an attempt to improve their historically tense relations, agreed (among other initiatives) not to attack each other's nuclear facilities. On the matter of nuclear power, one account in 1985 reported:

The leaders agreed to launch 'technical talks' to reassure each other about the peaceful nature of their nuclear programs.³⁸

2.35 Subsequent talks at officials and ministerial levels have failed to make real headway in easing the tension between the two countries. Clearly the instability in South Asia has serious ramifications, not only for the region but also for the world community.

2.36 Although India has established a nuclear weapons program, it also has a strong record as a staunch advocate for nuclear disarmament. During the 1950s, when nuclear weapons testing took place above ground, India took the lead in seeking to have such activities banned. In 1954, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru called for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons and, in the interim, for an agreement to halt experimentation with nuclear weapons. The objective was 'to snuff out nuclear weapons research and development'.³⁹ Eleven years later, India, along with a small group of non-aligned countries, proposed the idea of an international non-proliferation agreement 'under which the nuclear weapons states would agree to give up their arsenals provided other countries refrained from developing or acquiring such weapons'. Even though India has championed the cause of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, it has refused to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty on the grounds that they favour the five nuclear weapon states, 'the haves', and discriminate against non-nuclear weapons states, 'the have-nots'.⁴⁰

The Broader Picture: India and Pakistan and their friends and foes

2.37 Whilst the rivalry between India and Pakistan is important in understanding the background to their development of nuclear capabilities, it is no less important to recognise that the foreign policies of both nations have been and are still very much influenced by broader international complexities. India, as a large and populous nation, has sought to play a significant role on the regional and international stage. At the same time, Pakistan has sought to advance its interests by aligning itself with larger powers, especially the United States and China.

38 *Facts on File*, Yearbook 1985, pp. 795, 947; Yearbook, 1988, p. 964; Yearbook 1990, p. 962.

39 Address by the Prime Minister of India at the XII NAM (Non Aligned Movement) Summit at Durban, 3 September 1998. Internet site: <http://www.nam.gov.za/nam.html>

40 'Evolution of India's Nuclear Policy', paper laid on the Table of the House, 27 May 1998; G.N. Srivastava, 'Why India went Nuclear', *National Herald*, 16 June 1998.

India and China

2.38 India and China have had a long-standing dispute over the demarcation of part of their border, which is still unresolved. In 1962, tension mounted between the two neighbours, with India accusing China of incursions in Ladakh and the North-east Frontier Agency. The Chinese matched these allegations with denials and counter charges that the Indians were responsible for border violations and forays into Chinese territory. Heavy fighting broke out in October 1962 and the Chinese, who outnumbered the Indians, advanced to 'within striking distance of the Assam plains...before suddenly halting their offensive and announcing a ceasefire'.⁴¹ For India, this war brought demoralising defeat.

2.39 The proximity of China, a large and militarily powerful nation, is a source of great concern for India. Several submissions received by the Committee referred to India's fear and apprehension of Chinese aggression.⁴² The 1962 war with China, followed by China's first nuclear test in 1964, heightened India's security concerns. This anxiety is deepened by ongoing border disputes, especially in the area of neighbouring Tibet, which has been occupied by Chinese military forces since 1950. The presence in India of Tibet's leader in exile, the Dalai Lama, is an ongoing source of friction in the India–China relationship. India has expressed concern at what it sees as 'encirclement' by China, with not only the Chinese military deployments in Tibet to the north, but also Chinese activities and alliances with neighbouring Pakistan to the west and Burma to the east.⁴³

2.40 The India–China relationship was improving in recent years, with the implementation of measures designed to avoid military clashes along their border.⁴⁴ Agreements were signed in 1993 and 1996, which included an undertaking to reduce troops and maintain peace along the line of control that divides Chinese and Indian forces, in particular in the Aksai Chin region in north-eastern Kashmir.⁴⁵ Despite this progress, however, India has remained wary of China's intentions. Immediately prior to the nuclear tests, the Indian Defence Minister referred to China as India's main security threat, and some have interpreted India's nuclear tests as a response to this threat.⁴⁶

41 *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, 8–15 December 1962, p. 19121.

42 Dr Mohan Malik, Submission no. 24, *passim*; Dr Kenneth McPherson, Submission no. 5, vol. 1, pp.24–25, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Australian Defence Organisation and the Australian Safeguards Office, Submission no. 33, vol. 3, p. 9.

43 Dr Malik., Submission no. 24, vol. 2, p. 4.

44 Robert G. Wirsing, 'The Kashmir Conflict', p. 172.

45 *CRS Issue Brief*, '93097: India–U.S. Relations', p. 3, and '94041: Pakistan–U.S. Relations', November 1996, p. 8. Internet site: <http://www.fas.org/man/crs/94-041.htm>

46 DFAT/Defence Submission, *ibid*.

India and the USSR

2.41 In the Cold War years, India developed good relations with the Soviet Union. Soviet security concerns over China, which was developing links with Pakistan, contributed to the Indo–Soviet Friendship Treaty of 1969. India received increased military assistance from the USSR, and Soviet aid to Pakistan was stopped. Since about 1990, with the end of the Cold War and the demise of the Soviet Union, India has had to adjust to a changing global situation, and has lost a reliable source of economic assistance and military equipment. It has also lost an ally in its adversarial relationship with China and Pakistan.⁴⁷

India and the United States

2.42 The end of the Cold War has also affected relations between India and the United States. The United States, previously suspicious of India's links with the Soviet Union, has more recently been encouraging the opening up of India's formerly quasi-socialist and inward-looking economy. At the same time, however, China has also been opening up its economy to global markets, and an increasingly friendly relationship between China and the US has been of concern to India. India itself has been looking towards moving closer to the United States and seeking to achieve pre-eminence in the region. India has sought recognition in the international community of its position as a large and long-standing democracy.

Pakistan and the United States

2.43 In parallel with the developing Cold War relationship between India and the Soviet Union, Pakistan developed friendly ties with the United States, which was concerned about Soviet expansionism. A Mutual Defence Agreement was signed in 1954, and Pakistan has received large grants from the United States in military and economic aid over several years. The relationship has, however, been an uneasy one, cooling at times (for example, during the 1965 and 1971 wars with India), and warming at other times. The high point of the relationship was during the 1979–89 Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, when Pakistan was seen as a frontline state against Soviet expansionism.⁴⁸

2.44 In recent times, the Pakistan-United States relationship has been affected by the Soviet departure from Afghanistan, and United States' displeasure at Pakistan's continued development of its nuclear weapons program. Aid was suspended in 1990 under the Pressler Amendment (to the Foreign Assistance Act), which requires, as a prerequisite for aid, an annual certification by the United States President that Pakistan does not possess a nuclear device. The President was unable to provide the necessary certification that Pakistan did not have a nuclear device. Relations between

47 *CRS Issue Brief*, '93097 India–U.S. Relations', p. 4.

48 *CRS Issue Brief*, '94041 Pakistan–U.S. Relations', p. 4.

the two countries continued to deteriorate after the Pressler Amendment was enacted and anti-American sentiment in Pakistan grew. A \$650 million sale of F-16 aircraft was blocked, and the issue remains a bone of contention between the two countries. The aircraft remain parked in an Arizona desert, and the US has returned only \$150 million of the \$650 million Pakistan has paid.⁴⁹

Pakistan and China

2.45 A friendly relationship between Pakistan and China since the mid-1960s has been a significant factor determining developments in the region. The Committee received several submissions pointing to Indian disquiet at Chinese military aid to Pakistan, and in particular, concerns over Chinese assistance to Pakistan's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs.⁵⁰

Summary

2.46 A complicated web of issues and factors surrounds the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests in May 1998. At the heart of the issue is the intense rivalry between these two states and the on-going dispute over Kashmir. Irrespective of the significance of this bilateral relationship, it is only a part of a wider matrix of interrelationships involving other states, including the United States, China and the former Soviet Union. An understanding of the security situation in South Asia has to take account of this wider matrix.

49 *Nando Times*, 15 May 1998. Internet site: http://wedge.nando.net/newsroom/ntn/world/051598/worldt_29109_body (4 August 1998)

50 DFAT/Defence, Submission no. 33, vol. 3, p. 9; Dr Mohan Malik, Submission no. 24, vol. 2, p. 6.

CHAPTER 3

NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND BALLISTIC MISSILES ON THE SUBCONTINENT

‘SHOW OUR STRENGTH AND SILENCE OUR ENEMIES’¹

Background - Long Term Rivalry

3.1 This chapter traces the development of India’s and Pakistan’s nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs. It looks at the escalating tension and the intense arms competition between the two countries during the period prior to the nuclear blasts in May 1998.

3.2 Military rivalry has dominated the relationship between India and Pakistan since partition in 1947. From that time and against a backdrop of brooding hostility and deep-seated distrust, India and Pakistan have fought three wars - in Kashmir during 1947-48; in the Punjab area in 1965; and in former East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, in 1971.

3.3 Created in the shadow of a much larger and powerful India, and unable to claim victory in its three wars with this unfriendly neighbour, Pakistan measures its security status against India’s military strength. But it was the war in 1971 in which Pakistan lost nearly a fifth of its territory, former East Pakistan, that has left deep and lasting scars and clearly shapes Pakistan’s security concerns. This humiliating loss exposed Pakistan’s vulnerability to India’s military might and steeled Pakistan’s resolve to protect its territorial integrity. The tension between the two countries is aggravated by their dispute over Kashmir. Since the 1980s, India and Pakistan have been fighting on the Siachen Glacier in north-eastern Greater Kashmir and since 1989, a violent anti-Indian insurgency has been simmering with each side accusing the other of inciting conflict.²

3.4 These two traditional foes, with a common border and engaged in a long running and bitter feud over Kashmir, are trapped in a ‘reactive cycle’ in arms development and production.³ Each carefully tracks the activities of the other and although India possesses far superior conventional military strength, Pakistan

1 Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee quoted in Praful Bidwai and Achin Vanaik, ‘A Very Political Bomb’, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, July/August 1998. Internet site: [http:// www.bullatomsci.org/issues/yearindex.htm](http://www.bullatomsci.org/issues/yearindex.htm). Dr Peter Friedlander provides an analysis of media reports on this statement, see Submission, no. 44, vol. 3, p. 205.

2 See Mr Christopher Snedden, Submission no. 19, vol. 1, pp. 189–90 for more details.

3 ‘India and Pakistan’, Chapter 10 in *1997 Strategic Assessment: Flashpoints and Force Structure*, National Defence University, November 1996. Internet site: <http://www.ndu.edu/ndu/inss/sa97/sa97pre.html> (25 August 1998)

endeavours to keep up with developments in India's military technology. Even though both countries may wish to reduce their defence burden, the weight of history and the fear of aggression fuelled by mutual suspicion determine their security planning.⁴

3.5 China complicates the geo-political situation in this region. India and China see themselves as rival regional leaders and their relationship is uneasy. In 1962, China and India fought a brief but bloody border war; a war regarded by India as a major and ignominious defeat and which shattered its sense of military security.⁵ Two years later, in October 1964, China further asserted its standing in the region as a powerful and potentially dangerous adversary when it tested its first atom bomb. The border issue between the two countries remains unresolved.

3.6 The relationship between India and China is further strained by the close links that China has developed with Pakistan, particularly the assistance it is believed to have given Pakistan in developing its nuclear and missile technology. India views this Sino-Pakistan collaboration as a serious and direct threat to its security interests.⁶

Bombs for Peace

3.7 Pakistan assesses its security situation against India's position; India, in turn, defines its security situation in light of China's military force. When China exploded its nuclear bomb in 1964 and embarked on a program to modernise its military technology, India was spurred to develop its own nuclear program.⁷

3.8 It took India almost ten years, but in May 1974, at the Pokhran site in the Rajasthan desert, it detonated its own atomic bomb - a 'peaceful' 12 KT fission nuclear device. Since that time, the Indian scientific community has kept abreast of developments in global nuclear theory and technology and has continued its own research and development program into nuclear weaponry. India has maintained and expanded its complex of laboratory and industrial support activities necessary to support a nuclear weapons program but, until 1998, had refrained from conducting further tests.⁸

3.9 The strength of Pakistan's determination to keep pace with India's nuclear developments was signalled as early as 1965 when Zulfikar Ali Bhutto told the National Assembly of Pakistan that 'If India builds the bomb, we will eat grass and

4 *ibid.*

5 See K. Subrahmanyam, 'Dimensions of National Security', *Frontline*, vol. 14, no. 16, 9–22 August 1997. Internet site: <http://www.the-hindu.com/committee/fline/index.htm>; Dr Debesh Bhattacharya, *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 4.

6 K. Subrahmanyam, 'India Nuclear Policy—1964–98', *Nuclear India*, Jasjit Singh (ed.), Knowledge World, New Delhi, 1998, p. 50; Dr Mohan Malik, *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, pp. 46–50.

7 See comments by Dr Mohan Malik, *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 59.

8 David Albright and Mark Hibbs, 'India's Silent Bomb', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, September 1992; D. Sampathkumar, 'The Force of Sanctions', Cover Story, *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 11, 23 May–5 June 1998.

leaves, even go hungry. But we will get one of our own, we have no alternative'.⁹ India's nuclear explosion in 1974 tested Pakistan's resolve to follow India down the nuclear weapons path. It forced Pakistan to consider seriously its options in regard to developing its own nuclear weapons program.

3.10 Pakistan's leading missile and nuclear scientist, Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, maintained that India's military activities drove Pakistan to make nuclear weapons. He explained that the separation of East Pakistan in 1971 weakened Pakistan but the Indian nuclear explosion in 1974 brought a qualitative change. For Pakistan, the need to neutralise India's superior nuclear weaponry by establishing a degree of symmetry in their nuclear arsenals became clear.

3.11 Despite pressure from foreign powers, especially the United States, to forgo the development of a nuclear weapons program, Pakistan determinedly and clandestinely set about developing its nuclear capability. According to Dr Khan, Pakistan attained the capability to explode a nuclear device in 1984 but kept this quiet because there was no provocation to declare its status.¹⁰

3.12 Thus, over the years there has been a gradual maturing of India's and Pakistan's missile and nuclear programs. Both countries have followed a policy of nuclear ambiguity; that is, they have built up their nuclear capability but without going openly nuclear.

3.13 Although secrecy surrounds India's and Pakistan's nuclear programs, strategic analysts have, especially since the end of the Cold War, predicted that India would be compelled to declare its nuclear weapon status. The end of the Cold War brought about a realignment of alliances and caused nations to reassess their security interests. India lost its superpower friend and strategic ally, the Soviet Union, and with it a loss of global prestige and a weakening of its military standing in the region. India stood alone and as its influence waned, its rival, China, was gaining greater prominence and recognition as a world and regional power. Strategic affairs analyst Dr C. Raja Mohan explained:

The strong relationship that New Delhi had built up with Moscow during the Cold War and the belief that the central balance between the U.S. and USSR was immutable allowed India the luxury of keeping its nuclear option open. But the collapse of the Soviet Union, the emergence of China - once India's peer - as the second most important power in the world, the consequent disorientation of India's foreign policy and the fear that India will forever be

9 Quote taken from *Dawn*, 21 November 1965 cited in Prithvi Ram Mudiam, 'Indo-Pakistan Nuclear Rivalry: Need for a Modus Vivendi', *Strategic Analysis*, A Monthly Journal of the IDSA (Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis, New Delhi), vol. 20, no. 3, June 1997. Internet site: <http://www.idsa-india.org/an-jun-9.html>.

10 Interview with Pakistan nuclear scientist, A.Q.Khan, 'We Can Do a Fusion Blast', *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 12, 6-19 June 1998.

marginalised in the Asian and global geopolitics forced New Delhi to reconsider its nuclear policy in the 1990s.¹¹

3.14 Speculation about India's readiness to go nuclear firmed in December 1995, when American newspaper reports, based on leaked United States intelligence, suggested that India was preparing a test site at Pokhran to conduct a nuclear explosion. India did not categorically deny the allegation but rather dismissed the reports as 'highly speculative'.¹²

3.15 The changing geopolitical situation in Asia together with the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995 and the successful conclusion of negotiations on a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1996 placed even greater domestic pressure on India to clarify its nuclear weapon status. In September 1996, strategic analyst Brahma Chellaney asserted that India's refusal to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty was strongly supported by political parties and public opinion in India. He wrote:

Now the government faces mounting domestic pressure to end the unilateral test moratorium it has observed since conducting its sole nuclear detonation in 1974. A spate of recent articles in the national press urge the government to go overtly nuclear.

Wedged between nuclear armed China and nuclear-capable Pakistan, India sees its interests as demanding either a global drive to delegitimize and eliminate nuclear weapons or to weaponize its own nuclear option.¹³

3.16 Jasjit Singh, Director of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, clearly spelt out and reflected the thinking of some influential analysts in India at this time. He maintained:

China is the biggest military power in Asia, and its power is growing. There are many strategic uncertainties that India will have to contend with in the coming years and decades. But it is clear that China does not pose a threat in a way that India cannot adequately deal with. The issue thus is not a question of a threat from China, but the fact that if India has to maintain its independency of policy and action, it must have adequate means of self-defence, whether conventional or nuclear. The challenge is in ensuring the

11 C. Raja Mohan, 'Nuclear Balance in Asia', *The Hindu*, 11 June 1998. Cited *Indian Media Responses to India's N-tests*, Government of India, Department of External Affairs, *Discover India* Internet site: <http://www.meadev.gov.in/govt/nuclear/hin11.jun.htm> (11 September 1998).

12 Zia Mian and A.H. Nayyar, 'A Time of Testing', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, July/August 1996, vol. 52, no. 4; *CRS Issue Brief*, '94041: Pakistan-US Relations', 7 November 1996; Vipin Gupta and Frank Pabian, *Investigating the Allegations of Indian Nuclear Test Preparation in the Rajasthan Desert: A CTB Verification Exercise Using Commercial Satellite Imagery*, CMC Paper, July 1996. Internet site: <http://www.ca.sandia.gov/casite/gupta/intro.html> (28 October 1998). K. Subrahmanyam, 'India Nuclear Policy', *Nuclear India*, J. Singh (ed.), Knowledge World, New Delhi, 1998, p. 50.

13 Brahma Chellaney, 'Why India, Pushed Against the Wall, Could Go Overtly Nuclear', 20 September 1996, *Pacific News Service*. Internet site: <http://www.pacificnews.org/pacificnews/jinn/stories/2.20/960920-india.html>

autonomy and strength to deal with future coercion or military pressure. It is in this context that India will require a nuclear deterrent. China and India have signed agreements in recent years to maintain peace and tranquillity based on the principle of mutual and equal security. The concept of equal security could become meaningless, or worse, a mirage, if nuclear asymmetry is perpetuated.¹⁴

3.17 He could see three possible ways for India to resolve the challenges of this asymmetry in order to safeguard its security—obtain extended deterrence linked to an alliance with a nuclear weapons state; global nuclear disarmament; or acquire an independent nuclear deterrent. The first option he argued worked against the very principles of an independent India; the second option, the most desirable one, offered no short or medium-term guarantees because actual progress in disarmament could take decades. He concluded, therefore, that India was faced with hardly any choice ‘but to look seriously at acquiring a nuclear deterrent at least until disarmament becomes an established reality’.¹⁵

Ballistic Missile Program

3.18 A nuclear deterrent does not depend solely on a nuclear device but also on the ability to deliver the weapon. Thus: ‘A true nuclear deterrent embraces a proven warhead mated with a proven delivery system...delivery systems are the other half of the deterrence equation. They must be tested and deployed before a deterrent force is complete.’¹⁶ India and Pakistan did not neglect the second part of the nuclear deterrent equation. In line with advances in their respective nuclear weapons program, India and Pakistan have pushed ahead with the development of their own missile programs.

India’s Ballistic Missile System

3.19 The beginnings of India’s indigenous ballistic missile program go back to the establishment of the Integrated Guided Missile Development Programme (IGMDP) in 1983. The IGMDP now comprises five major missile systems—the short-range surface-to-surface missile Prithvi (Earth); the intermediate-range ballistic missile Agni (Fire); the short-range surface to air missile Trishul (Trident); the medium-range surface-to-air missile Akash (Sky); and the smokeless high-energy anti-tank guided missile Nag (Cobra).

3.20 The two largest missiles, the Prithvi and Agni, are of direct relevance to India’s production of an effective delivery system for nuclear warheads. They were developed in close association with India’s space industry. India first tested the short range Prithvi in 1988 and has tested this system on a number of subsequent occasions.

14 Jasjit Singh, ‘The Challenges of Strategic Defence’, *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 8, 11–24 April 1998.

15 *ibid.*

16 Andrew Koch and Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu, ‘Subcontinental Missiles’, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, July/August 1998, vol. 54, no. 4.

On 27 January 1996, India successfully launched a 250km 'extended range' version of the Prithvi.¹⁷ Thirteen months later, the missile was launched from a mobile launcher for the first time. The Prithvi is capable of hitting a target deep within Pakistan; its range covers all of Bangladesh, parts of China and Burma.¹⁸

3.21 Wary of advances in Indian missile technology, Pakistan monitored carefully the development of the Prithvi. In June 1997, the Indian Prime Minister I. K. Gujral denied reports that his country had deployed the missile near the border with Pakistan. He stated 'India has the capability of manufacturing the Prithvi and it has not, I repeat not, deployed Prithvi in any part of India, more so near the border.'¹⁹ However, in August 1997, the Indian Government announced it had decided to 'accord high priority to the next phase of the Agni program'.²⁰

3.22 The longer range Agni was first tested in May 1989 and has been tested several times since. During its last trial in February 1994, the Agni successfully hit its designated target after travelling 1,400km, approximately 1,100km short of its projected range of 2,500km. In December 1996, Indian officials, acknowledging developments, described it as a 're-entry technology demonstration' but have over time sent confusing messages about its status.²¹

3.23 In September 1996, there were indications from official sources that the Agni program was to be revived. But in the following December, the Indian Government announced that it would not put its Agni Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile into production unless its national security was under threat.²² The following March, however, the Indian Prime Minister told Parliament that India had not halted development of the Agni. Four months later the Government announced that it had given high priority to the next phase of its Agni program.²³ This next stage in development is likely to involve further tests to convert the missile from a 're-entry technology demonstration' into a deployable weapon system.²⁴

17 'India Plans Further Prithvi Missile Tests', *News and Views*, CDISS (Centre for Defence and International Security Studies, UK), September 1996. Internet site: <http://www.cdiss.org/mdnews.htm>.

18 'India Test Prithvi SRBM [February 24]', *News and Views*, CDISS, February 1997.

19 Sandeep Unnithan, 'India Has Not Deployed Prithvi: PM', *Indian Express*, 12 June 1997. Internet site: <http://www.expressindia.com/ie/daily/19970612/main.htm>.

2020 'Asia's Accelerating Missile Race', *News and Views*, CDISS, August, 1997.

21 'Agni "Could be Deployed within Three Months" ', *News and Views*, CDISS, December 1996.

22 *News and Views*, CDISS, September, December 1996 and June 1997.

23 Lora Lumpe, 'Zero Ballistic Missiles and the Third World', *Arms Control Today*, vol. 14, no. 1, 1 April 1994; *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 20 May 1998, p. 5; *News and Views*, CDISS, September 1996, March 1997; August 1997.

24 *News and Views*, CDISS, March, August 1997.

Pakistan's Ballistic Missile Program

3.24 During the 1980s the growing demand for, and use of, ballistic missiles was clearly demonstrated during the Iran–Iraq war of 1980–88 and during 1988–89 war in Afghanistan. Aware of India's ballistic missile program and of the use of missiles in modern day warfare, Pakistan embarked on its own ballistic missile program. Under the leadership of Dr Abdul Khan and, reportedly, with co-operation from the Government of the People's Republic of China, Pakistan gradually moved ahead with the development of the Haft-I, with a range of 80km, and Haft-II, with a range of 300km. Haft II is a battlefield weapon and not capable of strategic intimidation or deterrence.²⁵

3.25 The launch of the Indian Prithvi in 1988 gave impetus to Pakistan's missile program.²⁶ Pakistan tested the two short-range missile systems Haft-I and Haft-II in early 1989. Since the launch of the Agni intermediate-range ballistic missile in 1989, Pakistan has accelerated its efforts to develop its own missile system.²⁷ In mid 1991, the US imposed sanctions against Chinese and Pakistani companies and the government agencies allegedly involved in the transfer of some missile technology from China to Pakistan. In August 1993, the United States Administration determined that China had again transferred M-11 missile related equipment to Pakistan and imposed sanctions on missile-related trade with Chinese and Pakistani aerospace organisations.²⁸ In November 1992, China reportedly transferred 24 M-11 missiles to Pakistan.²⁹

3.26 Allegations and reports of Chinese assistance to Pakistan have persisted. In March 1996, Senator Nunn referred to a clear statement given by the Director of Central Intelligence that China actively assisted Pakistan in providing missiles and nuclear technology to Pakistan. He told the US Senate:

Mr Chairman, the intelligence community continues to get accurate and timely information on Chinese activities that involve inappropriate weapons technology assistance to other countries, nuclear technology to Pakistan, M-II missiles to Pakistan, cruise missiles to Iran.³⁰

25 'Pakistan Set to Unveil "Ghauri" MRBM in March', *Current Missile News, News and Views*, CDISS, February 1998.

26 'A Silent Partner', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 15 May 1998.
Internet site: <http://www.janes.com/mainset.html>.

27 Ben Sheppard, 'Too Close for Comfort: Ballistic Ambitions in South Asia', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, January 1998, vol. 10, no. 1.

28 Lora Lumpe, 'Zero Ballistic Missiles and the Third World', *Arms Control Today*, cites Federal Register, 17 July 1991; Robert Shuey and Shirley A. Kan, 'Chinese Missile and Nuclear Proliferation: Issues for Congress', *CRS Issue Brief*, IB92056, 2 February 1995.

29 Lora Lumpe, *ibid.*, cites R. Jeffrey Smith, 'China Said to Sell Arms to Pakistan', *Washington Post*, 4 December 1991, p. A10.

30 Congressional Record, Senate, 2 March 1996 p. S2657; see also Congressional Record, 12 June 1996, p. S6139.

3.27 During 1997, competition in the missile race between India and Pakistan intensified. Pakistan's test of the Haft-3 in July 1997, which reputedly reached a range of 800km, probably moved India to assert that it would place a high priority on the next phase of its 2,500km range Agni missile program. This in turn provoked Pakistan into suggesting that its engineers had recently developed a 1,500km missile referred to as the 'Ghauri' which was intended to counter the resumption of the Agni's program.³¹

Ballistic Missile and Nuclear Proliferation

3.28 As 1997 drew to a close, fears about the proliferation of missile development and production heightened as an action-reaction pattern between the two South Asian countries fuelled suspicions about each other's intentions.³² At this time Pakistan's concerns about escalation in the ballistic missile programs combined with speculation about India going overtly nuclear.

3.29 India's nuclear ambitions and its hegemonic designs was a dominant theme running through Pakistan's foreign policy polemics.³³ On 20 November 1997, in an address on 'Arms Control and Disarmament', the Permanent Representative of Pakistan at the Chemical and Biological Weapons Institute in Washington stated:

...there is always the possibility that India may be tempted to conduct a nuclear test, as it has in the past. Others may even acquiesce in and grant India the status of a nuclear weapon state. Pakistan cannot accept this situation in the light of its own security concerns, nor can it abandon its fundamental doctrine of 'ambiguity'.

3.30 In relation to ballistic missiles, the Permanent Representative went on to say, 'Pakistan is deeply concerned about the production and deployment of Indian ballistic missiles against Pakistan. We will be obliged to take appropriate steps to respond to this new and qualitatively enhanced threat to our national security'.³⁴

3.31 The increasing popularity of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its menacing rumblings about inducting nuclear weapons further worried Pakistan. The BJP had publicly committed itself on numerous occasions to bring India's nuclear weapons out of the closet.³⁵ In their party manifesto of 1998 the BJP pledged 'To re-

31 'Asia's Accelerating Missile Race', *News and Views*, CDISS, August 1997.

32 Aabha Dixit, 'Missile Race in South Asia: Linear Progression Required to Cap Race?', *Security Analysis*, IDSA, September 1997.

33 See Amit Baruah, 'The South Asian Nuclear Mess', Cover Story, *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 12, 6-19 June 1998.

34 Address on 'Arms Control and Disarmament' by the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations at the Chemical and Biological Weapons Institute in Washington, 20 November 1997.

35 'Indian Hindu Opposition Warns of War with Pakistan', *Reuters*, 31 August 1994 and 8 April 1996; Zia Mian and A.H. Nayyar, 'A Time of Testing?', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, idid.

evaluate the country's nuclear policy and exercise the option to induct nuclear weapons'.³⁶ The BJP made plain that it:

...shall not compromise on national sovereignty and security. The current situation and regional war politics demand us to have a nuclear weapons program in India and the BJP party will take India to be a nuclear power. We do not wish to see India blown apart by Pakistan or China because we did not possess the deterrent nuclear power.³⁷

3.32 The election of the BJP in March 1998 deepened Pakistan's fears. Pakistan again drew attention to the situation developing on the subcontinent and the severe provocation it was experiencing. On 2 April 1998, the Pakistani Prime Minister sent a letter to the Heads of State of the United States, Russia, China, Japan, Italy, Belgium, Spain and Germany. In part it stated:

The recent policy pronouncement by the new Indian Government to 'exercise the option to induct nuclear weapons' has qualitatively altered the security environment in our region besides dealing a serious blow to efforts at promoting non-proliferation at the global and regional levels.

...

We have every reason to believe that the Indian policy pronouncement connotes a giant step towards fully operationalizing Indian nuclear policy.

Unfortunately, the international community has continued to disregard the series of escalatory steps taken by India during the recent years on the nuclear and ballistic ladder.

...

Pakistan will be obliged to take cognizance of these alarming developments and it cannot but exercise its sovereign right to adopt appropriate measures to safeguard its security.³⁸

3.33 Within the week, on 6 April, Pakistan tested its new ballistic missile called the Ghauri with a maximum range of 1,500 kilometres. Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif explained that the test flight was part of his country's integrated missile Research and Development (R&D) Programme and conferred on Pakistan a credible indigenous missile capability. A Pakistani Foreign Affairs spokesman stated that the Ghauri missile 'primarily relates to our security needs which is of fundamental importance to us. Our sovereignty, territorial integrity and national interest is

36 'National Security', *Bharatiya Janata Party—Manifesto 1998*.
Internet site: <http://www.indiagov.org/elec98/manift/bjp.htm> (2 September 1998).

37 Dr Krishna M. Bhatta and Dr Mahesh Mehta, 'Nuclear Issue', *BJP Homepage (Policy on Major Issues)*.
Internet site: <http://www.bjp.org/major/nuclrkb-1.html> (2 September 1998).

38 Press Briefing by Foreign Office Spokesman, Government of Pakistan, 4 May 1998.

sacrosanct.’³⁹ Given Pakistan’s lack of advanced technical infrastructure and a defence industrial base, some analysts believed that Pakistan did not possess the indigenous capability to develop a medium range ballistic missile and questioned Pakistan’s claim that the Ghauri was indigenously developed. They strongly suspected that North Korea and China might have provided assistance.⁴⁰

3.34 The newly unveiled Ghauri missile, with the capability of striking deep into Indian territory and named after a twelfth-century Muslim raider who defeated a Hindu ruler, Prithvi Raj Chauhan, held important symbolic significance for Pakistan.⁴¹ The successful launch of this missile demonstrated that it could now keep in step with India’s growing missile capability.⁴² The Ghauri may have been Pakistan’s answer to India’s Prithvi but it also prompted India to push further ahead with its missile program.⁴³

3.35 The launch of the Ghauri together with the announcement by Pakistan that it was in the process of developing a longer-range ballistic missile, the ‘Ghaznavi’, marked a significant escalation in the expanding South Asian nuclear and missiles competition. Statements at the time, such as Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan’s assertion that India was ready to carry out a nuclear explosion at any time⁴⁴ and a headline in the *Hindustan Times* which carried the warning “‘Ghauri’ can carry N-Warhead”,⁴⁵ only inflamed an already tense situation.

3.36 Indian Defence Minister George Fernandes responded to Pakistan’s show of strength by stating that Pakistan’s missile test came as no surprise. He added that ‘China has been supplying missile technology to Pakistan despite having given an undertaking to the United States to do no such thing’. In a statement he described China as the mother of the Ghauri and asserted ‘we are aware of constant outside assistance to Pakistan in this field despite the existence of multilateral export control regimes, unilateral declarations of restraint and supply restrictions on producer

39 ‘Pakistan Test Fire Ghauri Missile: A Landmark in Country’s Defence History’, *Pakistan Government Homepage*, Internet site: <http://www.pak.gov.pk/govt/ghauri.htm> (18 September 1998)

40 ‘Pakistan set to Unveil “Ghauri” MRBM in March’, *News and Views*, CDISS, February 1998 and ‘Update on the Ghauri: the Evidence to Date’, News Analysis, *News and Views*, CDISS, May 1998; *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, 16 April 1998 and 15 May 1998: see paras 24–5.

41 Andrew Koch and Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu, ‘Subcontinental Missiles’, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, *ibid.*

42 ‘Ignore Pressure, Develop More Missiles: Tarar’, *Hindustan Times*, 20 April 1998; Internet site: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/nonfram/250699.archive.asp> See also *News and Views*, CDISS, February 1998.

43 David C. Wright, ‘An Analysis of the Pakistani Ghauri Missile Test of 6 April 1998’. Security Studies Program, MIT, 12 May 1998. Internet site: <http://www.fas.org/news/pakistan/1998/05/980512-ghauri.htm> (17 August 1998).

44 *Jane’s Weekly Defence*, 15 May 1998; *Hindustan Times*, 20 April 1998.

45 *Hindustan Times*, 8 April 1998.

countries.’⁴⁶ He drew attention to India’s Prithvi short-range ballistic missile, which he maintained was capable of hitting any target in Pakistan. He emphasised ‘we are capable of dealing with the situation in Pakistan. There is no part of Pakistan that is outside the range of Prithvi.’⁴⁷

3.37 The Indian Prime Minister reinforced Fernandes’ message. He asserted that India would not be ‘a silent spectator to arms building exercise started by the neighbouring Pakistan’. He insisted that ‘India is prepared to face any challenge and if necessary steps will be taken to counter new challenges’.⁴⁸ India raised the stakes by announcing plans to launch a low-orbit remote-sensing surveillance satellite over the subcontinent to monitor all missile testing activity early in 1999.⁴⁹

3.38 As May 1998 approached, the political rhetoric became increasingly bellicose with India turning on China as a major threat to its security. Early in May, Fernandes declared China as the ‘potential threat number one’ with its military and naval involvement beginning to ‘encircle’ India along the border with Pakistan, Myanmar and Tibet.⁵⁰ He pointed to the transfer of missile technology and nuclear know-how to Islamabad by Beijing; the nuclear weapons stockpiled in Tibet along the borders with India; the extension of military air fields in Tibet; China’s involvement in training and equipping the Myanmar army; the conversion of Coco islands near Andaman and Nicobar into a surveillance post for monitoring India’s activities; China’s plans to transform the island into a major naval base; and China’s fast expanding navy ‘which will be getting into the Indian Ocean fairly soon’.⁵¹ One newspaper quoted Fernandes as saying ‘the predecessor regimes had not ruled out the nuclear weapons but the new Government has ruled them in’.⁵²

3.39 The extent to which such statements were an attempt to galvanise public opinion against China and in favour of nuclear testing or a genuine reflection of India’s fears is difficult to assess. Nevertheless, within days the Indian Prime Minister authorised the detonation of five nuclear weapons.

46 The *Hindu*, ‘Fernandes Sees No Threat From The Ghauri’, 10 April 1998, Internet site: <http://www.hinduonline.com/thehindu/archives.htm>; Praveen Swami, ‘A Hawkish Line On China’, *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 11, 23 May–5 June 1998.

47 Missile Resources, CDISS, *Hindustan Times*, 15 April 1998.

48 ‘India Ready to Face Any Challenge, Says PM’, *The Hindu*, 18 April 1998, p. 11.

49 Arjuna Ranawana, ‘A New Threat to Stability: How Will India Answer Pakistan’s Missile Test?’, *AsiaWeek*, 1 May 1998. Internet site: <http://www.pathfinder.com/asiaweek/constant/archive.html>; *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, 24 April 1998.

50 ‘China is Threat No. 1, says Fernandes’, *Hindustan Times*, 4 May 1998.

51 *Hindustan Times*, *ibid.*; Ajay Singh, ‘Playing with Fire’, *AsiaWeek*, 29 July 1998.

52 *Hindustan Times*, *ibid.*

CHAPTER 4

INDIA'S TESTS—OPERATION SHAKTI

'BUDDHA TODAY SMILED'¹

4.1 On Monday, 11 May 1998, India conducted three underground nuclear tests in the Pokhran Range in the desert of Rajasthan near the Indo-Pakistan border.² In defiance of world opinion, India followed these tests on 13 May with two additional explosions.

4.2 The tests, the first carried out by India since 1974, marked the culmination of years of work undertaken by the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and the Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO). According to DAE and DRDO the three tests conducted on 11 May were with a fission device with a yield of about 12 KT, a thermonuclear device with a yield of about 43 KT and a sub-kilo tonne device. All were detonated simultaneously and the thermonuclear device was designed to meet stringent criteria such as containment of the blast to minimise any chance of causing damage to buildings and structures in neighbouring villages. The 12 KT weapon was designed for tactical purposes such as aircraft bombs, missiles and artillery shells while the thermonuclear weapons were normally intended for strategic purposes.³

4.3 The tests carried out on 13 May involved two sub-kiloton devices and were also detonated simultaneously. The yields of the sub-kiloton devices were in the range of 0.2 to 0.6 KT and produced data to be used for the computer simulation of nuclear design.⁴ DAE and DRDO maintained that the tests were fully contained with no release of radioactivity into the atmosphere.⁵ The two explosions on 13 May barely registered on global seismic equipment but this may have been because the bombs were set off in a deep sand dune.⁶

1 In his article 'Showcase of Technological Leap by Indian Nuclear Establishment', Mavendra Singh refers back to the message conveyed to Indira Ghandi on the occasion of the first nuclear test carried out at Pokhran on 18 May 1974. See *The Indian Express*, 12 May 1998.
Internet site: <http://www.expressindia.com/ie/daily/19980512/13250814.html> (15 January).

2 Public Diplomacy Query, Early Report 5/12, 'India Crosses Nuclear Rubicorn', 12 May 1998.

3 *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 26 May 1998; *Weekly Defense Monitor*, Center for Defense Information, 21 May 1998.

4 *Jane's Defence Weekly*, *ibid.*

5 Joint Statement by Department of Atomic Energy and Defence Research and Development Organisation, New Delhi, 17 May 1998. Internet site: <http://www.meadev.gov.in/govt/drdo.htm>.

6 *Jane's Defence Weekly*, *ibid.*

4.4 A scientist involved in India's nuclear weapons program stated: 'We have complete mastery over a range of nuclear weapon technologies and they are intended for different delivery systems. Also, we can do computer simulation of subcritical experiments in the future.'⁷ Dr Anil Kakodkar, Director, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, explained in an interview that their project was part of an ongoing activity:

We had planned the tests with an objective. Our objective was to prove a standard fission device and a thermonuclear device. The objective was also to generate data on the basis of which further work can be carried out. That is how the devices consisted of one standard fission device, one thermonuclear device and three sub-kiloton devices of different configurations...now, the total yield of these devices had to be limited in such a way that the seismic damage to the buildings in the nearby village, 5 to 5.5km away, is kept to a minimum. We did not want any damage to occur. So that put a limitation on the maximum yield.⁸

4.5 Several seismic experts have questioned India's estimation of the magnitude of the yield from the detonations. They believe the yields were smaller than those announced officially. In particular, some seismologists doubt Indian claims about their exploding a thermonuclear device; they suggest that it was simply a boosted atom bomb. Despite the scepticism, and in the absence of conclusive evidence, a number of analysts have accepted at face value Indian claims that the yields were kept deliberately low to minimise damage to the surrounding district.⁹ P.K. Iyengar, a former Chairman of the Indian Atomic Energy Commission, stated simply:

Whatever the details, it is clear that India has graduated from the fission club to the fusion club,¹⁰ it has demonstrated that it can make a fusion weapon or hydrogen bomb.

India's Reasons

National Security

Direct military threat from China and Pakistan

4.6 It would appear as though India's public pronouncements on China made before the tests prepared the ground for the justifications that would follow the explosions. India had clearly indicated that it felt increasingly threatened by the provocative and belligerent activities of China and Pakistan. Official comments and

7 T.S. Subramanian, 'Technological, Scientific Success', *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 11, 23 May–5 June 1998.

8 Interview with BARC Director, Dr Anil Kakodkar, 'We Have Got Everything We Wanted', *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 12, 6–19 June 1998.

9 William J. Broad, 'Big Claims, Small Evidence', *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 12, 6 June–19 1998; Andrew Koch, 'India: Building the Bomb', *Weekly Defense Monitor*, 21 May 1998; Terry C. Wallace, 'The May 1998 India and Pakistan Nuclear Tests', SRL Publications, September 1998. Internet site: <http://www.geo.arizona.edu/geophysics/faculty/wallace/ind.pak/index.html>.

10 Cover Story, *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 11, 23 May–5 June 1998.

observations presented India as a nation under siege and fighting for its survival and honour.

4.7 The depiction of China and Pakistan by India as aggressors persisted without interruption or deviation after the tests. India unequivocally put forward security as the overriding motivation for conducting the nuclear tests. It argued that India could no longer be seen as complacent in the face of Pakistan's rapidly developing missile program or China's growing military influence in the region.¹¹ Indian strategic analysts such as Jasjit Singh and Brahma Chellaney clearly identified China as fundamental in their assessment of India's security interests. At one stage before the tests, Mr Chellaney warned that India's restraint in not demonstrating its nuclear capability:

is being challenged by China's growing military and economic power and its continuing covert nuclear and missile assistance to Pakistan.

...

The Sino-Pakistan umbilical cord will snap only if New Delhi can stand up to Beijing and the Chinese strategy of building up a countervailing power to tie India down south of the Himalayas. But at present, India does not have even the conventional military resources to deter direct or indirect Chinese threats to its security.¹²

4.8 Strengthening this theme of self-defence, the Ministry of External Affairs issued a press release immediately following the tests which stated:

The Government is deeply concerned as were previous Governments, about the nuclear environment in India's neighbourhood. These tests provide reassurance to the people of India that their national security interests are paramount and will be promoted and protected. Succeeding generations of Indians would also rest assured that contemporary technologies associated with nuclear option have been passed on to them in this the 50th year of our independence.

4.9 The Prime Minister also sent a letter to President Clinton, dated 12 May, in which he wrote of the deteriorating security situation, especially the nuclear situation, faced by India. In part he said:

We have an overt nuclear weapon state on our borders, a state which committed armed aggression against India in 1962...to add to the distrust that country has materially helped another neighbour of ours to become a covert nuclear weapons state. At the hands of this bitter neighbour we have suffered three aggressions in the last 50 years. And for the last ten years

11 'India and Pakistan: News Analysis', *Missile Resources*, CDISS, May 1998.

12 Brahma Chellaney, 'Why India, Pushed Against the Wall, Could Go Overtly Nuclear', 20 September 1996, *Pacific News Service*.
Internet site: <http://www.pacificnews.org/pacificnews/jinn/stories/2.20/960920-india.html> (16 July 1998).

have been the victim of unremitting terrorism and militancy sponsored by it in several parts of our country, specially Punjab and Jammu & Kashmir.¹³

4.10 A number of witnesses before the Committee agreed with Chellaney's assessment and with the Indian Government's main justification for conducting the tests. Dr Mohan Malik submitted that China was 'the most important actor inducing India to exercise its nuclear option, and that 'India's nuclear and missile capabilities owe much to the dynamics of Sino-Indian rivalry'. He maintained:

The singlemost objective of China's Asia policy has been to prevent the rise of a peer competitor, a real Asian rival to challenge China's status to Asia-Pacific's Middle Kingdom...

...

Since the 1962 India-China War, China has built up Pakistan as a military counterweight to India so as to tie India down south of the Himalayas. India, on its part, has always perceived Sino-Pakistani military nexus as 'hostile', and 'threatening' in both intent and character.¹⁴

4.11 He argued that China had 'taken advantage of Burma's isolation since 1990 to satisfy its own great power ambitions, especially its desire to counter India in the Indian Ocean, and to ensure the control of vital sea lanes by drawing Burma tightly into its sphere of influence'.¹⁵ He further cited the presence of Chinese troops in Tibet, the extension of runways in that country and China's military modernisation program as developments that worried India's military community.¹⁶ Dr Malik had no doubt that:

No other Asian country has ever backed and armed another Asian country as China has backed and armed Pakistan over the last 30 years in such a consistent manner over such a long period of time. So there is obviously a key strategic objective that Pakistan and now Burma fulfil in China's strategy for the 21st century. They tie India down to the south of the Himalayas and thereby prevent its rise as a major challenger to China's primacy of the Asia-Pacific.¹⁷

4.12 According to Dr Malik, India's concerns were further heightened at signs 'that far from balancing China, the US had been drawing it into a close embrace, seemingly oblivious of its implications for regional security.'¹⁸ He acknowledged India's claims

13 India's letter to President Bill Clinton on Nuclear Testing, *New York Times* (Late edition), Wednesday 3 May 1998, p. 14.

14 Submission no. 24, vol. 2, pp. 4, 6.

15 Submission no. 24, vol. 2, p. 7.

16 Submission no. 24, vol. 2, pp. 7-8.

17 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 49; Submission no. 24, vol. 2, p.10.

18 Submission no. 24, vol. 2, p. 9.

that by detonating the nuclear weapons it has ‘corrected the asymmetry in power relationship with China and restored strategic balance of power in the Asia-Pacific which had tilted in China’s favour following the withdrawal of the former Soviet Union from the Asian region’.¹⁹ In summary Dr Malik asserted:

...India sees China as the mother of all its security concerns from the Bay of Bengal to the Persian Gulf.²⁰

4.13 Dr Debish Bhattacharya supported Dr Malik’s thesis and told the Committee that India had become more concerned in the 1990s about there being some kind of encirclement of India. He explained to the Committee:

On the east, there is Burma and Bangladesh, and the United States wants influence in Bangladesh. On the north nothing has been done about the Chinese exporting missile technology to Pakistan and, there is Pakistan.²¹

4.14 It should be noted that from his analysis of English and Hindi language newspapers, Dr Peter Friedlander found that India’s English speaking elite and the foreign press, perceived China as the prime reason for India’s nuclear tests. But a study of the Hindi press revealed a preoccupation with Pakistan and a coverage of the nuclear tests that emphasised the Pakistani threat and rubbed in insults from Islamabad.²² He did point out that the only times when the mention of China did arouse interest was when the press ‘reminded people of the Indo-Chinese war in 1962 and when there was a great deal of talk about the need to maintain awareness on all fronts for defence purposes’.²³

Failure of the international community to move toward nuclear disarmament

4.15 India strengthened its ground for claiming it acted in self-defence by focusing on the failure of the international community to deal with the deteriorating security situation in South Asia. India argued there was no element of adventurism on its part but rather Indians were left with no other option especially given China and Pakistan’s

19 Submission no. 24, vol. 2, p. 12.

20 Submission no. 24, vol. 2, p. 10. See also Dr Jim Masselos: ‘Pakistan’s perceived links with China fuel Indian unease as does the apparent closeness of US ties with China. The net of interlinked relationships is seen as being fundamentally hostile to India and its objectives. Until these fears can be allayed...then the situation of the subcontinent will continue to impose problems’. Submission no. 31, vol. 2, p. 149 and in *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 24.

21 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 4. Professor McPherson also drew attention to evidence of covert missile build-up in Pakistan aided by the transfer of missiles from North Korea and China, Chinese aggression and military build-up in Tibet and Chinese assistance to the Pakistanis to develop their nuclear program. See Submission no. 5, vol. 1, pp. 22–5; and also The Australian Greens, Submission no. 15, vol. 1, p. 158; Medical Association for Prevention of War (WA Branch), Submission no. 21, vol. 1, p. 208; and the Hon. Jim Kennan, Submission no. 43, vol. 3, pp. 197–98.

22 Submission no. 44, vol. 3, p. 206.

23 *Committee Hansard*, 7 August 1998, p. 340.

collaboration in missiles development and nuclear technology and the inaction shown by the world community.

4.16 Mr K. Subrahmanyam, former director of the Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses in India, had no doubt that ‘India was compelled to join the nuclear club because the international community legitimised nuclear weapons when they indefinitely extended the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT)’.²⁴

4.17 Similarly, on 27 May 1998, the Prime Minister Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee tied India’s security worries with the international community’s inability to guarantee a secure environment. He told the Indian Parliament:

The decades of the 80s and 90s had meanwhile witnessed the gradual deterioration of our security environment as a result of nuclear and missile proliferation. In our neighbourhood, nuclear weapons had increased and more sophisticated delivery systems inducted. In addition, India has also been the victim of externally aided and abetted terrorism, militancy and clandestine war.

At a global level, we see no evidence on the part of the nuclear weapon states to take decisive and irreversible steps in moving towards a nuclear-weapon-free-world. Instead, we have seen that the NPT has been extended indefinitely and unconditionally, perpetuating the existence of nuclear weapons in the hands of the five countries.

Under such circumstances, the Government was faced with a difficult decision. The touchstone that has guided us in making the correct choice clear was national security. These tests are a continuation of the policies set into motion that put this country on the path of self-reliance and independence of thought and action.²⁵

4.18 Not only did India portray itself as a defender of its people and its territory but as a staunch advocate of nuclear disarmament as the following official press release showed:

It is necessary to highlight today that India was in the vanguard of nations which ushered in the Partial Test Ban Treaty in 1963 due to environmental concerns. Indian representatives have worked in various international forums, including the Conference on Disarmament, for universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable arrangements for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. The Government would like to reiterate its support to efforts to realise the goal of a truly comprehensive international arrangement which would prohibit underground nuclear testing of all weapons as well as related experiments described as sub-critical or ‘hydro-nuclear’.

24 ‘Sign of Self-Confidence, Say Experts’, *Hindustan Times*, 12 May 1998.

25 Suo Motu Statement by Prime Minister Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee in Parliament, 27 May 1998. Internet site: <http://www.fas.org/news/india/1998/05/980527-india-pm.htm>

India remains committed to a speedy process of nuclear disarmament leading to total and global elimination of nuclear weapons.²⁶

4.19 India's preoccupation with China as a major threat to its security seemed inconsistent with a growing trend toward friendly relations between the two countries. In 1994, India and China had signed the Border Peace and Tranquility Agreement which addressed their dispute over their Himalayan borders.²⁷ The visit by President Jiang Zemin of China to India in 1996 marked the high point of improved relations between the two countries. In November 1996, China and India agreed in principle on mutual troop withdrawals from disputed areas along a 2,500 mile frontier and pledged that neither would use its military capability against the other.²⁸

4.20 A number of commentators and analysts, aware of the trend toward improved relations between these two neighbours, regarded India's stated fear of China's military intentions as exaggerated. They felt that any suggestion that China posed a major threat to India's national security interests 'flies in the face of ten years of Chinese military reforms, the improvement in Sino-Indian relations since Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Beijing in 1988'.²⁹

4.21 Similarly, they discounted the argument that the Chinese-Pakistani nexus posed a real threat to India's security interests. They maintained that nothing had happened recently in India's security environment that warranted even a mild qualification of this proposition. A prominent Indian journalist Praful Bidwai argued:

It is irrelevant to cite, as some of India's hawks do, Sino-Pakistan nuclear cooperation. Apart from being old hat, such cooperation is of limited, non-strategic nature. No state has recently threatened India with nuclear weapons or acted more belligerently than before.³⁰

4.22 Before the Committee, several witnesses also drew on this record of growing detente between India and China, to question the genuineness of India's justification.

26 Official Press Statements, Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, 13 May 1998. There are numerous similar official statements, for example in response to the United Nations Security Council presidential statement of 14 May, the Indian Government again made clear that the tests were not directed against any country but were conducted because 'of the continuing threat posed to India by the deployment, overtly and covertly, of nuclear weapons in the lands and seas adjoining us that we have been forced to carry out these tests, so that we can retain a credible option to develop these weapons, should they be needed for the security of India's people, who constitute one-fifth of the world's population'. New Delhi, 15 May 1998.

27 Raju G.C.Thomas, 'The South Asian Standoff', *Foreign Service Journal*, February 1998.

28 See Major. Gen. Dipankar Banerjee (retd), 'India-China Relations and Southeast Asia', *Asian Defence Journal*, no. 6, June 1998, p. 7.

29 Eric Arnett, Project Leader on Military Technology at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, Sweden, 'What Threat?', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, March/April 1997, vol. 53, no. 2. Without hesitation he asserted that 'in 1997, there is no China nuclear threat to India, and no plan to create one.' See also Praful Bidwai and Achin Vanaik, 'A Very Political Bomb', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, *ibid.*; and Dr Samina Yasmeen, *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 173.

30 Praful Bidwai, 'Seeking a Paradigm Shift', *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 8, 11-24 April 1998.

DFAT and the Department of Defence noted India's stated concern about China being its main security threat but held that 'such perceptions appear to give little weight to the improvement in Sino-Indian relations over the last decade'.³¹

4.23 Following this same line of argument, Mr Hamish McDonald maintained that prior to the election of the BJP government there had been 'a longstanding process of confidence building with the Chinese and substantive negotiations on the border question'.³²

4.24 In support of this view, Dr Samina Yasmeen argued that the reference to the presence of a Sino-Pakistan axis fails to take account of the reality of a changed Chinese position vis-à-vis South Asia. She asserted that the Chinese Government has consistently pursued a policy of improving relations with India. According to Dr Yasmeen, India responded positively to China's approach and 'Sino-Indian rapprochement had become a reality of the South Asian scene'.³³ She pointed to India's need for prestige and recognition in the post-Cold War era, arguing that domestic factors provide a more realistic understanding for New Delhi's decision to test nuclear weapons. Indeed, she suggested that India may have been reinforcing its claim to a better status in the post-Cold War era.³⁴

*Strength respects strength*³⁵

4.25 The extent to which the Indian Government deliberately played on the China and Pakistani threat in order to gain domestic and international approval for their actions is difficult to determine. Nevertheless, India's apprehensions about its security situation must be acknowledged as a significant but not the only factor which determined its foreign and defence policies.

4.26 Undoubtedly India perceived China as a rival and potential security threat. India's reasons, however, for exploding the nuclear bombs go beyond the necessity to deter overt conventional and nuclear attack from neighbours or to preserve its territory from incursion or secessionist movements, for example in Kashmir. India's argument about national security is not confined to the defence and preservation of its territory and its people. India's security interests encompass a much broader context that takes in the protection and enhancement of national integrity and independence.³⁶ India felt that it needed to be able to resist intimidation from potentially hegemonic powers. It was concerned about the ability of powerful nations with interests in the region, such as the United States and China, to intrude into its affairs and those of South Asia.

31 Submission no. 33, vol. 3, p. 9.

32 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 79.

33 Submission no. 30, vol. 2, p. 137.

34 *ibid.*

35 Rashme Sehgal, 'Abdul Kalam Hits Out at Anti-Nuclear Zealots', *Times of India*, 8 August 1998.

36 Refer to Steven A. Hoffmann, 'The International Politics of Southern Asia', *Journal of Asia and African Studies*, vol. 33, no. 1 February 1998.

Witnesses said that India saw nuclear weapons as a political tool to be used in pursuing foreign policy as well as in military operations.

4.27 Some witnesses developed this line of argument further. They appreciated that India sought to preserve its territory and to protect its integrity as a sovereign nation, but that India's nuclear tests, were also a means to enhance its prestige. The nuclear weapons were not only a deterrence against military attack and political coercion but were a way of becoming a major regional and global power to be respected and to be taken seriously.

4.28 The desire by Indians to be recognised as a great nation permeates Indian society. A poll by the *Times of India* conducted in six cities within 24 hours of the first set of tests revealed that 91 per cent of those interviewed approved of the explosions.³⁷ Indeed, expressions of joyous pride followed the announcement of India's nuclear explosions—people greeted the news with public displays of enthusiastic support; they danced in the streets and distributed sweets.³⁸ They were confident that it would earn their country the international recognition and status due to a powerful nation. The Indian tests were seen as an assertion of national greatness in defiance of the hostility of the major powers.

4.29 Indeed, nationalism and India's self image were fundamental to India's policy-makers in deciding to become a nuclear weapons power. The nuclear tests touched a strong current of national pride in the Indian people and met a deep underlying need to be acknowledged not only as a self-reliant and autonomous nation but as a major international force with authority and power.³⁹ Defence Minister George Fernandes stated bluntly 'India has to restore its pride and its place in the world'.⁴⁰

4.30 The nuclear tests also provided an opportunity for Indian scientists to demonstrate and receive accolades for their skill and ability. Indeed, the scientific community and their desire to 'show off their excellence' may well have fed into the overall domestic approval for India to demonstrate their nuclear prowess.⁴¹ On a practical and technical level the tests gave them the opportunity to build on these tests and to move further ahead with developments in nuclear technology. Dr Malik observed:

37 Tim Healy, 'A Nuclear Test Makes Good Domestic Politics but Lousy Foreign Policy', *AsiaWeek*, 22 May 1998; *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 19 May 1998.

38 Refer to Dr Jim Masselos, Submission no. 31, vol. 2, who gives a comprehensive description of the reaction to the Indian tests in India.

39 See Dr Masselos, *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 19.

40 Interview with Georges Fernandes, 'Action Will Follow a Review', Cover Story, *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 8, 11–24 April 1998.

41 See comments by Associate Professor Ian Copland, Submission no. 4, vol. 1, p. 17 and Dr Masselos, Submission no. 31, p. 91.

While Pakistan was in possession of tested Chinese nukes and missiles, Indian scientists were not absolutely certain of whether they had usable and reliable nuclear weapons which form the basis of stable nuclear deterrence. Moreover, the five NWSs had gone in for smaller, and hence more usable nukes or designer nukes because advances in nuclear and missile technology afforded the opportunity to use nuclear weapons in regional conflict without causing collateral damage. Making small nuclear bombs (miniaturisation or mini-nukes) necessitates testing.⁴²

4.31 As noted above, DFAT and the Department of Defence maintained that their assessment of India's motivations for conducting the tests do not necessarily concur with reasons given by India and that India overstated its fear of China. Both departments argued that the fundamental reason for India's tests is tied up with its place in the international community. Mr Griffin from DFAT told the Committee:

The conducting of the tests in the first instance was to prove in an anachronistic way that they could shoot their way into the top boardrooms which they felt disgruntled about being excluded from for so long. Having demonstrated that they could do what...the big boys do, that demonstration effect is, in terms of prestige, all they need.⁴³

4.32 India's drive for international status was frustrated by its inability to gain recognition as a global power. Dr Malik told the Committee that during the Cold War, the Soviet Union provided a nuclear security umbrella for India, but in the post-Cold War world India, as a growing power, found itself increasingly 'friendless and lonely'.⁴⁴ Its exclusion as a permanent member of the Security Council, of ASEAN and of APEC deepened its sense of isolation. According to a number of submitters and strategic analysts India felt left out of international affairs; it believed that it was not taken seriously and that its voice was not being heard.⁴⁵

4.33 Dr Jim Masselos submitted that Indians have 'a sense of a new kind of world imperialism which excludes them and which tries to dominate them, and there is that sense of apartheid by...first world nations'.⁴⁶ Along similar lines, Dr McPherson argued: 'Indians often feel that the West dismisses the reality of their achievement in remaining a democracy and accord more respect to the repressive and far from democratic nuclear power, China'.⁴⁷ This feeling of neglect, even alienation, sharpened India's ambition to be recognised as a major power.

42 Dr Mohan Malik, Submission no. 24, vol. 2, p. 11.

43 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, pp. 95.

44 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 46; see also p. 57.

45 For example, see Jim Kennan, Submission no. 43, vol. 3, p. 198.

46 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 21 and Submission no. 31, vol. 2, p. 147. See also Dr Malik, *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 57 and Submission no. 24, vol. 2, p. 4.

47 Submission no. 5, vol. 1, p. 20.

4.34 Professor Stephen Cohen described how deeply Indians felt about being overlooked:

This sense of isolation cuts across the entire political spectrum, and is compounded and heightened by an awareness of economic failure (compared with the fast-growing economies to the east), and a belief that India was not accorded the respect due to it because of its civilizational and cultural qualities, its population, and its potential, let alone its dominant position in South Asia.⁴⁸

4.35 It is important to keep in mind the association made between the possession of nuclear weapons and great nation status. Witnesses in evidence said that India saw the tests as a means to earn international respect and recognition. This connection between nuclear capability and national might is clear in a number of public statements made by Indian officials which promote an image of India as a strong, self-reliant nation.

4.36 After the tests the Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee announced that 'India is now a nuclear weapon state...the decision to carry out these tests was guided by the paramount importance we attach to national security...the tests...have given India shakti, they have given strength, they have given India self-confidence.'⁴⁹ In a similar vein, Dr R. Chidambaram, Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, explained after the tests that 'India must be strong. The greatest advantage of recognised strength is that you don't have to use it.'⁵⁰ Clearly Indians associated national strength with the possession of nuclear weapons. The link between nuclear weapons and national status is a fundamental and unquestioned assumption at the heart of India's drive for international standing.

4.37 Further evidence of the strong association between India's self image as a global force and the possession of nuclear capability can be seen in the reaction of the people of India to the news of the nuclear tests. The *Hindustan Times* wrote:

The 'smiling Buddha' of 1974 has now blossomed into a new assertion of the country's right to arm itself in a manner which it believes is best suited to its security interests.⁵¹

4.38 Witnesses before the Committee also drew attention to this tight connection between the possession of nuclear weapons and national prestige. According to Professor Ian Copland, India believed 'understandably, that possession of nuclear weapons is one of the distinguishing marks of great power status'. He went on to say 'It reckons that going public on its nuclear capability will give it leverage with

48 Professor Stephen P. Cohen, 'An Overview of India's Nuclear Tests'.
Internet site: http://acdisweb.acdis.uiuc.edu/homepage_docs/resource_docs/test_docs/CohenHAsia.html

49 N. Ram, 'The Perils of Nuclear Adventurism', *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 11, 23 May-5 June 1998.

50 T.S. Subramanian, 'Key Players in Pokhran', *ibid.*

51 'Moment of Pride', Editorial, *Hindustan Times*, 12 May 1998.

America, Britain, Russia, France and (perhaps especially China) that it has not had in the past.⁵² Mr Harun Rashid, former Bangladesh Ambassador to Australia, argued that India's main purpose in conducting the tests was to signal to China and Pakistan that it was a 'regional player with nuclear capability' and to the world that it 'should not be ignored as a global power.'⁵³

4.39 Mr McDonald agreed that great power status is equated with nuclear weapons possession and noted that the five permanent members of the UN Security Council are the five recognised nuclear-armed powers.⁵⁴ He strongly supported the view that national status and prestige were major factors driving India's decision to detonate the weapons. He believed that India, equating great nation status with nuclear weapon ownership and desiring standing as a world power, had kept the China threat alive to justify keeping its nuclear option open.⁵⁵

4.40 Also using the Security Council as a yard stick of international influence, the People for Nuclear Disarmament pointed out that since its inception the composition of the UN Security Council had been dominated by the permanent members who were also declared nuclear weapon states. It went on to conclude 'it is little wonder that countries such as India should see that their international status would be enhanced by possession of the bomb'.⁵⁶ Mr Richard Leaver pointed out that the BJP government believed that the nuclear tests would pave the way to a seat on the UN Security Council.⁵⁷

Domestic politics

4.41 Indian nationalism and India's annoyance at the lack of international recognition were significant factors guiding government policy. Some commentators and submitters argue further that domestic party politics finally pushed India into going overtly nuclear: that the newly elected BJP was, for political gain, prepared to take that final step in openly demonstrating India's nuclear capability.

4.42 Clearly, the desire of many Indians to see their country given international recognition as a global power was an important force in influencing decision-makers within the BJP. To explain India's decision to demonstrate its nuclear weapons capability, some observers within India cited the rise of Hindu nationalism which, to them, had altered the language of Indian politics and was beginning to transform the

52 Associate Professor Ian Copland, Submission no. 4, vol. 1, p. 17. See also Sanaka Weeraratna, Submission no. 8, vol. 1, pp. 45–6; The Australian Greens, Submission no. 15, vol. 1, pp. 158–59 and statement by Dr Samina Yasmeen, *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 174.

53 Submission no. 10, vol. 1, p. 57.

54 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 80. See also evidence by Dr Roderic Pitty, *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, pp. 262–64.

55 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 80. pp.79, 80.

56 Submission no. 9, vol. 1, p.51.

57 Richard Leaver, Submission no. 12, vol. 1, p. 119.

character of Indian society. They saw the BJP as the catalyst that propelled the decision to conduct the nuclear tests. Praful Bidwai and Achin Vanaik, who assert that the timing of the tests was determined solely by the fact that the BJP-led coalition took power six weeks before the event, wrote:

India's nuclearization reflects the belief of the BJP-RSS as well as growing sections of the Indian elite that nuclear weapons constitute a shortcut to establishing the country's stature as a major actor—in Prime Minister's Atal Bihari Vajpayee's words, the nuclear tests 'show our strength and silence our enemies'.

The near-hysterical adulation this act initially drew cannot be properly understood without recognizing that the groundwork was laid through the growing acceptance of the way in which the BJP has transformed the discourse of Indian nationalism. Despite resistance from the left and the center, it is the right's version of the 'cultural' essence of India, of national security, of national 'greatness' that are setting the direction of Indian politics, both external and internal.⁵⁸

4.43 The BJP clearly sought to tap this deep current of national pride. It saw the political advantages to be gained from building on and further invigorating strong nationalistic sentiments. The party promoted the call of Hindutva which is a plea for national greatness. According to the BJP, Hindutva '...is a call to all Indians to their highest capabilities'.⁵⁹

4.44 To stir nationalistic fervour, the BJP drew on the assumption that the possession of nuclear weapons would bring national strength and greatness. In outlining its policy on major issues, Drs Krishna Bhatta and Mahesh Mehta maintained that they believed in making India strong and able to maintain peace in the region. They noted that with China and Pakistan possessing nuclear capabilities, then India must also have nuclear weapons.⁶⁰

4.45 A number of witnesses before the Committee supported the view that the accession of the BJP to government was a significant factor precipitating the nuclear tests. They believed that the BJP saw the demonstration of India's nuclear capability as politically advantageous, and as a means of generating and galvanising public support.

4.46 DFAT and Defence clearly identified domestic political considerations as an important force behind India's decision to go nuclear. They stated:

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led coalition government was seeking to consolidate its hold on power. It had been in office for less than two months

58 Praful Bidwai and Achin Vanaik, 'A Very Political Bomb', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, *ibid.*

59 M.V. Kamath, 'Give Us This Day Our Sense of Mission', BJP, April 1996, *BJP Homepage*, *ibid.*

60 'Nuclear Issue', *Policy on Major Issues*, BJP, *ibid.*

and comprised a coalition of eighteen constituent elements with internal divisions and every prospect of infighting. The BJP apparently concluded that it could gain electoral support and a consolidation of the coalition, as a result of its decision to test. As popular support for the tests subsequently demonstrated, it may have been correct in this, at least in the short term.⁶¹

4.47 Professor Copland maintained that the BJP-led coalition, holding a majority in parliament of just ten seats, was conscious of its vulnerability. It ‘saw the tests as an easy way of winning mass support...more especially it wanted to shore up its core constituency who were getting restless following the BJP’s dropping of other core planks’.⁶²

4.48 Supporting this argument, Dr Yasmeeen maintained that the BJP coalition was not expected to stay in power for longer than a few weeks. She suggested that the Indian Prime Minister ‘may have exercised the option to test nuclear weapons in order to establish his government’s credibility as a “good and strong” representative of Indian people’.⁶³

4.49 Not all agree that the BJP acted for purely domestic political gain. Dr Kenneth McPherson rejected the notion put forward by a number of commentators that the Indian bomb was ‘a child of the recently elected right wing BJP government and was paraded as evidence of India’s resurgent Hindu nationalism’.⁶⁴ He suggested, rather, that the nuclear bomb had wide bipartisan support.⁶⁵ Although he acknowledged that the BJP were prepared to take the ultimate step to resume nuclear testing he noted that the nuclear program was an evolutionary process.⁶⁶ He referred to a study that had shown that there existed in India overwhelming support for the possession of nuclear capability two years before the election of the BJP.⁶⁷

4.50 The BJP itself denies that its actions were politically motivated. Its general secretary, Mr Venkaiah Naidu, refuted suggestions that the timing of the tests was influenced by party political considerations by pointing out that the BJP had always advocated making a bomb and that this was stated in the party’s manifesto and incorporated in the National Agenda of Governance of the government. He asserted that ‘We would not have undertaken the nuclear tests for partisan political purposes. It was part of our known programme and there is no question of using this for electoral gain.’⁶⁸

61 Submission no. 33, vol. 3, p. 9.

62 Submission no. 4, vol. 1, p. 18. See also Harun Rashid, Submission no. 10, vol. 1, p. 57.

63 Submission no. 30, vol. 2, p. 138.

64 Submission no. 5, vol. 1, p. 24.

65 *ibid.*

66 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 218.

67 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 219; Submission no. 5, vol. 1, p. 24.

68 *The Hindu*, ‘BJP Denies Political Angle to Tests’, 14 May 1998, p. 11.

4.51 Indeed, India had been teetering on the threshold of going nuclear for many years. The former Atomic Energy Commission Chairman Dr Raja Ramanna's recent comments indicate that the preparations for the tests would have started many months previous to the tests.⁶⁹ A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, Director-General of the Defence Research and Development Organisation, explained that the process of nuclear weaponisation involves many stages. He stated that India's five tests marked the culmination of many steps; that before the tests there were simulation, design, verification and many laboratory experiments.⁷⁰

4.52 Undoubtedly there were strong domestic political motives for India to declare its nuclear weapons status—the BJP clearly thought that it would be a politically wise move. But other factors such as national security and the desire for recognition as a world force came into play and indeed fed into one another. Opinions differ as to which factor should be given greater weight. Nevertheless, in seeking solutions to the issue of the nuclear tests, all three factors should be taken into consideration, especially India's security concerns and its need to be seen as an important and valued member of the international community.

International Reactions to India's Nuclear Tests

4.53 Generally countries throughout the world condemned the tests. Some focused narrowly on India and others looked more broadly at global disarmament; some imposed sanctions, others simply urged restraint. The following selection of countries and their reactions to India's nuclear tests provides an indication of the range of responses at the bilateral and multilateral level.

Pakistan

4.54 Pakistan's reaction to India's nuclear tests was immediate, strong and unequivocal. The Foreign Minister of Pakistan stated that the resumption of nuclear testing by India was not a surprise, that for the past twenty-four years Pakistan had consistently drawn the attention of the international community to India's nuclear aspirations. He maintained that India had 'become a nuclear weapon state, openly for the first time. India has owned up. India has bared its nuclear fangs and claws'. In turning to Pakistan's situation, he asserted that: 'We have made it absolutely clear in the past that any step of nuclear escalation by India will find a matching response from Pakistan. We stand by that commitment'. Finally, with unmistakable resolve, he went on to say:

I wish to assure the nation that Pakistan has the technical capability to respond to any threats to its security. The ideological and geographical frontiers of Pakistan, are by the grace of Almighty Allah secure and impregnable. Pakistan will take all appropriate steps which are within its

69 Anand Parthasarathy, 'For A Weapons Delivery System', *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 12, 6–19 June 1998.

70 Interview with A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 19, 12–25 September 1998.

sovereign right of self-defence. No outside pressure will deflect us from pursuing the path of self-reliance. We alone will determine what is essential for our security.⁷¹

4.55 The Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif made it clear that Pakistan saw India's actions as directed unequivocally at them. He wrote to leaders of the G8 countries telling them that India's nuclear testing 'of a whole range of weaponry, including systems which are Pakistan specific, has multiplied the immediacy and the magnitude of threat to our security'. He stated that the 'BJP government has already made its aggressive designs against Pakistan a fundamental article of its policy agenda...in the face of these ominous developments which pose an immediate threat to our security, we cannot be expected to remain complacent'.⁷²

4.56 The overriding message that Pakistan sent to the international community was of a dangerously changed security landscape in South Asia and of its rock-solid commitment to ensure Pakistan's safety.⁷³

4.57 On 23 May, Nawaz Sharif explained further that 'No amount of condemnation or sanctions have changed the immediacy or magnitude of the threat to us. Practically sanctions mean little and change nothing. The reality on the ground remains.' The Prime Minister went on to say that the whole nation had shown a sober and mature approach to developments in the region. He reiterated:

We have not taken any action in haste. We have not behaved in a tit-for-tat manner. We have not let any madness engulf us. Whatever decision we will eventually take it will be in our supreme national interest.⁷⁴

Clearly, the Pakistani government had put India and the rest of the world on notice that they would not, under any circumstances, allow their country to be put at risk.

United States of America

4.58 The US responded promptly to the Indian tests. President Clinton expressed deep disappointment at the nuclear explosions, threatened to punish India for its underground testing, and urged India's neighbours to refrain from taking the nuclear route. On 12 May, he made the following statement:

71 Statement by the Foreign Minister of Pakistan in the Senate of Pakistan, 11 May 1998 and Opening Remarks made on 12 May 1998 by the Foreign Minister in the Senate of Pakistan on India's nuclear test.

72 The text of this letter was reproduced in *Dawn*, 17 May 1998.

73 A Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram in the UN Conference on Disarmament, 14 May 1998 underscored this message. On 14 May he told the UN Conference on Disarmament that the series of nuclear tests conducted by India had significantly altered the strategic and security equation in the region and that they presented a 'direct and most serious challenge to Pakistan's security'. Although noting that Pakistan had consistently acted as a responsible member of the international community and never resorted to adventurism and provocation, he insisted that Pakistan alone would decide on and take the measures required to guarantee its security.

74 Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's statement on the Indian nuclear tests, Press Conference, 23 May 1998.

This action by India not only threatens the stability of the region, it directly challenges the firm international consensus to stop the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. I call on India to announce that it will conduct no further tests, and that it will sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty now and without conditions. I also urge India's neighbours not to follow suit—not to follow down the path of a dangerous arms race...our laws have very stringent provisions, signed into law by me in 1994, in response to nuclear tests by non-nuclear weapons states. And I intend to implement them fully.⁷⁵

4.59 President Clinton invoked the relevant legislation almost immediately. In a memorandum to the Secretary of State dated 13 May he announced:

In accordance with section 102(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, I hereby determine that India, a non-nuclear-weapon state, detonated a nuclear explosion device on May 11, 1998. The relevant agencies and instrumentalities of the United States Government are hereby directed to take the necessary actions to impose the sanctions described in section 102(b)(2) of that Act.⁷⁶

4.60 The sanctions imposed and required by Section 102 of the Arms Export Control Act, otherwise known as the Glenn Amendment, are as follows:

- termination of assistance under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, except for humanitarian assistance for food or other agricultural commodities;
- termination of sales of defence articles, defence services and construction services under the Arms Export Control Act, and termination of licenses for the export of any item on the United States munitions list;
- termination of all foreign military financing under the Arms Export Control Act;
- denial of any credit, credit guarantees, or other financial assistance by any department, agency, or instrumentality of the United States Government;
- opposition to the extension of any loan for financial or technical assistance by any international financial institution;
- prohibition on United States banks making any loan or providing any credit to the Government of India, except for the purpose of purchasing food or agricultural commodities; and

75 Letter dated 14 May from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the Conference on Disarmament transmitting remarks by President Clinton at a Press conference on 12 May concerning Indian nuclear testing, CD/1505, 14 May 1998.

76 Public Diplomacy Query, Text: Clinton's order to impose sanctions on India is issued 13 May 1998.

- prohibition on the export of specific goods and technology subject to export licensing by the Commerce Department.⁷⁷

4.61 Finally, a similar determination under section 2(b)(4) of the Export-Import Bank Act of 1945 directed that ‘the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank may not give approval to guarantee, insure, or extend credit, or participate in the extension of credit in support of United States exports to India’.⁷⁸

4.62 In summary, according to State Department spokesman, Mr James Rubin, the sanctions were ‘going to involve very stiff penalties on the Government of India, including development assistance, military sales and exchanges, trade and dual-use technology, US loan guarantees’. He explained further:

The requirement for the United States to oppose loans and assistance in the international financial institutions could potentially cost India billions of dollars in desperately needed financing for infrastructure and other projects. The prohibition on loans by US banks to the government of India and on Ex-Im and OPIC activities could cost hundreds of millions of dollars, affect projects already approved and could cause major US companies and financial institutions to rethink entirely their presence and operations in India.⁷⁹

4.63 The US administration also took steps to dissuade Pakistan from retaliating in response to India’s tests. President Clinton spoke directly to the Pakistan Prime Minister and decided to send a mission to Pakistan, headed by Deputy Secretary Talbott and General Zinni, the Commander in Chief of the regional command. Mr Rubin explained that the mission would work closely with the Pakistani Government to try to ensure that ‘the actions by the Indian government does not spawn a nuclear arms race in South Asia and that all steps we can take are taken to encourage restraint and to try to stabilize what could be an increasingly dangerous situation’.⁸⁰

Japan

4.64 Japan, one of the largest bilateral donors of economic assistance to India, denounced the tests and announced it would freeze all grant assistance to India with the exception of those programmes of an emergency or humanitarian nature, and grassroots grant assistance. The Japanese Government indicated that it would inform the World Bank of its intention to withdraw Japan’s offer to host the India Development Bank chairmanship.⁸¹

77 Letter dated 14 May from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the Conference on Disarmament transmitting...the text of a statement by the White House Press Secretary on 13 May concerning India sanctions, CD/1505, 14 May 1998.

78 *ibid.*

79 Transcript: State Department Noon Briefing, State Department Spokesman James Rubin, 13 May 1998.

80 *ibid.*

81 Press Conference by the Press Secretary, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 15 May 1998.

4.65 On learning of India's second tests, Japan took additional measures which included freezing yen-loan to India for new projects and examining carefully the loans extended to India by international financial institutions. Japan also temporarily recalled its ambassador to discuss the matter.

4.66 Responding to Pakistan, Japan sent a special envoy to Islamabad with a letter from Prime Minister Hashimoto urging restraint. The Prime Minister also phoned Prime Minister Sharif to encourage him to shun the nuclear weapon option. Japan urged Pakistan 'to stop its nuclear development and tests, and to become party to the CTBT and the NPT, while calling on the international community to unite in addressing the situation of nuclear proliferation'.⁸²

China

4.67 China strongly condemned and expressed shock at the nuclear tests. It argued that the Indian Government had undermined the international effort to ban nuclear tests in defiance of universal condemnation so as to obtain hegemony in South Asia and had triggered off a nuclear arms race in the region. China refuted outright India's assertion that China posed a nuclear threat to India, arguing that: 'this gratuitous accusation by India against China is solely for the purpose of finding an excuse for the development of its nuclear weapons'.⁸³

United Kingdom

4.68 Mr Derek Fatchett, Minister of State at the Foreign Office, summoned the Indian High Commissioner to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to convey the Government's shock and dismay at the Indian tests. The British High Commissioner was recalled from Delhi for consultation on how Britain and Europe could most effectively convey to India their fears for the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and for the stability of the South Asia region. The Foreign Secretary, Mr Robin Cook, told parliament that the tests undermined the efforts of the international community to prevent nuclear proliferation and that Britain would seek to co-ordinate its response with that of its major international partners at the next G-8 Summit Meeting to be held the following day. He also informed parliament that Britain was urging Pakistani leaders to show restraint 'at what we acknowledge is a difficult time for them'.⁸⁴

82 Comments by the Chief Cabinet Secretary on Measures in Response to the Second Nuclear Testing conducted by India; and Comments by the Chief Secretary on the Nuclear Testing conducted by Pakistan, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 14 May and 28 May 1998; Press Conference by the Press Secretary, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 15 May 1998 and 19 May 1998.

83 Letter dated 15 May 1998 from the Permanent Representative of China to the Conference on Disarmament ...transmitting the text of the statement issued on 14 May 1998 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China concerning India's nuclear tests, CD/1508.

84 *Indian Nuclear Tests, Foreign & Commonwealth Office News*, 14 May 1998.
Internet site: <http://www.fco.gov.UK/news/newstext.asp?883>.

Russia

4.69 The Russian Foreign Ministry announced that Russia viewed the nuclear tests with alarm and concern and denounced the tests as unacceptable. It added that as a close friend of India, Russia regretted India's actions but would not support sanctions against that country. The Foreign Ministry called on India to reverse its nuclear policy and to adhere to the Non Proliferation Treaty and the CTBT.⁸⁵

Canada

4.70 Canada also promptly responded to the tests by expressing its deep concern and disappointment with India's actions. It took a two-pronged approach in addressing the problem of both non-proliferation and of disarmament. It acknowledged the risk of India escaping significant real censure or even gaining nuclear-weapon state status. Mr Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs, stated: 'any widespread endorsement of *de facto* or *de jure* recognition that the five nuclear-weapons States of the Non Proliferation Treaty can become six, or seven or eight, will inevitably lead to pressures for further expansion of this club'. He maintained that Canada's actions in response to India's tests were intended to demonstrate its unwillingness to accept such an outcome. Canada took the following steps:

- recalled its High Commissioner;
- cancelled CIDA consultations, trade policy talks and the Joint Ministerial Committee;
- banned all military exports to India;
- opposed non-humanitarian loans to India by the World Bank;
- stopped non-humanitarian Canadian development assistance to India; and
- decided to offer Pakistan those aid funds withheld from India, should Pakistan agree to refrain from testing.⁸⁶

4.71 In addressing disarmament, Mr Axworthy announced that Canada would continue to pursue its disarmament agenda with vigour. He conceded that little progress had been made in turning the bilateral START process into reality, pointing out that the Russian Duma had refused to consider early ratification of the START II agreement.

85 Dr Scott Parrish, 'Russia Reaction to the Indian Nuclear Tests', 13 May 1998, Centre for Non Proliferation Studies. Internet site: <http://cns.miis.edu/russia.html> (7 September 1998)

86 Notes for a Statement by the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade, 'India's Nuclear Testing: Implications for Nuclear Disarmament and the Nuclear Non-proliferation Regime', 26 May 1998. *Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade* (Canada) Internet site: <http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/english/news/statements/98%5Fstate/98%5F040e.htm> (14 August 1998)

Sweden

4.72 The Swedish Government expressed its deep dismay at the Indian tests and urged the Indian Government to refrain from any further testing. The Minister for Foreign Affairs called in the Indian Ambassador to make clear Sweden's views. As a country strongly committed to nuclear disarmament, Sweden took the opportunity to express the view that the international community had 'reached a point where new political force is needed in nuclear disarmament work.' The Minister for Foreign Affairs drew attention to the Canberra Commission's proposals and noted they should be considered in depth in international disarmament fora with a view to their early implementation.⁸⁷

Germany

4.73 Germany condemned the tests and was one of the first countries to act against India by freezing fresh development aid to India and cancelling government talks with India on development policy.⁸⁸

Indonesia

4.74 Although Indonesia did not condone India's actions, it took a less condemnatory stand. It also turned the spotlight on the nuclear weapon states and their commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ali Alatas, stated:

Indonesia fully acknowledges the sovereign right of states to determine their own security requirements and the means to ensure them, but as a non-nuclear weapon state, we are of the view that such a security policy should be implemented without recourse to nuclear arms.

It is undeniable, however, that the possession of these weapons by the five nuclear powers has conferred untenable privileges, incompatible with the sovereign equality of all states as enshrined in the UN Charter. As long as these are maintained, there will always be an incentive for the non-nuclear weapon states to acquire nuclear-weapon capability. Hence, we call on the nuclear weapon states to fully implement both the letter and the spirit of agreements relating to non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, and on all states to refrain from developing these weapons and thereby facilitate the attainment of the ultimate goal of the elimination of all nuclear weapons.⁸⁹

87 Address by the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mrs Lena Hjelm-Wallen, at the seminar, 'Nuclear Arms - Phased Out or Back Again', Stockholm, 12 May 1998.

Internet site: <http://www.ud.se/english/press/speformi/980512-0.htm> (14 August 1998)

88 The *Hindu*, 'PM Writes to Western Leaders on Nuclear Tests', 13 May 1998, p. 1.

89 Statement by Minister for Foreign Affairs, Ali Alatas, at the Ministerial Meeting of the Non Aligned Movement on India's Recent Nuclear Tests, Coordinating Bureau, Cartagena, 19 May 1998. Internet site: <http://www.dfa-deplu.go.id/english2/Nuklir-India.htm> (14 August 1998)

Saudi Arabia

4.75 The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia also expressed concern about India's tests and called for the complete prohibition of the deployment of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. It urged all members of the international community to refrain from conducting tests, which 'threaten all of mankind'.⁹⁰

Sri Lanka

4.76 After a noticeable delay, Sri Lanka finally responded officially to the tests. It noted with deep concern the missile and nuclear testings that had taken place in the South Asian region over the past few months. As with Indonesia it wanted to broaden the context of the debate to include global disarmament. A statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs explained:

Sri Lanka believes that the entire international community should continue with efforts to achieve global disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons without which peace and international security will continue to be in constant jeopardy.⁹¹

4.77 Foreign Minister Kadirgamar stated that Sri Lanka was not opposed to anybody becoming a nuclear power and did not think the nuclear club should be closed to only five members but rather there was the need for total global nuclear disarmament. In turning to sanctions, he said 'the application of sanctions includes a very judgemental decision, a sort of punishment. World affairs cannot be conducted on that basis because very few countries can afford to take a high moral ground on anything at all'. He added that the surrounding countries 'hoped that the tensions can be contained in whatever way possible as between two mature countries.'⁹²

Multilateral

UN Secretary-General

4.78 On 11 May, a spokesman on behalf of the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan expressed deep regret that India had conducted three underground nuclear tests and called on all states for maximum restraint with a view to facilitating nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.⁹³

90 Council of Ministers Meeting, SPA:18 May 1998. Internet site: <http://www.saudi.net/press-release/98-spo/98-05-3.html>

91 *Sri Lanka News Update*, 15 May 1998. Internet site: http://lanka.net/lankaupdate/15_may-98.html (4 September 1998)

92 *ibid.*

93 Press Release SG/SM/6555. *FAS (Federation of American Scientists) News*. Internet site: <http://www.fas.org/news/india/1998/03/19980311-sgsm6333.html>

UN Security Council

4.79 Soon after India's second set of tests, the President of the Security Council issued a statement which strongly deplored India's actions. In part his statement read:

The Council strongly urges India to refrain from any further tests. It is of the view that such testing is contrary to the de facto moratorium on the testing of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and to global efforts towards nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

The Council also expressed its concern at the effects of this development on peace and stability in the region.⁹⁴

Conference on Disarmament

4.80 The Conference on Disarmament resumed its 1998 session on 14 May amid a storm of global protest about the nuclear explosions. Over thirty countries took the floor to express their regret over India's tests.

G-8

4.81 On 17 May, the leaders of the G-8 countries—the US, the UK, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and Russia—agreed to a statement which condemned the nuclear tests. They expressed their grave concern about the increased risk of nuclear and missile proliferation in South Asia and elsewhere and urged India and other states in the region to refrain from further tests and the deployment of nuclear weapons or ballistic missiles. The G-8 leaders called upon India to rejoin the mainstream of international opinion; to adhere unconditionally to the NPT and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; and to enter into negotiations on a global treaty to stop the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.⁹⁵ The Group failed to take a collective stand on the imposition of sanctions and it was left to individual G8 members to decide what specific measures they would take.⁹⁶

Summary

4.82 The reactions of individual countries and of countries which came together in international fora covered much common ground. Overwhelmingly, the international community expressed grave concern over the tests and the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Many countries called on India to refrain from further tests, some went further urging it to adhere to the NPT and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Other countries looked to the broader problem of nuclear proliferation and wanted greater commitment from the nuclear weapons states and the international community as a whole toward the elimination of all nuclear weapons. The approach toward the

94 Press Release SC6517, 14 May 1998, *FAS News*. (3 September 1998)

95 Text: G-8 Statement on Indian Nuclear Tests, 17 May 1998, USIS Washington file. *FAS News* (3 September 1998)

96 See Thomas Abraham, 'A Divided G-8, Cover Story, *Frontline*, vol.15, no.11, 23May–5 June 1998.

imposition of economic sanctions varied from approval through to outright disapproval.

4.83 In turning to Pakistan, the international community was aware of the pressure on that nation to match India's show of nuclear force. Some countries made direct representation to the Pakistani Government to dissuade the country from retaliating. Countries such as Canada offered the carrot of additional aid as an incentive for Pakistan to refrain from conducting nuclear tests. Others reminded Pakistanis of the heavy stick of economic sanctions that awaited them should they decide to explode their own nuclear weapons.

CHAPTER 5

THE PAKISTANI NUCLEAR TESTS

‘WE HAVE SETTLED THE SCORE’¹

Introduction

5.1 This chapter examines Pakistan’s decision to follow India’s example and detonate its own nuclear devices. It analyses the reasons behind this decision and details the international reaction to Pakistan’s nuclear tests. Further, this chapter identifies and pulls together some of the common threads running through the responses of individual countries and international fora to the recent nuclear tests.

Pakistani Tests

5.2 The US Administration and in particular President Clinton ‘worked diligently to try to persuade the Pakistani Government to assume the political and moral high ground’ by showing restraint and not matching India’s nuclear tests. The US government entered intensive discussions with the Pakistani Government to explain to it the serious negative consequences of testing. The Pakistanis were made aware that loans to India including \$450 million for electrical power distribution; \$130 million for hydro-electric generators, \$275 million for road construction, and \$10 million for promotion of private sector development - a total of \$865 million had been postponed. The US Government wanted the Pakistanis to take note of what was happening to India so they could fully appreciate the effect that automatic sanctions required by American law could have on their nation.²

5.3 Other countries such as Japan actively engaged Pakistani officials in discussions intended to discourage them from testing nuclear weapons. Canada and Australia offered additional aid to Pakistan on condition that they not conduct nuclear tests. Pakistan was clearly aware of the international opprobrium likely to meet any further nuclear explosions.

5.4 Despite the efforts of the international community to dissuade Pakistan from responding in kind to India’s actions, Pakistan carried out five nuclear tests on 28 May and one on 30 May in the Chagai hills in the remote south-western province of

1 See statement by Nawaz Sharif reported in *Worldbeat*, 28 May 1998, Internet site: <http://www.cnn.com/WORLD/asiapcf/9805/28/pakistan.nuclear.4/> (30 July 1998), and also Rebecca Johnson, ‘International Implications of the India–Pakistan tests’, *Disarmament Diplomacy*, no. 28, July 1998.

2 Transcript, US Department of State Daily Press Briefing, Wednesday 27 May 1998.

Baluchistan. Information on these tests was at times confusing. According to Pakistani officials the six devices were of the boosted fission type using uranium 235.

5.5 The yields of the five nuclear tests conducted on 28 May were announced officially as 40 KT to 45 KT. According to one of Pakistan's top nuclear scientists, Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, one of these was a 'big bomb' with a yield of about 30 KT to 35 KT. The other four were small tactical weapons of low yield which when 'tipped on small missiles can be used on the battlefield against concentrations of troops'. The sixth test on 30 May had an explosive yield of 15 KT to 18 KT and registered only a faint echo on the global network that tracks earthquakes and underground atomic blasts.³ As with the Indian data, some seismic yield determinations appear to be smaller than those officially given.⁴

5.6 Pakistan issued few technical details about the nature and scope of the tests. During an interview Dr Khan stated succinctly that the tests were 'a successful nuclear explosion by all definitions. It was exactly as we had planned and the results were as good as we were hoping'.⁵

Reasons

Settle the score and restore the strategic balance

5.7 The reaction of the international community after India exploded its nuclear devices demonstrated a strong expectation that Pakistan would indeed follow India down the nuclear path. There was real anticipation that Pakistan would feel compelled to retaliate in order to re-establish the strategic balance in the region.

5.8 Tanvir Ahmed Khan, a former Pakistani Foreign Secretary, highlighted how tightly Pakistan's security policies are coupled to India's. He stated: 'We have always linked our responses to India. In the past, we have said if India signs the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in the morning, we will do it in the afternoon'.⁶

5.9 The events preceding the Pakistani tests followed a pattern similar to those established before the Indian nuclear blasts. For weeks prior to the tests Pakistan presented itself as a nation fighting for its survival in the face of serious external

3 The *Hindustan Times*, 31 May 1998; *Jane's Weekly Defence*, 10 June 1998, p. 3; 'The South Asian Nuclear Mess', *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 12, 6–19 June 1998; William J. Broad, 'A Small Event', *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 12, 6–19 June 1998; Terry C. Wallace, 'The May 1998 India and Pakistan Nuclear Tests'. Internet site: <http://www.geo.arizona.edu/geophysics/faculty/wallace/ind.pak/index.html>.

4 Umer Farooq, 'Pakistan Needs up to 70 Nuclear Warheads', *Jane's Weekly Defence*, 9 June 1998; Terry C. Wallace, 'The May 1998 India and Pakistan Nuclear Tests'.

5 Interview with Pakistan nuclear scientist A.Q. Khan, 'We Can Do a Fusion Blast', *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 12, 6–19 June 1998.

6 Amit Baruah, 'Pakistan's Dilemma', *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 11, 23 May–5 June 1998.

threats to its security. It unequivocally portrayed India as an aggressor. Indeed, on the very eve of the tests the Pakistani Government made public its fear that India was about to mount an attack. It reported on 28 May, that it had received intelligence suggesting that India was planning to make a pre-emptive strike on Pakistan's nuclear installations.⁷ India dismissed these allegations as 'utterly absurd and malicious' propaganda.⁸

5.10 In explaining the reasons behind Pakistan's nuclear tests, the Pakistani Prime Minister, on 29 May, drew on the main theme that his government had been developing over the past weeks—national security. He stated:

As a self-respecting nation we had no choice left to us. Our hand was forced by the present Indian leadership's reckless actions. After due deliberation and a careful review of all options we took the decision to restore the strategic balance. The nation would not have expected anything less from its leadership...

Under no circumstances would the Pakistani nation compromise on matters pertaining to its life and existence. Our decision to exercise the nuclear option has been taken in the interests of national self-defence. These weapons are to deter aggression, whether nuclear or conventional. Pakistan will continue to support the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, especially in the Conference on Disarmament, bearing in mind the new realities.

5.11 The Prime Minister indicated his preparedness to engage in constructive discussions with other countries on ways to promote nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. He noted that Pakistanis were fully conscious of the need to handle these weapon systems with the highest sense of responsibility and asserted that they have not and would not transfer sensitive technologies to other states or entities.⁹

5.12 Referring to outside influences, the Prime Minister noted that Pakistan had refused a package of incentives which was being offered to it as a price for exercising restraint, adding that Pakistanis were not afraid of economic sanctions.¹⁰

7 'Pakistan Warns India against Attack on N-installations', *The Independent*, 29 May 1998; 'Tim McGirk, 'Nuclear Madness', *Time Asia*, 8 June 1998, vol. 151, no. 22.
Internet site: http://www.pathfinder.com/time/asia/magazine/1998/980608/pakistan_nukes.html (30 July 1998)

8 Official Press Release, New Delhi, 28 May 1998; see also 'India Was Going to Attack Pakistan on the Night of May 27', *Pakistan News Service*, 1 June 1998; and Press Release, Ministry of External Affairs, External Publicity Division, New Delhi, 28 May 1998.

9 Text of Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif's Statement at a Press Conference on Pakistan Nuclear Tests, Islamabad, 29 May 1998.
Internet site: <http://www.fas.org/news/pakistan/1998/05/980528-gop-pm.htm> (17 August 1998)

10 PPI, excerpts from PM's speech, 18 May 1998.
Internet site: <http://www.kashmir.org/main8may-28b.html> (31 July 1998)

5.13 Pakistani business leaders supported the Government's actions and accepted that national security had been at stake. They asserted, 'we were forced to go nuclear because of India's aggression'.¹¹

5.14 Throughout the days following the tests, Pakistan held fast to its stand that it had acted in self-defence. On 2 June, the Pakistani Ambassador Munir Akram told a special session of the Conference on Disarmament that Pakistan did not instigate or initiate the security crisis in South Asia. Rather, he asserted, they were obliged by security considerations to respond to India's provocative nuclear tests. He pointed out that India backed up its nuclear tests with threats that culminated in 'credible reports of planned pre-emptive strikes against Pakistan's sensitive facilities'. Developing his argument, he stated that 'others may discount these reports, but Pakistan which has been subject to aggression 3 times could not ignore the nature and depth of the danger'. He added, 'Thus, the nuclear proliferation crisis was transformed into a major security crisis in South Asia'. According to the ambassador, three factors underpinned Pakistan's decision to detonate its nuclear devices which he insisted became virtually inevitable. They were:

- the steady escalation in the provocations and threats emanating from India—its declaration that it was a nuclear weapons state, that it would use nuclear weapons, its threats against Pakistan;
- the weak and partial response of the world community to India's tests and threats—no one was willing to underwrite Pakistan's security and thus criticism from some of those who enjoy the NATO security umbrella was not even-handed;
- the realisation that, given the nature of the Indian regime, Pakistan could not leave India in any doubt about the credibility of its capability to deter and respond 'devastingly' to any aggression against its country or pre-emptive strikes against its facilities.¹²

5.15 The ambassador drew a clear distinction between India's and Pakistan's actions: India's action were provocative, Pakistan's were reactive; India's tests destabilised the security balance in South Asia, Pakistan's tests restabilized the balance of mutual deterrence.¹³ He stated that Pakistan was not seeking the status of a nuclear weapon state and that it had given only a bare minimum response.¹⁴

11 PPI, 'Business Leaders Hail Nuclear Tests', 28 May 1998.
Internet site: <http://www.kashmir.org/main9may-28b.html> (31 July 1998)

12 Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram at the Special Session of the Conference on Disarmament, 2 June 1998.
Internet site: <http://www.fas.org/news/pakistan/1998/06/980602-pak-ed.htm> (17 August 1998)

13 Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram, *ibid.*

14 'Pakistan Completes the Current Series of Nuclear Tests...' Foreign Secretary, Mr Shamshad Ahmed's statement at the Press Conference in Islamabad on 30 May 1998. Internet site:

5.16 Some witnesses appearing before the Committee accepted that Pakistan felt compelled to match India's nuclear threat by demonstrating its nuclear capability. Dr Yasmeen noted that Pakistan's nuclear weapons were seen to balance India's nuclear capability but they were also seen to provide an additional shield for Pakistan which lacks strategic depth and could be overrun easily.¹⁵

Survival as a proud nation

5.17 Unlike India, where it is difficult to disentangle the issues of national security, national prestige and domestic politics in explaining what moved the country to go nuclear, Pakistan's main consideration was strategic. Pakistan insisted that the issue was one of 'security, and not status'.¹⁶ Nevertheless, national pride, honour and sense of achievement were also forces propelling Pakistan to test its nuclear weapons. According to one Pakistani analyst: 'the people and the government were confronted with a very difficult choice: explode the bomb, and prepare to eat grass. Or decide against it, and eat humble pie'.¹⁷ The move to strengthen or enhance Pakistani's sense of pride and achievement was reflected in the Prime Minister's announcement. He congratulated the nation on the achievements of its scientists and engineers who, he stated, had made it possible 'for the people of Pakistan to enter the next century, with confidence in themselves and faith in their destiny'. He told the Pakistani people:

I also know that when we were able to match India in respect of nuclear explosions, the heads of my Pakistani brothers and sisters, the young and elderly, were raised high with pride. They flexed their muscles for any eventuality, and their faces shone with the light of happiness. To enable Pakistan to walk tall, I am determined to sacrifice body and soul.¹⁸

5.18 This was a speech appealing to nationalistic sentiment in a people who, despite obstacles, were determined to repel any threat to their nation. Dr Abdul Qadir Khan, held to be the architect of Pakistan's nuclear program, was hailed in the local press as a Pakistani hero 'who led Pakistan to become a nuclear power' and was the 'pride of the nation'.¹⁹

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/ht/nonfram/310598/detfro01.htm> (31 July 1998); Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram at the Special Session of the Conference on Disarmament, 2 June 1998, *ibid.*

15 Submission no. 30, vol. 2, p. 138.

16 Statement issued by the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN in Response to the Security Council Resolution 1172, 6 June 1998.
Internet site: <http://www.undp.org/missions/pakistan/08980606.htm> (31 July 1998)

17 Zaffar Abbas, 'The Hardest Choice', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, July/August 1998, vol. 54, no. 4.

18 National Agenda for Self-Reliance, Change, Reconstruction and Development, Address to the Nation by Prime Minister Mohammed Nawaz Sharif, 11 June 1998.
Internet site: <http://www.pak.gov.pk/govt/pmspeech/pmaddress-11-06-1998.htm> (17 August 1998)

19 PPI, 'Pakistan Becomes First Islamic Country to Have Nuclear Device', 28 May 1998; AAP, 'Dr Qadeer Khan is Pride of Nation', *Pakistan News Service*, 3 June 1998.

Political motives

5.19 Domestic pressure was also a factor influencing the Pakistani Government's decision to conduct the tests. But unlike the situation in India, where the BJP government had a more active and deliberate role in grooming public opinion and in initiating the tests, in Pakistan the call for nuclear tests came very strongly from the people and in reaction to the Indian tests. The Pakistani Prime Minister felt that throughout his country there had been an expectation that the Government would conduct nuclear tests.²⁰ He explained to a journalist that the pressure within Pakistan was irresistible:

...It was mounting on the government every day, every hour. The outside world is not aware of the emotional feelings of the people of this region. I have been holding on and exercising utmost restraint. But we were disappointed that the world community really failed to take a strong reaction against India.²¹

5.20 Dr Yasmeen acknowledged that public pressure had a major role in prompting a reticent Prime Minister to agree to explode the nuclear devices. She asserted:

Both conservative and moderate elements supported and demanded that Pakistan should go nuclear. So strong was this demand that a small minority that objected to going nuclear was either silenced or sidelined.²²

5.21 Clearly strong public support for Pakistan to demonstrate its own nuclear capability and the desire for national prestige influenced the Government's decision to conduct nuclear tests. But the overriding concern for Pakistan was to establish some form of strategic balance in South Asia to ensure its own national security and to preserve its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Response

5.22 The international community, aside from India, responded to the Pakistani nuclear tests by expressing disappointment with Pakistan's action and by condemning the tests. As with the response to India's tests, individual countries called for restraint and now urged both India and Pakistan to establish dialogue in order to work through their difficulties.

20 Text of Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif's statement at a Press Conference on Pakistan Nuclear Tests, Islamabad, 29 May 1998, *ibid*.

21 'An Interview with Nawaz Sharif: "Madam, I Was Hurt Very Much" ', *Time: Asia*, 8 June 1998, vol. 151, no. 22.
Internet site: http://www.pathfinder.com/time/asia/magazine/1998/980608/pakistan_interview.html
(30 July 1998)

22 Submission no. 30, vol. 3, p. 138.

India

5.23 India used the Pakistani nuclear tests to justify its own position and brushed aside Pakistan's claim that India posed a threat to Pakistan's security. In an official statement the Ministry of External Affairs announced:

Pakistan's nuclear tests have confirmed what has been known all along—that that country has been in possession of nuclear weapons. This event vindicates our assessment, and our policy as well as the measures that have been taken...the government have taken all steps necessary for safeguarding the nation's security.²³

5.24 It reiterated its offer to hold discussions with Pakistan on 'a no-first-use agreement reflecting its desire to maintain stability in the region'. It also stated that the Indian Government remained fully prepared to deal firmly and effectively with any outside threat.²⁴

The United States

5.25 On 28 May, the American President condemned Pakistan's actions stating: 'By failing to exercise restraint and responding to the Indian test, Pakistan lost a truly priceless opportunity to strengthen its own security, to improve its political standing in the eyes of the world.' He went on to say:

And although Pakistan was not the first to test, two wrongs don't make a right. I have made it clear to the leaders of Pakistan that we have no choice but to impose sanctions pursuant to the Glenn amendment as is required by law.²⁵

5.26 He spelt out how India and Pakistan could take positive measures to resolve the situation by renouncing further tests, signing the CTBT, and by taking 'decisive steps to reduce tensions in South Asia and reverse the dangerous arms race'. Two days later, on 30 May, the President directed the relevant agencies and instrumentalities to take the necessary actions to impose sanctions set out under the Arms Export Control Act.²⁶ It was predicted that the Glenn Amendment sanctions would cause more harm to Pakistan than to India, because Pakistan's economy was weaker and more dependent on assistance from international financial institutions.²⁷

23 Official Press Release, Ministry of External Affairs, External Publicity Division, New Delhi, 28 May 1998. Internet site: <http://www.fas.org/news/india/1998/05/980528-goi.htm> (3 September 1998)

24 Official Press Release, Ministry of External Affairs, External Publicity Division, New Delhi, 30 May 1998. Internet site: <http://w3.meadev.gov.in/govt/nuclear/official-8.htm> (19 January 1999)

25 Text: Statement by Ambassador Robert Grey, US Representative to the Conference on Disarmament, Geneva, 2 June 1998.

26 Text: Presidential Determination on Sanctions Against Pakistan, 1 June 1998, *ibid.*

27 Bruce Odessey, 'Administration Grappling with India, Pakistan Sanctions', 3 June 1998.

5.27 The President also announced that he would continue to work with leaders throughout the international community to reduce tensions in South Asia and to preserve the global consensus on non-proliferation.²⁸ This message was firmly underlined by the Assistant Secretary of State, Mr Karl Inderfurth. He told the Senate Foreign Relations subcommittee on Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs on 3 June:

Just as we responded to the Indian tests, the United States has moved swiftly to invoke sanctions and to condemn Pakistan's reciprocal tests...In the short term...we are focussing our efforts on ways to prevent further provocative acts, to get both sides to end further tests, and to prevent related escalation such as missile testing and deployment. We are encouraging the immediate resumption of direct dialogue between India and Pakistan and are working to shore up the international non-proliferation regime.

He went on to state:

Now and for the foreseeable future, we will enforce sanctions firmly, correctly, and promptly, in full compliance with the Glenn Amendment and other legislative authorities. We will continue working to ensure the widest possible multilateral support for the steps we have taken. A vigorous enforcement regime will be necessary for India and Pakistan to perceive that their actions have seriously eroded their status in the international arena, will have a substantial negative impact on their economies, and that they have compromised, rather than enhanced their security. We will firmly reject any proposal for India or Pakistan to join the NPT as a nuclear weapon state. We do not believe that nations should be rewarded for behaviour that flies in the face of internationally accepted norms

Nevertheless, he also made plain that the US did not want to make 'international pariahs' out of India or Pakistan.²⁹

5.28 On that same day, the Under Secretary of State, Stuart Eizenstat, explained that the US administration sought to implement sanctions in a way that would do the least harm to US business interests and would not push India and Pakistan into 'the behaviour of rogue regimes—countries considered outside the world community'.³⁰ He recalled Inderfurth's statement that if India stands 'outside the international community, we will get nowhere'.³¹

28 Statement by Ambassador Robert Grey, *ibid.*

29 Text: Inderfurth, Details of US Policy toward India, Pakistan at Senate, 3 June 1998.

30 Bruce Odessey, USIA Staff Writer, 'Administration Grappling with India', Pakistan Sanctions, 3 June 1998.

31 Text: Inderfurth, *ibid.*

5.29 Clearly the US wanted to avoid isolating India and Pakistan from the international arena and wanted 'to very much work with both India and Pakistan to help them resolve their differences and restore future hope, not fear, to the region'.³²

Japan

5.30 On 29 May, Japan's Minister for Foreign Affairs summoned Pakistan's Charge d'Affairs ad interim to protest strongly against the nuclear tests. He urged Pakistan to cease immediately nuclear testing and the development of nuclear weapons. Japan took the following measures:

- froze grant aid for new projects, except emergency and humanitarian aid and grant assistance for grassroots projects;
- froze yen-loan for new projects; and
- announced it would cautiously examine the loan programs to Pakistan by international financial institutions.

5.31 Japan also announced that in multilateral fora, such as the United Nations Security Council, it would actively deal with the issues so as to firmly maintain a non-proliferation regime and ensure peace in South Asia.³³ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs urged India and Pakistan not to commence a dangerous nuclear arms race and to join the NPT and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty without condition. It explained that it was exploring measures that could be taken in collaboration with like-minded countries. The Ministry expected to be in touch with more countries concerned with discussing the possibility of joint appeals or actions.³⁴

5.32 In addition, Japan proposed to host a meeting between Pakistan and India on the Kashmir issue.³⁵ It also raised the possibility of convening an Emergency Action Forum on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. The proposal was to draw prominent thinkers, former policy-makers and experts from throughout the world to discuss ideas about how the goals of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation might be achieved.³⁶ Foreign Minister Obuchi explained:

I believe that the issue of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation needs to be addressed, not only through discussion among governments, but also by focusing wisdom from all possible realms on this subject. To this end,

32 'Pakistan Welcomes Clinton's Mediation Offer', *Pakistan News Service*, 5 June 1998.

33 Comments by the Chief Cabinet Secretary on Measures in Response to Nuclear Testing Conducted by Pakistan, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 29 May 1998.

34 Press Conference by the Press Secretary, The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 29 May 1998. Internet site: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/press/index.html>.

35 'Kashmir Dispute: Japanese Mediation Welcomed', *Pakistan News Service*, 5 June 1998; Press Conference by the Press Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 5 June 1998.

36 Press Conference by the Press Secretary, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 9 June 1998.

parallel with forthcoming deliberations among the relevant governments, the Government of Japan will join forces with the Japan Institute of International Affairs and the Hiroshima Peace Institute to establish at the earliest possible date, an Emergency Action Forum on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in which around ten government and private sector experts from around the world will gather for approximately three meetings to be held in Japan with a view toward drafting concrete proposals within a year on ways to further promote nuclear disarmament and maintain and enhance the non-proliferation regime.³⁷

5.33 On 6 June, Japan, together with Sweden, Costa Rica and Slovenia, proposed a resolution to the United Nations which was passed unanimously. The resolution called on the international community to 'maintain and consolidate the international regime on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as well as to cope with the threat against the preservation of peace and security in South Asia and other regions'. It urged India and Pakistan to resume dialogue on all outstanding issues and encouraged them to find mutually acceptable solutions to the deep seated causes of tensions between them.³⁸

New Zealand

5.34 New Zealand expressed dismay and disappointment at Pakistan's nuclear tests. The New Zealand Prime Minister, Jenny Shipley, explained that the New Zealand Government had called upon Pakistan to exercise restraint and that her government would be making known to Pakistan, as it did to India, that the tests were totally unacceptable. She announced that the New Zealand Government would be consulting with other governments about the steps that the international community could take to defuse 'this potentially dangerous situation'.³⁹

5.35 Indeed, New Zealand worked actively and closely with other countries to explore options on how to exert pressure on Pakistan and India to cease their nuclear weapons programs and to adhere to the CTBT and the Non Proliferation Treaty. It joined Australia in calling for a special emergency meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

China

5.36 Although denouncing Pakistan's nuclear tests, China was less condemnatory. The Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Zhu Bangzao, told a press gathering that China felt anxious and upset about the escalation of nuclear arms in the region. He observed that 'the current nuclear arms race in South Asia was triggered off by India

37 Press Conference by the Press Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 5 June 1998.

38 Press Conference by the Press Secretary, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 9 June 1998 and 3 July 1998.

39 Press Statements issued by the Prime Minister Jenny Shipley: 'Prime Minister Condemns Nuclear Tests by Pakistan', New Zealand High Commission, Canada, 1 June 1998.
Internet site: http://www.nzhcottawa.org/publications/statements_980601.html (18 January 1999).

single-handed because Pakistan's nuclear tests were conducted as a response to the Indian threat'. China strongly condemned India for its nuclear testing, but regretted that Pakistan had also carried out tests.⁴⁰

5.37 The Chinese Foreign Ministry urged both countries to join unconditionally the CTBT and the NPT, and not to take any steps that may further endanger the situation in South Asia. China maintained:

The nuclear tests carried out by India and Pakistan have dealt a heavy blow to international non-proliferation efforts, and India and Pakistan should exercise restraint, stop further nuclear tests and abandon their nuclear weapons development programs.⁴¹

5.38 The spokesman from the Chinese Foreign Ministry noted that China had vowed not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against countries or regions which do not have their own nuclear weapons. He stressed that China had 'always opposed the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their carriers, and therefore handles cautiously and controls in a responsible manner export of missiles'.⁴²

United Kingdom

5.39 Following Pakistan's nuclear tests, Mr Robin Cook issued a strong statement condemning the explosions. He explained that the British government was engaged in detailed discussions with the EU and other international partners on how 'to impress on India and Pakistan the urgent need to adhere to the global non-proliferation regime; to conduct no further tests; and to begin a dialogue which will go to the heart of the differences between them'. He pointed out: 'The nuclear tests have only increased tension, not enhanced security. It is now time patiently to rebuild confidence'.⁴³

5.40 Mr Cook announced that he had decided to withdraw Britain's High Commissioner in Islamabad for consultations. He noted that Britain had already cancelled a number of high level military visits between India and the UK and would be looking for a similar reduction in military cooperation with Pakistan. Further that the EU General Affairs Council had decided that member states would work to delay

40 'Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman on South Asia Post-Nuclear Test Situation', Chinese Embassy, Washington, 2 June 1998.

Internet site: <http://www.china-embassy.org/cgi-bin/press.pl?posttest> (14 August 1998)

41 'China Urges India, Pakistan to Abandon Nuclear Weapons Development Programs', Press Release, Chinese Embassy, Washington, 6 June 1998.

Internet site: <http://www.china-embassy.org/cgi-bin/press.pl?abandon> (14 August 1998).

42 Press Release, Chinese Embassy, Washington, 2 June 1998.

43 'Pakistan Nuclear Tests', Foreign Secretary Statement, 29 May 1998, *Foreign Commonwealth Office News*. Internet site: <http://www.fco.gov.uk/news/newstext.asap?1045> (23 November 1998).

consideration of loans by the International Financial Institutions to India and asked the Commission to consider India's continued eligibility for GSP trade preferences.⁴⁴

5.41 Britain also took measures to strengthen its controls over the export of nuclear-related goods to India and Pakistan and to discourage all contacts by British nuclear scientists or nuclear personnel with Indians and Pakistanis, indicating that no visits by Indians or Pakistanis to British nuclear facilities would be permitted.⁴⁵

Canada

5.42 Canada condemned the actions of Pakistan in detonating nuclear devices and urged both India and Pakistan to renounce their nuclear weapons programs and to sign the nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty and the CTBT. It recalled Canada's High Commissioner to Pakistan, it discontinued non-humanitarian development assistance to Pakistan, banned military exports to Pakistan, deferred the planned visit to Canada by Pakistan's Auditor General, and announced that it would seek deferment of planned International Financial Institution-funded projects in Pakistan.⁴⁶

5.43 On 27 July, Foreign Affairs Minister Lloyd Axworthy and Minister for International Co-operation Diane Marleau announced support for a project to promote disarmament and peaceful conflict resolution in India and Pakistan. The project was to be implemented by the Indian and Pakistani associates of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, in partnership with Peace Fund Canada, a Canadian non-government organisation. They were to organise an advocacy campaign to promote peaceful conflict resolution and disarmament, directed both at political leaders and across society throughout the sub-continent.⁴⁷

Sweden

5.44 Sweden also severely criticised Pakistan's tests as a 'dangerous step'. It urged Pakistan and India to accede without delay and unconditionally to the Non Proliferation Treaty and the CTBT.⁴⁸ Looking at the broader issue of nuclear proliferation, Sweden suggested that it was the 'responsibility of the five nuclear weapons states to show the way by taking prompt and concrete action for intensified nuclear disarmament with the aim to achieve the complete abolition of these weapons.' Sweden joined with other countries of similar views on the nuclear issue to bring the matter of nuclear non-proliferation before international bodies and was particularly active in urging the nuclear weapons states to begin practical steps toward

44 *ibid.*

45 India/Pakistan: Nuclear Exports, 10 July 1998.

46 Press Release, 'Axworthy Condemns Pakistan's Nuclear Weapons Tests and Announces Sanctions', 28 May 1988, no. 136.

47 Press Release, 'Canada to Support Peacebuilding Efforts in South Asia', 27 July 1998, no. 181.

48 Press Release, Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Sweden), 28 May 1998. See also paras 1.34, 1.64–68.

the elimination of nuclear weapons. It was on the initiative of Sweden and Japan that the Security Council adopted a resolution on the recent nuclear tests.⁴⁹

Sri Lanka

5.45 Sri Lanka noted the Pakistani nuclear tests with concern. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that Sri Lanka believed that the entire international community should continue its efforts to achieve global nuclear disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons.⁵⁰

Saudi Arabia

5.46 After Pakistan detonated its nuclear devices, King Fahd called on India and Pakistan to exercise self-restraint. He took the opportunity to remark on the dual standard shown by the world community in exempting Israel from international inspection of its nuclear facilities. He wanted a comprehensive ban on proliferation of nuclear weapons and asked for the Middle East to be a nuclear-free zone. Although he appreciated the Pakistani stand regarding the preservation of its national security, Saudi Arabia nevertheless called on both parties to exercise self-control in order to make way for the welfare and prosperity of their people.⁵¹

Multilateral

5.47 By this time a core body of opinion had begun to form toward the nuclear tests and a common approach was taking shape in the international community. In coming together in multilateral fora, countries were able to articulate their views and work toward reaching an agreement on how to respond to the tests. At the very heart of the international response was deep dismay and disappointment at the tests. With one voice the international community urged countries to refrain from further testing and from the deployment of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles; and called for the adherence to the CTBT and Non Proliferation Treaty. There were, however, some important differences in emphasis.

The United Nations—initial response

5.48 On 28 May, the President of the General Assembly expressed his grave concern about Pakistan's nuclear tests and appealed to both India and Pakistan to refrain from continued development of their nuclear weapons. He urged them to pledge their prompt and full cooperation with the international community in

49 Press Release, Ministry for Foreign Affairs (Sweden), 6 June 1998.

50 'Sri Lanka Expresses Deep Concern Regarding Further Nuclear Tests in the South Asian Region', *Sri Lanka News Update*, 5 June 1998. Internet site: http://www.lanka.net/lankaupdate/5_june_1998.html (4 September 1998).

51 Council of Ministers Meeting, 1 June 1998.

preventing any further aggravation of the situation.⁵² The Secretary-General of the UN, Kofi Annan, deplored the tests conducted by India and Pakistan stating that they exacerbate tension in an already difficult relationship'.⁵³

Conference on Disarmament

5.49 On 2 June, thirty-four countries spoke at the Conference on Disarmament. New Zealand made a statement in the name of 46 member states in which it expressed their alarm and serious concern about the nuclear tests. They 'condemned all nuclear testing and considered such acts to be contrary to the international consensus which banned the testing of nuclear weapons and other explosive devices'. The statement called on India and Pakistan to: announce immediately a cessation to all further testing of those weapons; to renounce their nuclear weapons programmes; to sign and ratify, unconditionally the CTBT; to accede, without delay, to the Non Proliferation Treaty; to join all States in ensuring the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons; and to engage in negotiations to conclude a ban on the production of fissile material.⁵⁴

5.50 A few countries wanted a stronger reference made to disarmament. For example, Egypt stated that 'the crux of the matter was the prohibition of possession of nuclear weapons and New Zealand's statement this morning should have included that truth'. Mexico, which supported New Zealand's statement, noted, however, that the statement did not sufficiently stress the need for multilateral and universal steps to establish confidence in the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. A number of countries, including Iran, Sweden, Brazil, Colombia and Syria referred directly to the need for the nuclear weapon states to honour their responsibility to implement nuclear disarmament and to take prompt action to bring about the elimination of nuclear weapons.⁵⁵ Syria hoped that the latest events on the Indian sub-continent would be a stimulus to wake up nuclear-weapon states to their responsibility to strive for nuclear disarmament.⁵⁶

5.51 Some countries took the opportunity to touch on more specific regional concerns. Algeria, Iran, Syria and Egypt raised the issue of Israel's nuclear capability. More specifically, Algeria referred to the need to break the silence on the nuclear regime of Israel. Iran spoke of the imperative for serious attention to be given to establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone as a step to comprehensive nuclear disarmament. It mentioned, in particular, the Middle East, 'which was faced with the

52 Press Release GA/SM/42, 28 May 1998.

53 SG/SM/6575.

54 Conference on Disarmament, Press Release DCF/336, 3 June 1998.

55 *ibid.*

56 Conference on Disarmament, Press Release DCF/337, 3 June 1998.

menace of Israeli nuclear capabilities'. Syria described Israel as a threat to the Arab region.⁵⁷

5.52 Ireland, Switzerland, and China acknowledged that the Pakistani tests were a response to India's actions.

United Nations - Security Council – P-5

5.53 Ministers from the five permanent members of the UN Security Council met in Geneva on Thursday 4 June to consider ways to reduce tensions between India and Pakistan.⁵⁸ In a joint communique they condemned the tests and expressed deep concern about the danger to peace and stability in the region. They pledged to cooperate in their endeavours to reinvigorate the non-proliferation regime, to encourage a peaceful resolution between India and Pakistan, and to prevent a nuclear and missile arms race in South Asia.

5.54 The ministers agreed that India and Pakistan should stop all further tests, refrain from the weaponisation or deployment of nuclear weapons and of missiles capable of delivering such weapons and from the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. They believed that India and Pakistan should adhere to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty immediately and unconditionally, and that all countries, including India and Pakistan, should adhere to the NPT as it stands without any modifications.

5.55 In addressing actions that they could take as a group or individually, the ministers confirmed their respective policies to prevent the export of equipment, materials, or technology that could assist programs in India or Pakistan for nuclear weapons or ballistic missiles capable of delivering such weapons. They undertook to promote the peaceful resolution of differences and to assist in fostering confidence and security building measures. Without any preamble, they stated their determination to fulfil their commitments relating to nuclear disarmament under Article VI of the NPT.⁵⁹

United Nations—Security Council

5.56 The Security Council also expressed strong condemnation of the tests and called upon all parties to exercise maximum restraint and to take immediate steps to reduce and remove tensions between them.⁶⁰

57 Conference on Disarmament, Press Release DCF/336, 3 June 1998.

58 Public Diplomacy Query, Early Report 'Nuclear Tests by India, Pakistan: Two Steps Backward?', 19980602.

59 UN Security Council, Press Release, SC/6527, 5 June 1998.

60 Text: UN Security Council on Pakistani Tests.

5.57 In an official statement on 29 May, the President of the Security Council announced that the Security Council strongly deplored Pakistan's underground nuclear tests. It urged India and Pakistan to refrain from any further tests. On Saturday, 6 June 1998, on the initiative of Sweden and Japan, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1172 on India's and Pakistan's nuclear tests. This resolution followed closely the substance of the P-5 communique though expressed more stridently and which *inter alia*:

- condemned the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan;
- urged India and Pakistan to resume the dialogue between them on all outstanding issues, particularly on all matters pertaining to peace and security, in order to remove the tensions between them, and encouraged them to find mutually acceptable solutions that address the root causes of those tensions, including Kashmir;
- called on India and Pakistan to stop immediately their nuclear weapons development programs, to refrain from weaponization or from the deployment of nuclear weapons, to cease development of ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons and any further production of fissile material for nuclear weapons;
- encouraged all States to prevent the export of equipment, materials or technology that could in any way assist programs in India or Pakistan for nuclear weapons or for ballistic missiles capable of delivering such weapons;
- urged India and Pakistan, and all other States that had not done so, to become Parties to the Non Proliferation Treaty and the CTBT without delay and without conditions;
- urged India and Pakistan to participate in negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices with a view to reaching early agreement;
- urged them to exercise maximum restraint and to avoid threatening military movements or provocations likely to aggravate the situation.⁶¹

It reaffirmed its 'full commitment to and the crucial importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty'.

5.58 The Council also expressed its:

Firm conviction that the international regime on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons should be maintained and consolidated and recalls that in accordance with the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons India or Pakistan cannot have the status of a nuclear-weapon state.

61 United Nations, S/RES/1172 (1998), 6 June 1998.

5.59 Resolution 1172 drew attention to the reference made by the P-5 to their responsibilities under Article VI of the NPT. It affirmed the need to continue to move with determination towards the full realisation and effective implementation of all the provisions of the NPT and welcomed the determination of the five nuclear weapon states to fulfil their commitments relating to nuclear disarmament under Article VI.⁶²

5.60 India rejected outright the contents of Resolution 1172. The Indian Prime Minister described it as unhelpful in respect to the objectives it sought to address. He maintained that India was a responsible and committed member of the international community and that urging India to stop nuclear testing was redundant because India had already instituted a voluntary moratorium. He noted that India had made clear its readiness to engage in multilateral negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. Furthermore, he pointed out that his government was committed to initiatives that could open negotiations for a global convention for the elimination of all nuclear weapons.⁶³

5.61 The Indian Prime Minister told parliament that a glaring lacuna in the resolution was its failure to recognise that non-proliferation had to be placed in a global context. He pointed out that India's tests were necessary because of the failure of a flawed non-proliferation regime, and proceeded to dismiss any notion that India had adversely affected regional or global security.

5.62 Pakistan also criticised the resolution which it argued was deficient in several aspects and the product of an approach devoid of realism. Pakistan depicted itself as a responsible regional citizen seeking balance or parity and made this point all the more strongly by pointing to the failure of the international community, notably the Security Council itself, to address Pakistan's security concerns. The Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the UN made plain that India's decision to weaponise and induct nuclear weapons compelled Pakistan to join the process of nuclearisation. He stressed that Pakistan was obliged to demonstrate its nuclear capability for self defence and to restore the strategic balance in South Asia. He told the Security Council:

We informed the Council about India's provocative actions and unambiguous expression of intent to commit aggression against Pakistan. Unfortunately, the Council did not pay heed to the impending breach of peace.

Faced with these ominous developments resulting from India's deliberate and calculated actions to alter the strategic equation, Pakistan was left with no choice but to exercise its nuclear option in its supreme national interest, to restore the strategic balance and to preserve peace...

62 United Nations S/RES/1172 (1998), 6 June 1998.
Internet site: http://www.UN.org/plweb/cgi/idoc2.pl?281+unix+_free_user_+www.UN.org.80-UN-UN+scres+scres++199721/08/1998there%3c19.

63 Prime Minister's Statement in Rajya Sabha regarding U.N. Security Council Resolution on 8 June 1998.

We cannot be asked to give up the right to defend our country against any external threat emanating from conventional or weapons of mass destruction. Pakistan reserves the right to maintain the ability to deter aggression by conventional weapons or non-conventional means.⁶⁴

5.63 Pakistan urged the Council to deal with the issue pragmatically. It advised the Council to adopt a 'comprehensive approach to the issues of peace, security, confidence building, conventional imbalance, and conventional and nuclear arms control...whereby this Council and the international community could contribute to defusing the security crisis in South Asia'.

5.64 Pakistan drew special attention to the Council's call for India and Pakistan to avoid threatening or provocative military activities and for them to resume dialogue that would promote peace and security and to find mutually acceptable solutions that would address the root cause of tension. Pakistan simply answered:

In short, the Council wants Pakistan and India to settle the issues bedevilling their relations by themselves.

If Pakistan and India could have sorted out these problems by themselves, today South Asia would not have been nuclearized.⁶⁵

New Agenda

5.65 A number of countries used the world's heightened awareness of nuclear proliferation to seek determined support toward a nuclear weapon free world. Sweden and Ireland, together with the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, Egypt, Mexico, New Zealand, Slovenia and South Africa who had been working 'to re-ignite the will of the international community for nuclear disarmament', formed a coalition known as the 'New Agenda Coalition'.⁶⁶ On 9 June they made representation in a joint ministerial declaration to the nuclear-weapons states and to India, Israel and Pakistan.

5.66 In this statement, they declared that they could no longer remain complacent at the reluctance of the nuclear weapons states and the three nuclear-weapons-capable states to make a commitment to the 'speedy, final and total elimination of their nuclear weapons and nuclear weapons capability'. They urged the nuclear weapons states and the nuclear-weapons-capable states to take fundamental and requisite steps for the achievement of total elimination of nuclear weapons and to agree to start work immediately on the required negotiations and on the implementation of practical means. The ministers agreed that such measures would begin with those states that

64 Pakistan Mission to the United Nations, New York, Statement by the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations in the Security Council's debate on 6 June 1998, on the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan, *ibid.*

65 *ibid.*

66 Statement by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr David Andrews, on the occasion of the launching in Dublin of a Joint Ministerial Declaration 'A Nuclear Weapons Free World: the Need for a New Agenda'.

have the largest arsenals, but they stressed the importance that they be ‘joined in a seamless process by those with lesser arsenals at the appropriate juncture’.⁶⁷

5.67 In looking at practical ways to begin this process they called on the nuclear weapons states to abandon present hair-trigger postures by proceeding to de-alerting and de-activating their weapons and also to removing non-strategic nuclear weapons from deployed sites. The eight countries believed that such measures would ‘create beneficial conditions for continued disarmament efforts and help prevent inadvertent, accidental or unauthorized launches’.⁶⁸

5.68 As part of the process they stated that the three nuclear-weapons-capable states must ‘clearly and urgently reverse the pursuit of their respective nuclear weapons development or deployment and refrain from any actions which could undermine the efforts of the international community towards nuclear disarmament’. They urged them, and other states that had not yet done so, to adhere to the Non Proliferation Treaty and to sign the CTBT without delay and without conditions.⁶⁹

5.69 According to a statement by the New Zealand Government the joint declaration:

builds on the finding of the International Court of Justice that there exists an obligation to pursue and conclude negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament. It also supports interim steps to reduce the nuclear threat, such as those recommended by the Canberra Commission.⁷⁰

5.70 The joint ‘New Agenda’ declaration was read at a meeting of the Conference on Disarmament on 11 June and formed the basis of a resolution, ‘Towards a Nuclear Weapon-Free World: the Need for a New Agenda’, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly during its 53rd session.

G-8

5.71 The G-8 Foreign Ministers in recalling the communique issued by the P-5 in Geneva on 4 June and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1172 condemned the nuclear tests and endorsed the recommendations of the Security Council. They pledged to encourage India and Pakistan to find mutually acceptable solutions to their problems. The ministers expressed their belief that India and

67 *Joint Ministerial Declaration by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, Egypt, Ireland Mexico, New Zealand, Slovenia, South Africa and Sweden*, 9 June 1998.

68 *ibid.*

69 *ibid.*

70 ‘Towards a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World: The Need for a New Agenda’, article by the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mrs Lena Hjelm-Wallen, and the Irish Foreign Minister, Mr David Andrews, published in *Herald Tribune*, 22 June 1998; and also Statement New Zealand High Commission, Canberra, 9 June 1998.

Pakistan must be made aware of the strength of the international community's views on the recent tests. They stated:

Several among us have, on a unilateral basis, taken specific actions to underscore our strong concerns. All countries should act as they see fit to demonstrate their displeasure and address their concerns to India and Pakistan. We do not wish to punish the peoples of India and Pakistan as a result of actions by their governments, and we will therefore not oppose loans by international financial institutions to the two countries to meet basic human needs. We agree, however, to work for a postponement in consideration of other loans in the World Bank and other international financial institutions to India and Pakistan, and to any other country that will conduct nuclear tests.⁷¹

The European parliament

5.72 On 19 June the European Parliament adopted a resolution on the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan. It condemned the tests and expressed deep concern about the danger to peace. The parliament urged the Indian and Pakistani Governments to refrain from any further nuclear tests, it called on them to give an immediate commitment not to assemble or deploy nuclear weapons, to halt the development of ballistic missiles, and to start talks immediately to reduce tension in the region. In turning to its members, the parliament called on member states to prevent the export of equipment, materials and technology that could assist nuclear or ballistic missile programs in India or Pakistan and to ratify the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. The parliament called on the five nuclear states to 'interpret their Treaty obligations as an urgent commitment to the total elimination of their nuclear weapons'.⁷²

ASEAN regional forum

5.73 The nuclear tests were also discussed during the ASEAN Regional Forum meeting in July 1998. China briefly referred to the destabilising effect of the nuclear tests adding that they plunged South Asia into 'a sudden wave of tension'.⁷³ Russia also mentioned the underground tests and the importance of India and Pakistan signing the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and NPT as well as resuming effective political dialogue between the two countries.⁷⁴ Mr Wolfgang Schussel on behalf of the European Union spoke along similar lines. The US raised the matter of the nuclear

71 G-8 Foreign Ministers Communique on Indian and Pakistani Nuclear Tests, London, 12 June 1998.

72 Resolution adopted by the European Parliament on the Nuclear Tests by India and Pakistan, 19 June 1998.

73 Address by H.E. Mr Tang Jiaxuan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China at the 5th ARF Ministerial Meeting, 27 July 1998, Manila.

74 Statement by Mr Yevgeny M. Primakov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Russia, at the 5th Session of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), 27 July 1998, Manila.

tests in greater detail. It acknowledged that both nations had legitimate security concerns but neither faced an imminent threat that ‘could justify the far greater danger we all now face’. It stated:

Our goal is not to point fingers but to point the way to stability, security and peace. We are urging India and Pakistan to accept the benchmarks set forth in the Geneva P-5 and London G-8 communiqués and endorsed by the UN Security Council.⁷⁵

5.74 The forum had difficulty in reconciling some conflicting approaches to the nuclear tests. The Chair of the ARF summed up the feelings of the Forum in his closing statement:

On the basis of the views expressed by the ARF Foreign Ministers, I, as Chairman, saw the need to strike a balance between the two views that emerged.

One view felt that the nuclear detonations should be condemned because, aside from violating the nuclear non-proliferation regime, the nuclear tests breached the nuclear barrier and created a situation that is highly dangerous not only to South Asia but to the entire world as well.

Therefore, it was deemed necessary to send an emphatic message so that what happened in South Asia, which raised the spectre of a nuclear arms race, will not be duplicated in other regions of the world.

The other view believed that the ARF should not be converted into a forum for denouncing ARF participants in no uncertain terms as this would affect the comfort level of the participants concerned.

Taking all these points into account, I deemed it appropriate that the contentious portion of paragraph 21 be worded as follows: ‘the Ministers, therefore, expressed grave concern and strongly deplored the recent nuclear tests in South Asia which exacerbated tension in the region and raised the spectre of a nuclear arms race.’⁷⁶

Paragraph 21 reads in full:

The Ministers recalled that as early as 1995 the ARF put emphasis on the importance of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in promoting regional peace and security. They also noted that the ARF subsequently welcomed the overwhelming adoption of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty as an important step in prohibiting nuclear test explosions and stressed its determination to contribute to the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects. In this connection, the Ministers recalled the

75 Statement by Secretary of State, Madeleine K. Albright at the ASEAN Regional Forum Plenary, 27 July 1998.

76 Closing Statement, H.E. Domingo L. Siazon, ASEAN Regional Forum, Manila, 27 July 1998.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1172 issued on 6 June 1998. The Ministers, therefore, expressed grave concern over and strongly deplored the recent nuclear tests in South Asia, which exacerbated tension in the region and raised the spectre of a nuclear arms race. They called for the total cessation of such testing and urged the countries concerned to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty without delay, conditions, or reservations. They asked the countries concerned to refrain from undertaking weaponization or deploying missiles to deliver nuclear weapons, and to prevent any transfer of nuclear weapon-related materials, technology and equipment to third countries. In the interest of peace and security in the region, the Ministers called on the countries concerned to resolve their dispute and security concerns through peaceful dialogue.⁷⁷

5.75 Clearly within the ARF there were countries prepared to refer to but not endorse Security Council Resolution 1172. While some countries, in expressing their concern for the security situation in South Asia, were happy to name India and Pakistan, others were not.

5.76 The body of opinion that was forming toward India and the nuclear tests after 12 May firmed and took shape after Pakistan exploded its nuclear weapons. The P-5 statement of 4 June and the Security Council Resolution 1172 have become significant reference documents in debate about nuclear testing. Three main objectives became clear: to stem any escalation of the nuclear and missile race in South Asia; to defend and preserve the international non-proliferation regime; and finally to ease tensions between India and Pakistan.

77 Chairman's Statement, the Fifth Meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum, 27 July 1998, Manila.

CHAPTER 6

AUSTRALIA'S RESPONSE TO NUCLEAR TESTS IN SOUTH ASIA

Australia's security interests are, for example, served by strengthening regional institutions, pursuing outward-looking and growth-creating trade and investment policies, encouraging habits of dialogue, expanding institutional linkages, and facilitating people-to-people links within the region.¹

Introduction

6.1 In this chapter, the Committee examines Australia's response to the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests and the basis for that response. It also assesses some of the comments made about Australia's response.

Australia's Response to the Indian Nuclear Tests

6.2 The Australian Government together with the Labor Party and other non-government parties strongly condemned India's nuclear tests. The Australian Government described the tests as 'outrageous acts' - as an ill-judged step 'which could have most damaging consequences for security in South Asia and globally'.² It urged India to cease all further testing; to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) without delay; and to join the international nuclear non-proliferation regime.³

6.3 On 12 May 1998, within hours of the announcement of the tests, the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs called in the Indian High Commissioner to convey the Australian Government's 'condemnation of the tests in the strongest possible terms'. The Australian Government also recalled its High Commissioner from New Delhi for consultations.⁴ After India's second series of tests, the Government announced that it had decided:

- to suspend bilateral defence relations with India, including the withdrawal of Australia's Defence Adviser stationed in New Delhi;

1 Commonwealth of Australia, *In the National Interest: Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy, White Paper*, Canberra, 1997.

2 Press Release (Prime Minister), 'Indian Nuclear Tests', 12 May 1998; Media Release, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Alexander Downer, FA 59, 14 May 1998.

3 Press Release (Prime Minister), 'Indian Nuclear Tests', 12 May 1998; Media Release, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Alexander Downer, FA 58, 13 May 1998.

4 Press Release (Prime Minister), 12 May 1998.

- to cancel ship and aircraft visits, officer exchanges and other defence-related visits;
- to withdraw Australian Defence Force personnel currently training in India;
- to request the immediate departure of three Indian defence personnel currently at defence colleges in Australia;
- to suspend non-humanitarian aid; and
- to suspend ministerial and senior official visits.⁵

6.4 Concerned that Pakistan would respond to India's nuclear explosions by conducting its own tests, the Minister for Foreign Affairs announced a substantial increase in Australia's development assistance program to Pakistan in 1998–99. He told a visiting Pakistani parliamentary delegation that the Australian Government welcomed the restraint that Pakistan had shown in not testing a nuclear device in response to India's actions. To encourage its continued restraint, he stated that the Government had put together a package of measures to assist Pakistan. This included a move to more than double Australia's bilateral aid during the next financial year by providing an additional \$2.6 million, bringing Australia's bilateral aid to \$5 million. He made it clear that this additional aid would be contingent upon Pakistan not conducting nuclear tests.⁶

6.5 In a further endeavour to persuade Pakistan not to retaliate, the Australian Government made direct representations to the Pakistani Government. The Prime Minister wrote twice to the Pakistani Prime Minister urging restraint, and the Foreign Minister spoke to his counterpart to reinforce this message.⁷

Australia's Response to Pakistan's Tests

6.6 When Pakistan did retaliate by detonating its own nuclear devices, Australia strongly condemned Pakistan's 'ill advised decision'. It asserted that Pakistan's action flew in the face of internationally accepted norms against nuclear weapon testing and would have serious implications for global and regional security.⁸ The Australian Government responded to the tests by taking actions against Pakistan similar to those it had taken against India. It decided:

- to recall Australia's High Commissioner from Islamabad for consultations;

5 Press Release (Minister for Foreign Affairs), FA 59, 14 May 1998.

6 Press Release (Minister for Foreign Affairs), AA42, 27 May 1998.

7 Submission no. 33, vol. 3, p. 18.

8 Media Release, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Alexander Downer, FA 67, 28 May 1998; Press Release (Minister for Foreign Affairs), FA68, 29 May 1998.

- to suspend bilateral defence relations with Pakistan, including the recall of Australia's defence adviser stationed in Islamabad and to cancel officer exchanges and other defence-related visits;
- to withdraw Australian Defence Force personnel currently training in Pakistan and to cancel all planned visits to Australia by Pakistani defence personnel;
- to cancel its decision to double aid to Pakistan;
- to suspend ministerial and senior official visits; and
- to discontinue the visit of the Pakistani parliamentary delegation then in Australia.⁹

6.7 The Minister for Foreign Affairs conveyed to the Pakistani High Commission Australia's 'strong condemnation of Pakistan's action'. He called on both Pakistan and India to sign immediately and ratify the CTBT without conditions and accede to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).¹⁰

6.8 Australia was also active in multilateral fora and called for an early 'special' session of the Conference on Disarmament to discuss the recent nuclear tests. Forty-five countries co-sponsored an Australian/New Zealand statement condemning the tests. Australia also wanted the tests to be placed on the agenda of the IAEA June meeting of the Board of Governors.¹¹

The Basis of the Australian Government's Response

6.9 Australia's response in taking a firm stand against the nuclear tests was consistent with the responses of countries such as the United States, Japan and Canada. DFAT informed the Committee that Australia's response had registered strongly with India and Pakistan. It went on to explain its approach:

Australia is pursuing a number of objectives, the most important of which is to defend the integrity of the non-proliferation regime, including by ultimately drawing India and Pakistan into adopting nuclear non-proliferation norms.

Another key objective of Australian policy is to support credible international efforts to reduce tension in South Asia. Australia will also work to support efforts to impede any potential flow-on proliferation effects into East Asia and the Middle East. To further these objectives, Australia is participating in a task force of senior officials from a broad based group of

9 The Pakistani Foreign Minister described this action as 'undiplomatic'. See PPI, 'Pakistan's Sixth Nuclear Test', 31 May 1998.

10 Press Release (Minister for Foreign Affairs), FA 68, 29 May 1998.

11 *ibid.*

countries to discuss how to respond further to the South Asian nuclear tests.¹²

6.10 According to DFAT, the nuclear tests had cast a shadow over Australia's relations with India and Pakistan and political relations had cooled since the tests and Australia's response to them. It noted, however, that apart from diplomatic and defence aspects, other areas of Australia's bilateral relations with the two countries remained unchanged. DFAT made the point that the Australian Government 'expressed its displeasure with the action taken by the Indian and Pakistan governments and not with the people of those two countries, and does not wish to take any measures which would impact adversely on people to people links or other Australian interests'. DFAT emphasised that:

A major factor in the restoration of normal interaction with India and Pakistan will be significant indications of a commitment on the part of India and Pakistan to playing a responsible role in the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.¹³

6.11 The Australian Government had placed a high priority on upholding the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Mr John Griffin, Director, Conventional and Nuclear Disarmament, DFAT, explained that the Government had rejected the notion that the recent nuclear tests had changed the non-proliferation paradigm and stressed that Australia wanted to preserve this regime. He told the Committee:

If India and Pakistan are made to realise that their behaviour is unacceptable, that they are paying an important price in terms of essential national interest in what they have done, if over time, because of the weight of national opprobrium and demonstration, the regime is still in business and functioning - it is not dead, as has been claimed - then those ambit claims, which basically amount to recognition as nuclear weapon states under the NPT and admission to the Security Council as permanent members, can be worn down and the paradigm protected.¹⁴

6.12 The Australian Government believed that to protect the integrity of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, it was necessary to ensure that no other country would be encouraged by the Indian and Pakistani examples to follow them down the nuclear weapon path. It was Australia's view that India and Pakistan should not be seen to be rewarded for their behaviour in terms of enhanced international status or recognition as nuclear weapons states.

6.13 According to Ms Deborah Stokes, First Assistant Secretary, International Security Division, DFAT, the Australian Government was prepared to be patient

12 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 86.

13 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 86.

14 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 88.

while international pressure was exerted on India and Pakistan to rejoin the international community's consensus on matters concerned with nuclear weaponry.¹⁵

6.14 DFAT acknowledged that Australia had only a limited capacity to convince either the Indian or Pakistani Governments to change its nuclear weapon policy. Ms Stokes said that by drawing on its history of active involvement in arms control and disarmament issues, Australia was playing an active role in helping to shape the international community's response to the nuclear tests. She stated:

We will use our bilateral relations with countries that will have potentially more significant influence on India and Pakistan to try to help shape their perspectives. That will be a second prong to our approach.¹⁶

6.15 Unlike the United States, Australia did not impose economic and investment sanctions on the two countries. DFAT told the Committee that there was no evidence of Australian commercial interests being harmed. This assessment was confirmed by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) which maintained that no sustainable prejudice had been suffered by Australia's commercial interests in India or Pakistan.¹⁷ Mr Alister Maitland, Chairman, Australia-India Business Council, told the Committee that the Council had contacted its members to ascertain whether there had been any commercial repercussions from Australia's reaction to the nuclear tests on the subcontinent. He said that of the 18 major companies contacted, the common response was 'not conscious of any impact' or 'no effect at this stage'. One mining company thought it might have lost a contract because of Australia's reaction to the tests.¹⁸ Nevertheless, Professor Vicziany, Monash Asia Institute, told the Committee that Australian companies were worried about the possible consequences of Australia's response to the nuclear tests on bilateral commerce.¹⁹

6.16 On 4 December 1998, at a second appearance before the Committee, DFAT further underlined the point that Australian business interests had not suffered because of Australia's response to the tests.

6.17 Ms Stokes pointed out that DFAT was continuing its 'normal diplomatic dialogue with India in New Delhi and other places' and noted that, only recently, Australia's High Commissioner had called on the second level officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in New Delhi. According to Ms Stokes, the High Commissioner and his officers continue to have an active dialogue with a whole range of other ministries.²⁰

15 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 89.

16 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 89.

17 *ibid*, p. 122.

18 *Committee Hansard*, 7 August 1998, p. 363.

19 *ibid*, p. 280.

20 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 117.

Reactions to the Australian Government's Response

Insensitive and harsh language

6.18 The Australian Government's response to the tests received wide press coverage throughout Australia. In particular, newspapers reported the Prime Minister's description of the Indian Government as playing 'fast and loose with international safety and security in the interests of a short-term political gain'.²¹ The press also reported the Prime Minister as saying that the Pakistani tests were crazy, and 'it is unbelievable that a country as dirt poor as Pakistan should be diplomatically or strategically romancing the idea that, in some way, it has reached a pinnacle of respectability by acquiring nuclear capability'.²² The *Hindustan Times* reproduced this quote.²³

6.19 Overall, however, Dr Peter Friedlander found very little coverage of Australia's response to the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests in the Hindi press. He noted that any mention of Australia's response to the tests tended to be included in alphabetically organised listings of international responses.²⁴

6.20 Although Australia's response did not attract significant attention in the South Asian press, a number of Australians strongly criticised it. Professor Ian Copland argued:

our heavy-handed advice to Pakistan that it would face reprisals if it went ahead and tested, and Mr Howard's gratuitous outpourings, on our behalf, of 'disgust' and 'outrage' at the developments in both countries (the *Age*, 1 June 1998), were not only unhelpful - since they failed to deter either party - but actually counter-productive, since we have lost whatever little influence we had there. Again, one wonders why it was in Australia's interests to alienate simultaneously, two of the key players in the Indian Ocean region at a time when a third, Indonesia ... was in crisis.²⁵

6.21 In support of this argument, Professor Marika Vicziany stressed that Australians needed to be more sensitive in how they express their own strategic and security interests. She noted that the sharpest criticism of Australia had been made not because it took a strong stand against nuclear proliferation but because of the inappropriate language that was used in condemning India and Pakistan.²⁶ She noted

21 For example, see the *Australian*, p. 1, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, p. 8 and the *West Australian*, p. 4, all dated 15 May 1998. The *SMH* and *West Australian* used the phrase 'short-term domestic political game.'

22 For example see the *Courier Mail*, p. 17 and the *Weekend Australian*, p. 12, both dated 30 May 1998.

23 'Australia, New Zealand for UN disarmament', the *Hindustan Times*, 30 May 1998.

24 Submission no. 44, vol. 3, p. 205.

25 Submission no. 4, vol. 1, p. 18.

26 Submission no. 28; vol. 2, p. 62. Also see comments by Dr Battacharya, *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 3.

that complaints had been raised about descriptions of Pakistan as being ‘dirt poor’ and about India’s ‘outrageous act of nuclear bastardry’. The Australian view that India was not really concerned about national or regional security but was either seeking a ‘grotesque status symbol’ or was playing ‘fast and loose with international safety and security’ also attracted criticism. She argued that such strong words have contributed to a virtual standstill in Australia's bilateral dialogue.²⁷ In brief, Professor Vicziany submitted:

...western responses to the nuclear tests in South Asia have brought to the fore some of the strongest expressions of ‘orientalism’ that we have seen for some time and India has been shocked by this. In these circumstances, it would have been very helpful had we in Australia adopted a more sympathetic attitude towards India even while repudiating the use of nuclear technology as a way of resolving defence insecurities.²⁸

6.22 Professor Vicziany also pointed out that Australia reacted to the tests too quickly; that there was a perception that Australia’s ‘handling of official bilateral matters in recent weeks has been high handed’. She stated: ‘there is a presumption that we had a pre-formed view of the tests. Had we delayed a little, it would have indicated that we were thinking about our bilateral relationship and considering a range of alternative strategies’.²⁹

6.23 Professor Robin Jeffrey regarded Australia’s response as ‘needlessly strident and unlikely to produce desirable results’.³⁰ He maintained that ‘the lack of knowledge of languages and cultures leads to unfortunate outbursts such as the attack on Pakistan as a “dirt poor” country’.³¹ He explained:

The chances are good that the ‘dirt’ aspect would be picked up by translators - a ‘dirty’ country, which would be highly offensive to both Muslims and Hindus, concerned as both are with ritual purity. Alternatively, the ‘poor’ element could easily have led to a translation that had nuances of ‘like a beggar’ - again, the way to anger, not influence, people in India or Pakistan. Such clumsiness distracts people in India and Pakistan from the main issue - the threat to their own well-being of nuclear proliferation.³²

27 Submission no. 28, vol. 2, p. 60. The reference about nuclear bastardry was contained in a press release from the Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs. The statement came after India's second set of nuclear tests and read ‘Coming on top of India’s three tests on Monday, this is an outrageous act of nuclear bastardry’. Laurie Brereton, News Release, 21/98, 13 May 1998.

28 Submission no. 28, vol. 2, pp. 56–7.

29 Submission no. 28, vol. 2, pp. 58, 62. See also Dr Jim Masselos, Submission no. 31, vol. 2, p. 147.

30 Submission no. 32, vol. 2, p. 153.

31 *ibid.* p. 154.

32 *ibid.*

6.24 Dr Debesh Bhattacharya³³ and Ms Angelina Tang³⁴ expressed similar sentiments.

6.25 Not all witnesses who gave evidence to the inquiry thought that the language used by Australians to criticise the nuclear tests was inappropriate. Mr Alister Maitland, Chairman of the Australia-India Business Council, thought that the language used was probably the right language needed to register Australia's displeasure. Mr Alan Oxley, Director, International Trade Strategies, described it as fitting.³⁵ Mr Brent Davis, Head of International Group and Director, Trade and Policy Research, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, argued that the maturity of the relationship and the professionalism of diplomatic representatives on both sides would lead to an understanding that Australia's response was in context and appropriate.³⁶

6.26 The Committee considered carefully the criticism that Australia's use of language in condemning the tests was inappropriate. It notes that the language used in such circumstances does provide an opportunity for people to deflect attention away from the central issue - in this case, the nuclear tests themselves. It also notes that in view of different cultural mores and sensitivities, such language could be misconstrued and be unhelpful in influencing the behaviour of either India or Pakistan. Nevertheless, the Committee endorses the substance of the Government's forceful condemnation of the nuclear tests.

Nestling under a nuclear umbrella

6.27 Some witnesses considered that Australia's ability to convey its message and engage effectively with India and Pakistan was constrained by Australia's lack of credibility on the issue of nuclear disarmament.

6.28 They argued that Australia's close association with the United States and its reliance on the American nuclear umbrella placed Australia in a weakened moral position and limited its influence.³⁷ The Hon. Jim Kennan, QC, asserted that Australia, sitting so snugly under the United States defence umbrella, will always have some difficulty in advancing arguments for non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament with a straight face.³⁸

33 Submission no. 35, vol. 3, p. 153.

34 *ibid.*, p. 148.

35 *Committee Hansard*, 7 August 1998, p. 363; Alan Oxley, *Committee Hansard*, 7 August 1998, p. 354.

36 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 133.

37 See People for Nuclear Disarmament, Submission no. 9, vol. 1, p. 52; Mr Paddie Cowburn, Submission no. 13, vol. 1, p. 154; Medical Association for Prevention of War, (WA Branch), vol. I, p. 213; Mr Denis Doherty, Submission no. 23, vol. 1, p. 238; Mr Hamish McDonald, Submission no. 37, vol. 3, p. 158; Mr Senaka Weeraratna, Submission no. 8, p. 46 and The Australian Greens, Submission no. 15, p. 160.

38 Submission no. 43, vol. 3, p. 200.

6.29 Professor Vicziany advised that Australia should take note of Indian criticism that Australia is in ‘no position to take the high moral ground because it has located itself so firmly under the American nuclear umbrella’. She suggested that: ‘Australia’s dependence on United States nuclear protection strikes our Indian colleagues as hypocritical and contradictory. Certainly we do not have the right, according to them, to take the high moral ground and to do this as loudly as we have done.’³⁹

6.30 In developing this argument, she maintained that Australia’s unquestioning attachment to the notion of ‘nuclear non-proliferation’ causes problems for Australia in its relationship with India because the Indian understanding of the term is so very different. She explained:

The Indian view of nuclear non-proliferation is that it is a posture which fosters non-proliferation horizontally amongst the non-nuclear states whilst simultaneously tolerating and actively *encouraging* nuclear proliferation vertically amongst the existing nuclear club nations.⁴⁰

She went on to point out:

The language which we use is important. In articulating our policy within the paradigm of ‘nuclear non-proliferation’ we are further identifying ourselves with the nuclear haves and this, in turn, undermines our capacity to be taken seriously by the nuclear have-nots and those who were nuclear have-nots before May 1998.⁴¹

6.31 The Medical Association for Prevention of War (WA Branch) argued that India will not accept criticism of its nuclear arms program from the nuclear weapon states or from those nations that shelter under their nuclear umbrella for their own security. It suggested that Australia should accept these sentiments from India - and do much more for global nuclear disarmament.⁴²

6.32 Dr Debesh Bhattacharya stated succinctly that Australia must answer the charge of double standards. He drew attention to the Maralinga nuclear tests in Australia in the 1950s and the visits to Australian shores of nuclear fleets from the United States. He noted that India has been campaigning for total elimination of nuclear weapons in all relevant fora for over the last 40 years.⁴³

6.33 Mr Denis Doherty, National Co-ordinator, Australian Anti-Bases Campaign Coalition and State Secretary, Pax Christi New South Wales, also argued that Australia, as a medium power that does not possess nuclear weapons, could be in a position to help abolish nuclear weapons but that it has muddied the waters. He

39 Submission no. 28. vol. 2, p. 58.

40 *ibid.*, p. 59.

41 *ibid.*

42 Submission no. 21, vol. 1, p. 213.

43 Submission no. 35, vol. 3, p. 153.

regarded Australians as being ‘very, very strongly implicated in the nuclear weapons cycle’.

6.34 He said he could understand why Indians ask ‘What right has one country to have nuclear weapons and to say to other countries that they cannot have them’. According to him, the subcritical tests conducted by the United States was also a matter of concern, pointing out that there have been over 30 such tests since the NPT was signed and ‘not a word of complaint has come from countries like our own’.⁴⁴ He submitted in evidence an extract from a letter from the Indian High Commissioner to peace and environmental groups in Sydney, which sheds light on India’s perceptions of Australia’s commitment to nuclear disarmament:

I hope you will not mind my saying that it has been our experience that in disarmament negotiations the Non Aligned countries like India seldom, if ever, receive support or understanding from Australia for measures that we propose for nuclear disarmament, within a reasonable time frame. There is a general feeling that because of Australia’s dependence on an extended US nuclear security guarantee for its own security and for the promotion of its regional security interests, it is just not in a position to urge the need for nuclear disarmament within a reasonable time frame, as Senator Evans had urged before the International Court of Justice. There is, in our view, a contradiction of virtually depending on the nuclear deterrent of a foreign power on the one hand, and being enthusiastic about the nuclear disarmament on the other. In our view, we should aim at the total elimination of all nuclear weapons by the year 2010.⁴⁵

6.35 Dr McPherson found it difficult to refute India’s contention that if its ‘critics are so concerned by the spectre of a new nuclear race, why don’t they vigorously pursue the goal of total nuclear disarmament which India claims to have championed since it sponsored the first CTBT proposal in 1954?’⁴⁶

6.36 DFAT rejected the notion that Australia’s reputation as a staunch advocate of nuclear disarmament was tarnished because of its association with the United States. In answer to this criticism it made plain that ‘Australia is committed to the objective of the eventual elimination of all nuclear weapons as embodied in Article VI of the Non Proliferation Treaty, and to seek security conditions which would permit this’. It pointed out, however, that Australian Governments have recognised the reality of the existence of nuclear weapons and thus have attached high importance to the maintenance of a stable nuclear balance between the nuclear weapon states until such time as nuclear weapons are ultimately eliminated. It stressed that Australia contributes in practical ways toward maintaining this stable nuclear balance by assisting in the monitoring of arms control and disarmament agreements, ballistic

44 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 31.

45 *ibid*, p. 32.

46 Submission no. 5, vol. 1, p. 28.

missile launches and underground explosions.⁴⁷ Mr Griffin emphasised that Australia strongly supports the progressive balanced reductions in existing nuclear arsenals.⁴⁸

6.37 Mr Alan Oxley rejected any notion of Australian hypocrisy. He told the Committee:

If you then look at the way in which successive governments have pursued our nuclear interests through the United Nations, the last expression was the Canberra Commission but there is a whole history before that. The position we took on nuclear testing, the position we have taken on the nuclear test ban treaty, the position we have taken on the nuclear non-proliferation treaty - where we have been one of its strongest advocates - indicates that we have been a very responsible activist for a nuclear order which recognises the reality.⁴⁹

6.38 Dr Marianne Hanson supported this view. She noted Australia's reputation as an active player in international fora for pursuing security issues and cited contributions in the United Nations, in the Conference on Disarmament and with the Canberra Commission.⁵⁰ She maintained that Australia is held in high regard because it has consistently called for a series of phased arms reductions and was prominent in the successful conclusion to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Because of Australia's recent contributions to the disarmament debate, and its strategic and diplomatic position, she suggested to the Committee that it now has an exceptional opportunity to move international arms control forward by pursuing a program of active and constructive diplomacy fully supported by the Government.⁵¹

6.39 Dr Hanson pointed out in July 1998 that India had approved of many of the resolutions that Australia had put forward in the United Nations General Assembly, but 'since May it still sees us as one of the enemies, it still sees us as being very closely aligned with the United States and not pushing strongly, or strongly enough, for more nuclear reductions.'⁵²

6.40 The Committee is in no doubt that Australia has played a significant role in recent years in international efforts aimed at nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. In November 1995, Australia and New Zealand joined non-aligned states such as Costa Rica, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Mexico, the Philippines, and Zimbabwe in arguing forcefully for the illegality of nuclear weapons before the

47 Submission no. 33, vol. 2, p. 15.

48 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 114

49 *Committee Hansard*, 7 August 1998, p. 359.

50 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 63.

51 Submission no. 20, vol. 1, p. 196.

52 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 67.

International Court of Justice.⁵³ The establishment of the Canberra Commission in 1995 also demonstrates clearly Australia's determination to progress nuclear weapon disarmament. Australia also played a leading role in negotiations for a CTBT in the Conference on Disarmament and in the procedural manoeuvring which led to the treaty's adoption in the United Nations General Assembly. No country has done more than Australia towards achieving nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

6.41 Australia's close ties with the United States and its place under the American nuclear umbrella does not in any way reduce Australia's ability to play a continuing constructive role towards further nuclear weapon non-proliferation and disarmament. The fact that Australia has been prepared to initiate and press forward with non-proliferation and disarmament measures against the interests of its nuclear weapon allies is evidence of Australia's integrity in this area. Australia's strong ties with the United States and the United Kingdom place Australia in a position where it may actually be able to exert some influence on these nuclear weapon states on disarmament issues.

6.42 The Committee rejects any notion that it is hypocritical for Australia, while under an American nuclear umbrella, to criticise India and Pakistan for developing a nuclear weapon capability and for conducting nuclear weapon tests. India at one time had close ties with the Soviet Union but, unfortunately for India, with the demise of the Soviet Union, it no longer has a nuclear weapon friend. It should not be forgotten that most countries do not rely on nuclear weapons for their security. And, as argued by the Canberra Commission, one cannot always rely on nuclear umbrellas for protection.

Withdrawal of officials

6.43 Several witnesses criticised the Australian Government's decision to withdraw defence personnel and cancel official visits with India and Pakistan. Mr Hamish McDonald was particularly concerned about Australia severing its military ties with India and Pakistan. He stated:

Our precipitous cutting of military connections I think will be self-punishing. I do not think that any other Western country has followed suit. We have really closed a window for ourselves into India and Pakistan by shutting down the exchanges of military attaches and military students. I believe it will take many years to replace that window.⁵⁴

6.44 He explained that Australia will now have little insight into military thinking on the subcontinent and will have to rely on its allies for intelligence. Moreover, he argued that our ability to influence India and Pakistan at a time of heightened tensions

53 John Burroughs and Jacqueline Cabasso, 'Nukes on Trial', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, March/April 1996.

54 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 75.

in South Asia, which could escalate toward nuclear exchange, have been curbed rather than improved. He estimated that it could take ten years to rebuild 'this lost intelligence capacity'.⁵⁵

6.45 Dr Makinda told the Committee that Australian defence attaches had done a lot to cultivate relations with India and 'now it has taken about two minutes without consultation with them to withdraw those people'.⁵⁶ Mr Jim Kennan also questioned the appropriateness and effectiveness of Australia's response concluding that by cutting official, including defence, ties with India, Australia effectively took itself 'out of the loop'.⁵⁷

6.46 Dr Maley suggested that it would be useful if Australia were to move relatively quickly to return defence advisers to India and Pakistan 'simply because they tend to be useful gatherers of information which can then be fed into our own policy making process, which can permit our diplomats in the field, and also officials in Canberra...to offer as informed a nuanced response as possible to developments which might occur at the time'.⁵⁸

6.47 As testing nuclear bombs is a defence-related matter, the Committee understands the symbolism surrounding the suspension of defence relations with India and Pakistan. These and other measures, which comprised Australia's response to the tests, sent a strong signal to both states. The Indian and Pakistani Governments were left in no doubt that the tests were anathema to Australia. It is questionable, however, as asserted by a number of witnesses, whether some of the defence-related measures were in Australia's long-term interests. A short-term withdrawal of the Defence Adviser, similar to the High Commissioner's return to Australia for consultations, might have made the point but allowed the Defence Adviser to continue to gather information useful to the Government on nuclear and other security matters in South Asia.

6.48 The training of officers from regional countries has long-term benefits for Australia, as Australian Governments have explained to the public, particularly in relation to the training of Indonesian officers in Australia. Those benefits include having senior officers in defence forces in the region who have an understanding of Australian thinking in military, political and social terms and who have a store of good will towards Australia.

6.49 Indian officers on training assignments in Australia might have reached a better understanding of Australia's position on nuclear tests and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons if they had been allowed to stay in this country. As it is, those officers' views about Australia and Australian views on nuclear weapons and their

55 Submission no. 37, vol. 3, p. 158.

56 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 204.

57 Submission no. 43, vol. 3, p. 199.

58 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 163.

personal feelings towards Australia would be clouded by the unceremonious termination of their attendance at courses here.

6.50 The Committee notes information received from Ms Stokes at the hearing on 4 December 1998 where she said the United States Government had, on 1 December 1998, decided, among other matters:

to waive aspects of the military sanctions imposed on India and Pakistan so as to permit the reinstatement of US international military education and training - IMET - programs in respect of both India and Pakistan. The United States will review these waivers in a year.

US sanctions remaining in place include measures preventing all transfers of dual-use technology and military sales to both India and Pakistan.⁵⁹

6.51 In view of the long-term benefits to be gained from having Indian and Pakistani participation in our military education and training programs and in light of the United States' reinstatement of Indian and Pakistani participation in IMET, the Committee believes Australia should also reinstate Indian and Pakistani participation in its military education and training programs. It would also be a gesture that would not be lost on the incoming government in India to replace the BJP-led government.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government re-instate its Defence Advisers in India and Pakistan.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends the Australian Government re-establish education and training exchange programs between Australian Defence Force officers and officers from the defence forces of India and Pakistan.

6.52 The Committee does not recommend, however, any reinstatement for the time being of other joint defence-related activities, such as ship visits, joint exercises, arms sales and the like. Such highly symbolic activities would send the wrong signal to the Indian and Pakistani Governments that they have done enough to return to a normal bilateral relationship. This should be reviewed once a new government is established in New Delhi, following the recent fall of the BJP-led government.

Poor understanding of South Asia and little interest in India and Pakistan

6.53 The importance of establishing and maintaining strong networks with India and Pakistan became more evident in light of comments indicating that Australians have a poor understanding of the South Asia region. Professor Jeffrey submitted:

59 *Committee Hansard*, 4 December 1998, p. 376.

Close understanding of the domestic scene offers a chance to foresee - and therefore take action to prevent - developments like the nuclear explosions. It also enables governments like ours to avoid giving gratuitous and attention-diverting offence. Finally, closer understanding enables us to recognize groups in India and Pakistan who support - or come close to - our positions.⁶⁰

6.54 Supporting this argument, Professor Vicziany suggested that a better knowledge of India's policies and expenditures on foreign and defence issues, together with a systematic analysis of Indian foreign policy at the highest levels of Australian Government, might have produced a different set of reactions.⁶¹ She asserted that it has been said that Australians:

...made too much of the role of the newly elected BJP government and failed to pay sufficient attention to the long term evolution of nuclear technologies in the region and what has compelled this...We have also underestimated the degree of national consensus behind the tests in South Asia. Above all, we have simply failed to accept the views of India and Pakistan that they have reasonable concerns for their national defence.⁶²

6.55 In a similar vein, Dr Bhattacharya maintained that Australia failed to understand the complexities of realpolitik in South Asia, especially India's commitment to the global elimination of nuclear weapons and its growing concern about what it perceived as the encirclement of its territory.⁶³

6.56 Dr Kenneth McPherson maintained that while Australia's reactions in part emanated from a genuine horror at the spectre of a new nuclear arms race, they were also shaped by other considerations, such as ignorance of events and opinions in South Asia and a degree of pseudo-colonial paternalism towards India and Pakistan. He pointed out that India is the world's largest democracy and as such its actions and policies reflect the will of the people unless proved otherwise.⁶⁴ He was concerned that in recent years successive Australian Governments had paid little attention to South Asia compared to the resources they have expended on East and South East Asia and the Middle East. He noted:

During the last decade, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) under Gareth Evans, Bob McMullan, Alexander Downer and Tim Fischer has made considerable efforts within tight budgetary constraints to promote a good relationship with India, but it seems to me that any positive moves on the part of these ministers and DFAT have been diluted in the broader political environment in Australia - most particularly at the federal

60 Submission no. 32, vol. 2, p. 154.

61 Submission no. 28, vol. 2, p. 55.

62 *ibid.*, p. 62.

63 Submission no. 35, vol. 3, p. 153; and *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, pp. 3-4.

64 Submission no. 5, vol. 1, p. 24; *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 216.

level - which has been dismissive, if not outright hostile, of any concerted effort to develop our national understanding and expertise with respect to South Asia.⁶⁵

6.57 Dr McPherson stressed that without a full understanding of the Indian position, particularly in Australia: 'we are less able to deal with the consequences and to perhaps change future developments'. Further, he argued that Australia must incorporate India and Pakistan in its pattern of dialogue much more effectively; that it has been too intermittent and inconsistent. He felt that at the present time Australia's ability to converse with both Pakistan and India had been severely curtailed.⁶⁶ Put simply, he argued that the more Australia can engage India in dialogue then it is better able to take on the very important role of interlocutor especially in South East Asia and with respect to APEC.⁶⁷

6.58 Dr Maley endorsed this view. He thought it unfortunate that Australia was not engaged in a political fashion in the subcontinent to the degree that it has been engaged in South East Asia. He suggested that Australia needs to address this area of neglect as a longer-term priority because the recent tests have demonstrated the capacity of that part of the world to create all sorts of political contingencies which can have far reaching implications for Australia.⁶⁸ Dr Maley argued that Australia suffers to some extent from not being a long-term major player in the region. He thought it was important for Australia to seek to pay more attention to developments on the subcontinent because:

the events of May 1998 do drive home the extent to which the possibility of significant security problems for Australia could arise from that particular point. That is not so much in terms of any direct military attack on Australian territory but in terms of the possibility of population displacements on a grand scale...⁶⁹

6.59 Adding weight to this argument, Mr Hamish McDonald believed that Australia's overall approach to India in recent years had been marked by a high level of discontinuity - by 'a rather desultory approach to the assessment of the importance of India, and a diffidence in embracing conclusions that many officials and advice have pointed the government towards'.⁷⁰ Finally, Mr Peter Prince noted that at a time when Australia is facing two major challenges - the Asian financial crisis and the open

65 Submission no. 5, vol. 1, p. 29; *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, pp. 214–15.

66 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, pp. 212, 215.

67 *ibid*, p. 216.

68 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 165

69 *ibid*, p. 159.

70 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 74.

assertion of nuclear capability by India and Pakistan - and is in need of important policy advice, policy resources have been cut back to their lowest levels.⁷¹

6.60 The Committee notes that towards the end of 1998, DFAT downgraded South Asia from a branch to a section in its departmental structure.

6.61 In making a broad analysis, the National Centre for South Asian Studies touched on many of the points made above and offered the following reasons for Australia's poor understanding of Indian needs and sensitivities:

- Australia has too few experts who properly understand the logic behind India's defence and foreign policies;
- Australian governments, companies and journalists are reasonably well informed about matters of Indian trade, economy and society but there is little understanding of security issues in South Asia;
- Australian foreign policy concerns have focused on the East Asian region and little attention has been paid to South Asia - moreover, the exclusion of India from regional forums such as APEC have meant that at the highest levels of government there has been little opportunity for Australia to come to an understanding of how India herself views East Asian countries, such as China and Korea.⁷²

6.62 Mr Timothy George, then Assistant Secretary, South Asia and Indian Ocean Branch, DFAT, refuted the suggestion that the Australian Government had allowed its interests in trade to lead to a lapse in intelligence gathering and Australia's ability to assess India's domestic situation. He cited the success of the New Horizons program and the visit by the Foreign Minister in 1997 as evidence of a 'very healthy degree of bilateral activity'. He pointed out that there may have been a doubling of trade over the last five years. He also drew attention to the Australia-India Council which he described as 'a very robust, well-funded body with some excellent programs across the board, improving ties in a whole range of areas', such as the scientific, technological, legal and cultural.⁷³

6.63 The evidence presented to this Committee builds on an existing body of substantial evidence taken by previous committees of inquiry that points to Australia's ignorance and neglect of South Asia. In 1990, the Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade found that 'expertise on India in Australia was at best fragmented between government departments and tertiary institutions or, from a less charitable perspective, simply not comprehensively developed and maintained.'⁷⁴

71 Seminar, Coombs Building, ANU, Canberra, 1998.

72 Submission no. 28. vol. 2, pp. 62-3.

73 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, pp. 98-9.

74 *Australia India Relations - Trade and Security*, Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Canberra, July 1990, p. 10.

More recently, the findings of the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade which inquired into Australia's trade relationship with India also indicated a lack of awareness by Australians of the South Asian region.⁷⁵

6.64 The Committee acknowledges that the Australian Government has undertaken a number of initiatives such as the New Horizons promotion of Australia in India in 1996 and the Government's year of South Asia, which have improved commercial relations between the two countries and raised the level of understanding. However, the Committee remains sceptical about the Department's commitment to South Asia in the light of its downgrading of South Asia in its departmental structure.

6.65 The Committee believes that more needs to be done to cultivate strong social, cultural, educational, commercial and political ties with the countries of South Asia. Furthermore, it believes that Australia needs to build up a body of expertise on South Asian affairs that can be called upon readily to help decision-makers in the formulation of government policy.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends the Australian Government review its funding to study and research centres that focus on South Asia with a view to ensuring that a pool of expert advice on South Asia is readily available in Australia and that important educational and cultural links are established with the countries of South Asia.

Re-establishing dialogue

6.66 Having looked critically at Australia's immediate response to the nuclear tests, many witnesses, in their submissions and in the hearings in July and August 1998, suggested it was time for Australia to re-establish and strengthen its links with India and Pakistan. Witnesses who criticised Australia's response as too harsh together with those who deemed Australia's reaction to the nuclear tests as appropriate agreed that Australia should now focus its energies on forging closer relations with South Asia. For them the challenge was to build strong links with India and Pakistan and to bring them into the international non-proliferation regimes.

6.67 Mr Maitland, Chairman of the Australia-India Council, told the Committee in August 1998 that Australia's response to the nuclear tests was 'absolutely correct', and that it had every right to express its abhorrence at the nuclear blasts that took place in both India and Pakistan. He noted, however, that while Indians understood the need and reasons why Australia would react the way it did, there is 'just a little feeling that we are continuing a little longer in persisting with pointing out the faults of their ways'.⁷⁶ In supporting the views of many witnesses, he added that Australia should be

75 *Australia's Trade Relationship with India*, Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, Canberra, June 1998, pp. 163-64; also see recommendations 6, 7, 14, 32, 33 and 34.

76 *Committee Hansard*, 7 August 1998, p. 369.

thinking more of the future than the past and the best way for Australia to convey its point of view was through active engagement. He told the Committee he would be 'keen to see ministerial and official level visits recommence at the earliest opportunity.'⁷⁷

6.68 Dr Yasmeeen told the Committee that the Australian Government must move to 'a new stage of encouraging the two South Asian states to create conditions for limiting the long-term negative effects of their decisions'. She pointed out that the Americans are setting an example and cited the visit of Mr Strobe Talbot to India and Pakistan and the preparedness of the United States to explore different options. To her this keenness to converse with India and Pakistan indicated that:

...Americans are willing to move beyond condemning to working out some solution. I think the Australian government needs to actually encourage that role rather than say 'Because we were upset we'll continue to remain upset.'⁷⁸

6.69 Professor Vicziany supported this view, especially in light of India's sense of isolation in the region and its failure to gain membership of regional organisations and fora. She suggested that Australia could have assumed a more helpful role by increasing its dialogue with India and Pakistan instead of reducing its involvement through the impositions of sanctions and the withdrawal from joint defence exercises. Put simply she asserted 'we could have voiced our concerns and criticisms but still insisted on a *further engagement* with India and Pakistan rather than a *disengagement*'.⁷⁹

6.70 In contrast to the enthusiasm of witnesses for Australia to re-establish links and actively engage India and Pakistan, Ms Stokes told the Committee on July 1998 that Australia was prepared to be patient while international pressure was exerted on India and Pakistan to rejoin the international community's consensus on non-proliferation. She maintained that Australia would continue to apply the sorts of pressures that the international community had agreed to. As noted earlier, she acknowledged that Australia's influence was not going to be significant but Australia would, by building on its history of active involvement in arms control and disarmament issues, work bilaterally with countries that have potentially greater influence on India and Pakistan.⁸⁰

6.71 When she appeared again before the Committee in December 1998, Ms Stokes announced that the Australian Government had decided that 'it would be appropriate to relax our suspension of ministerial and senior official visits'. She went on to explain:

77 *Committee Hansard*, 7 August 1998, p. 367.

78 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 187.

79 Submission no. 28, vol. 2, pp. 55, 61.

80 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 89.

The resumption of high level bilateral dialogue will allow more regular discussions about our concerns arising from the nuclear tests and the tensions between India and Pakistan, and the implications for Australia and the region of the nuclearisation of South Asia, as well as on the range of economic, political, security and other matters in which we have a mutual interest with Pakistan and India.⁸¹

6.72 The Committee welcomes the restoration of high-level communication between Australia and India and Pakistan and notes that the Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Tim Fischer, MP visited India in early 1999.

6.73 The Committee notes that both the Government and the Opposition made strong statements voicing their opposition to the tests. It also appreciates the need for the Government to have taken firm measures that would put both India and Pakistan in no doubt about Australia's position. The Committee acknowledges that a fine balance was required as the critics, too, had a valid point in arguing that it is in Australia's future interests to have strong lines of communication with South Asian states.

6.74 The Committee appreciates that since the fall of the BJP-led government, the opportunity to discuss security issues with the Indian Government is limited until a new government is elected. However, once a new government is installed in New Delhi, the Australian Government should seek to hold security discussions with both the Indian and Pakistani Governments. The Committee does not believe that Australia should assume it has no influence in South Asia and that it should work mainly through third parties. The Committee notes passages from the Government's *White Paper* on foreign affairs and trade:

An international reputation as a thoughtful and creative country, genuinely committed to the peace and prosperity of its region, and a source of practical ideas enhances Australia's capacity to influence the regional and global agenda in ways which promote the interests of Australia.

and,

Australia's security interests are, for example, served by strengthening regional institutions, pursuing outward-looking and growth-creating trade and investment policies, encouraging habits of dialogue, expanding institutional linkages, and facilitating people-to-people links within the region.⁸²

6.75 The Committee agrees with the sentiments expressed in the above passages from the *White Paper*. Australia has shown time and time again, through its creativity, perseverance and application of resources that it has an influence, both in the region and globally, well beyond the size of its population and economy. Even

81 *Committee Hansard*, 4 December 1998, p. 377.

82 Commonwealth of Australia, *In the National Interest: Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy, White Paper*, Canberra, 1997, pp. 13, 39–40.

though Australia may not have been a close regional partner of India or Pakistan, that is not a reason to shrink from seeking solutions to difficult security problems in South Asia and the wider region. Finding such solutions is, of course, in Australia's own security and economic interests.

Economic and trade sanctions

6.76 The Australian Government did not include economic or trade sanctions among the measures taken against India and Pakistan following their nuclear tests. The United States did, however, impose such sanctions. As some witnesses commented on the imposition of economic sanctions in such circumstances, the Committee decided to include comment in the report on this topic.

6.77 The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry welcomed the pragmatism and restraint of the Australian Government in discounting the use of economic and trade sanctions against India and Pakistan. It viewed trade sanctions as generally ineffectual and often counterproductive in that the imposition of sanctions has the potential to lift the fervour of the target country, galvanise national identity and commitment around the government. In this way it makes it difficult for that government to be seen to give way to outside pressures.⁸³ ACCI submitted:

The prompt statements by key Ministers ruling out the use of economic and trade sanctions were reassuring to commerce and industry, whilst still sending a clear signal to the Governments and people of India and Pakistan.

Diplomatic, economic and trade experience indicates sanctions are generally ineffective, with demanding thresholds for effective implementation as well as being costly for those imposing them.

...

As is becoming increasingly well-recognised, commercial and trade engagement rather than political ostracism and economic isolation are likely to prove more effective means for persuading countries of whose conduct Australia disapproves around to our way of thinking.⁸⁴

In summary, the ACCI saw little merit in trade sanctions and had little regard for them.⁸⁵

6.78 An indication of this reaction can be seen in a comment by Dr Abdul Kalam when replying to a question about economic sanctions imposed by the United States and other nations. He stated:

83 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, pp. 120, 124.

84 Submission no. 7, vol. 1, pp. 34–5.

85 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 122.

In retrospect, I would like to thank these nations for imposing sanctions on us. It helped us become self-reliant this time round too we must show these countries what we are capable of (meeting challenges), then they will not attempt to place sanctions on us again.⁸⁶

6.79 The Committee agreed with the view that the imposition of economic sanctions against India and Pakistan would have been counter-productive. Economic sanctions would not have improved security in the region; indeed, they might have contributed to political and social instability and so heightened insecurity. Nor would they have induced India or Pakistan to disavow their nuclear weapon programs. Finally, as pointed out by DFAT, Australia's argument has not been with the people of these two countries but with their governments and it has not been the wish to impose any unnecessary hardship on the people of South Asia.

86 Rashme Sehgal, 'Abdul Kalam Hits Out at Anti-Nuclear Zealots', *Times of India*, 8 August 1998.

CHAPTER 7

REGIONAL AND GLOBAL SECURITY

‘A BALANCE OF TERROR’

OR

‘NINE MINUTES TO MIDNIGHT’

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists has moved the minute hand of the ‘Doomsday Clock’ its symbol of nuclear peril, five minutes closer to midnight.

Yesterday it stood at 14 minutes to midnight. Today, it stands at nine. ¹

Introduction

7.1 The Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests sparked fears of a nuclear arms race in South Asia, of nuclear proliferation beyond South Asia, and of an increased possibility of nuclear weapons or technology falling into the hands of extremist groups. The tests heightened tensions in South Asia and raised questions about the future of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Implications for India and Pakistan

7.2 India’s ‘peaceful nuclear test’ in 1974 signalled India’s development of a nuclear weapon capability. It was also known over the last decade that Pakistan too had developed a nuclear weapon capability. By conducting the recent nuclear tests, both states declared their previously clandestine nuclear weapon programs. In one sense, the tests confirmed that which was already widely known.

7.3 Nevertheless, it was disturbing that India decided to conduct the tests at that time for largely domestic political reasons. By declaring its hand, even if the cards were known, it upped the stakes. The Indian Government’s nationalist Hindu rhetoric won overwhelming public support but also increased tensions not only within a multicultural India but also in relations with largely Muslim Pakistan.

7.4 Although the Pakistani Government did not immediately retaliate, it finally relented to domestic pressure to conduct its own series of tests despite international pleading and incentives to disregard Indian provocation.

1 Press Release: ‘Nine Minutes to Midnight’, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 11 June 1998.

7.5 The fervour generated by the tests in both countries has created an atmosphere of legitimacy and support for their nuclear weapon programs, which has undoubtedly made it more difficult for either government to eliminate its program, unless the security concerns underpinning it are addressed to satisfaction.

Arms race in South Asia

7.6 The size of the Indian and Pakistani nuclear arsenals is unknown. Various estimates have been proffered, suggesting that India has the ability to assemble between 60 and 70 nuclear weapons and Pakistan about 15.²

7.7 Dr Devin Hagerty, drawing on the work of the Federation of American Scientists wrote:

At a minimum each side must assume that the other has sufficient fissile material to deploy a small number of atomic bombs on aircraft capable of delivering them: the Mirage 2000, MiG-27, MiG-29, Su-30 and Jaguar for India, and the A-5, F16 and Mirage 3 for Pakistan. It is uncertain whether India and Pakistan have deployed nuclear warheads on ballistic missiles. India's most capable operational ballistic missile is the *Prithvi-150*, which can carry a 1000-kg payload to a range of 150km Pakistan's most capable operational ballistic missile is the *Half-2*, which can carry a 500-kg payload to a range of 280 km. Both countries have test-launched ballistic missiles with longer ranges, including the Indian *Agni* (2500 km) and the Pakistan *Ghauri* (1500 km). Prudent leaders in Islamabad and New Delhi must assume that, sometime in the very near future, military forces across the border can be equipped with nuclear-armed ballistic missiles capable of reaching virtually any important target on the subcontinent.³

7.8 According to Professor Desmond Ball, Australian National University, India and Pakistan have 'fairly substantial arsenals'. He maintained that India has produced enough fissile material for at least 250 bombs and has a stockpile of between 120 and 126 weapons. He conceded that his estimate of the number of weapons is twice as high as most public estimates. In considering Pakistan, he suggested it had 30 weapons before the detonations in May.⁴ Professor Ball argued that India and Pakistan have, over recent years, steadily increased their number of nuclear weapons, with India producing about ten a year since 1990 and Pakistan increasing production from just over one a year in 1990 to about three a year at present.

2 'Tracking Nuclear Proliferation', *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*. Internet site: <http://ceip.org/programs/npp/> (21 January 1999); see table in *The Bulletin with Newsweek*, vol. 117, 26 May 1998, p. 32 which estimates India has a capability for 74 operational warheads and Pakistan a capability for 10+. *Time* suggests India had an arsenal of about 65 warheads and Pakistan 15 to 25 warheads.

3 Dr Devin Hagerty, 'South Asia's Big Bangs', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 53, no. 1, April 1999, referring to the 'India-Pakistan Nuclear Crisis', *FAS News*, 1998.

4 Desmond Ball and Mohan Malik, Part I: 'The Indian and Pakistani Nuclear Programmes', *The Nuclear Crisis in Asia: the Indian and Pakistani Nuclear Programmes*, Working Paper No. 325, Strategic and Defence Studies Centre, ANU, Canberra, August 1998.

7.9 A number of witnesses and strategic analysts expressed grave fears for the stability and security of the South Asian region. DFAT and the Department of Defence submitted jointly that the situation with India and Pakistan represented perhaps the most serious risk of nuclear exchange ever known.⁵ Dr William Maley submitted that there is a far greater danger of a build-up towards a nuclear exchange between India and Pakistan than between any other two declared or undeclared nuclear states.⁶ Professor Paul Dibb and Mr Peter Prince in their submission to the Committee took a similar position.⁷

7.10 Professor Desmond Ball spelt out his concerns about regional security since the nuclear tests. He stated:

They have raised the prospect of uncontrolled nuclear proliferation. They have increased the potential for crisis instability on the subcontinent, raising fears of nuclear pre-emption and nuclear war. They have raised the likelihood of a nuclear arms race between India and China. They have destabilised the security of the Asia-Pacific region as a whole.⁸

7.11 Dr Richard W. Hu, University of Hong Kong, shared Professor Ball's apprehension for the South Asia region. He believed that there is a strong likelihood that the arms race would accelerate in South Asia.⁹

7.12 The nuclear tests have increased the level of uncertainty and tension in South Asia and apprehension within the region and globally. As a very minimum effect, their detonation in an atmosphere of nationalistic jingoism could have had no other result. Other than heightened tension, the question is whether there is other evidence of an arms race?

7.13 As already stated, the number of nuclear devices each country has is a matter of conjecture. There are no authoritative public data available. It is also unknown whether nuclear devices have been weaponised or deployed. Both sides have aircraft that can carry nuclear bombs and missiles with the payload and range suitable for nuclear warheads. Missile tests in recent years, including early 1999, have served both to develop a strategic capability and maintain tension between the two sides. However, as Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan - acknowledged father of Pakistan's bomb - has pointed out:

5 Submission no. 33, vol. 3, p. 10.

6 Submission no. 36, vol. 3, p. 156.

7 Submission no. 42, vol. 3, p. 190.

8 Desmond Ball and Mohan Malik, Part I: 'The Indian and Pakistani Nuclear Programmes', *The Nuclear Crisis in Asia: the Indian and Pakistani Nuclear Programmes*, *ibid.*

9 Dr Hu is Associate Professor of International Relations, Department of Politics and Public Administration, University of Hong Kong. See Richard W. Hu, 'Beyond the N-Test: Managing the Nuclear Arms Race in South Asia', *Disarmament Diplomacy*, no. 27, June 1998. Internet site: <http://www.gn.apc.org/acronym/27manag.htm> (21 September 1998)

The numbers are less important than their effectiveness and sophistication. If there is a war, you need only a few. Deterrence is the main advantage. Now they know we also have nuclear weapons, they will think ten times before invading us.¹⁰

7.14 Undoubtedly, India and Pakistan are refining their nuclear capabilities using the data gained from their tests. Similarly, both countries are developing missiles capable of being armed with nuclear warheads. To what extent the tit-for-tat missile tests signify major developments in missile capability or whether they are mainly public relations exercises for domestic consumption is open to debate. Nevertheless, scientists derive data from such tests to upgrade missile capability irrespective of the main reason for conducting them.

7.15 There is a significant difference in the size of the Indian nuclear weapon and missile arsenal, both in terms of number and sophistication, compared with that of China. India has never indicated that it is trying to achieve nuclear parity with China. By having a nuclear weapon capability, it considers that it has a deterrent to Chinese nuclear blackmail or invasion. Similarly, Pakistan seems to have adopted a deterrent posture with its nuclear weapon capability and has not sought to achieve nuclear parity with India. Although both India and Pakistan are developing their nuclear weapon and missile capabilities, there is no evidence of an 'arms race' between the two.

7.16 Deterrence is an old idea and an even older practice in statecraft.¹¹ Those who adhere to the theory of nuclear deterrence believe that nuclear weapon capability inhibits any risk-taking that could possibly escalate into a nuclear exchange. They believe that only nuclear weapons can deter the use of nuclear weapons: that nuclear weapons are for deterrence and not for use.¹² Deterrence works when adversaries perceive that they both have a credible attack capability which, because of the fear of serious reprisal, will prevent either from taking any action likely to provoke such a reprisal.¹³ That capability also depends on a state having a second strike capacity, which means that after having sustained a nuclear attack, it still has enough nuclear capability to inflict an unacceptable level of damage on its enemy.

7.17 Dr Brahma Chellaney wrote recently that India has not yet developed a nuclear doctrine and has yet to integrate its nuclear capability into its force structure:

10 Interview with A.Q. Khan, *Frontline*, vol. 15, no. 12, 6–19 June 1998.

11 Colin S. Gray, *Comparative Strategy*, vol. 2, Taylor & Francis Hemisphere Publishing Corporation, Washington DC, pp. 247–67.

12 Ibid. See also Devin Hagerty, 'Nuclear Deterrence in South Asia: the 1990 Indo-Pakistani Crisis', *International Security*, vol. 20, no. 2, Winter 1995; Tim Healy and Arjuna Ranawana, 'Upping the Ante: Pakistan's Nuclear Tests: Think the Unthinkable', *Asiaweek*, 12 June 1998; Avery Goldstein, 'Scared Senseless? The South Asian Nuclear Tests' at Internet site: <http://www.indianembassy.org/pic/usmedia/goldstein.htm>.

13 Barry Nalebuff, 'Minimal Nuclear Deterrence', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 32, no. 3, September, 1988, pp. 412–13.

Many months after conducting multiple nuclear tests, India has still to bring the military into the nuclear picture. This despite the fact that it has declared itself a NWS. The paradox of a country proclaiming it has a nuclear deterrent without the necessary military underpinnings has created an inherently dangerous situation, in which a potential adversary could be tempted to try and call India's bluff. It also highlights the marginalisation of one of the world's largest militaries.

Sooner rather than later, however, India will have to bring its military into nuclear planning. Without a military's involvement, it will not be possible for India to devise and put into operation a nuclear deterrent, which would involve targeting and deployment practices.

...

The failure to involve the military in nuclear planning has resulted in India still being vague about its nuclear doctrine. The only elements of the doctrine made public are that India will practice, in French-style terminology, 'credible minimum deterrence', and not be the first to use nuclear weapons. While those objectives are commendable, they only seek to make a virtue out of necessity: India does not have the plutonium or financial resources to exercise more than the barest of minimum deterrence, and is far from having the capacity to carry out a disabling first strike against an opponent. India's minimum deterrence is likely to look in the initial years as no more than counter-city deterrence. While India is going to have a diversified nuclear dyad made up of ballistic missiles and bomber aircraft, it is still distant from an invulnerable second-strike capability with submarine-launched missiles.

Similarly, the only discernible aspect of India's command and control system is that it will be firmly controlled by civilians, with the Prime Minister as the ultimate decision-maker at the head of a yet-to-be established Strategic Nuclear Command. An effective command-and-control system, of course, can only emerge over a period of time. After all, it took the traditional nuclear powers many years (in the case of the US, more than 15 years) to develop a command-and-control system that provided a degree of self-assurance.¹⁴

7.18 While Dr Chellaney alluded to the development of a second strike capability, in an opening statement on behalf of DFAT, Ms Stokes said that 'Halting further weaponisation will be difficult, we assess, given that India and Pakistan are likely to try to develop credible second-strike capabilities'.¹⁵ In a subsequent written statement, in relation to this assessment, DFAT advised that:

14 Dr Brahma Chellaney, *India's Nuclear Planning*, Australian Journal of International Affairs, vol. 53, no. 1, April 1999, pp. 65-6.

15 *Committee Hansard*, 4 December 1998, p. 375.

The statement is a commonplace analysis of the security and strategic situation in South Asia now that India and Pakistan have demonstrated nuclear weapons capability. The Indian government has declared that a key element of its nuclear doctrine is 'no first use' of nuclear weapons, which presupposes a second strike capability, that is, the capability to absorb an initial nuclear attack and still respond in kind.

The cornerstone of any nuclear deterrence policy is the ability to deter deliberate nuclear attack by maintaining an ability to inflict unacceptable damage on the aggressor - even after absorbing a surprise nuclear attack. A *second-strike capability*, therefore, is the capability to absorb a *first-strike* and survive with sufficient power to inflict unacceptable damage on the aggressor - to the point that a disarming first-strike becomes unattainable.¹⁶

7.19 Although the timing of the Indian nuclear tests was determined by domestic political circumstances, Indian nuclear scientists had been waiting a long time for government approval to conduct the tests. The data derived from the tests would no doubt have been used in the further development of Indian nuclear technology. It appears that India has also been working towards nuclear warheads for Prithvi and Agni missiles and that development will continue to take place. The Committee also presumes that Pakistan is continuing the development of its nuclear capability along similar lines.

7.20 Several witnesses asserted that India and Pakistan lacked command, control and intelligence systems and fail-safe mechanisms for their nuclear weapons that were comparable in sophistication to counterparts among the nuclear weapon states.¹⁷ DFAT pointed to the increased risk of miscalculation particularly given the lack of established nuclear weapons doctrines and command and control systems, the paucity of direct communication and the short flight times.¹⁸

7.21 Dr Devin Hagerty wrote that:

Over time, Washington and Moscow developed sophisticated command-and-control arrangements that buffered their gigantic nuclear infrastructures against the accidental or unauthorised use of nuclear weapons. In contrast, very little is known about Indian and Pakistani command-and-control systems, which are assumed to be rudimentary. If missile flight times of 20–30 minutes provoked enormous anxiety in the US-Soviet case, flight times of 5–10 minutes on the subcontinent are doubly worrisome. In combination, these factors cause many analysts to fear that so-called 'hair-trigger' pressures may eventuate in an Indo - Pakistani nuclear war, whether

16 DFAT to the Committee, letter dated 9 February 1999.

17 Professor Paul Dibb and Mr Peter Prince, Submission no. 42; vol. 3, pp. 189-90; Dr Hanson, *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 68; Dr William Maley, *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 156; DFAT, *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 96; see also statement by Mr Harun Rashid, *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 143.

18 Submission no. 33 vol. 3, p. 10.

intended or not. As one influential US report sums up this conventional wisdom:

...the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests have made South Asia and the world a more dangerous place. The presence of nuclear forces in the arsenals of two adjacent and often quarrelling countries increases the likelihood that nuclear weapons could be used in a conflict - and dramatically raises the human and financial costs of any armed confrontation should deterrence fail... No one should be sanguine about the prospects for regional stability. (Brookings Institution/Council on Foreign Relations 1998:2-3).

Few strategic analysts would disagree with this characterisation of the South Asian nuclear arms competition.¹⁹

7.22 There is no evidence to suggest that the command and control systems of India and Pakistan have reached beyond a rudimentary stage of development, if in fact they have got that far. Unfortunately, there is no independent authoritative assessment available. It should not be forgotten, however, that both sides have had nuclear weapons for perhaps ten years and, despite high tensions between them at times, which almost resulted in serious armed conflict, they have weathered these problems. Nevertheless, if nuclear weapons are deployed and targeted, the lack of sophisticated command and control systems could, in a crisis, lead to unfortunate consequences.

7.23 Professor Saikal thought that the present situation had the potential to lead India and Pakistan towards some sort of rapprochement and was likely to stabilise rather than destabilise their relationship. He accepted that a nuclear clash is always a possibility but the fact that both countries have a nuclear capability 'may serve as a restraining measure from allowing their conventional clashes to develop into a full-scale military confrontation and therefore a possible nuclear clash'.²⁰

7.24 Dr Hu argued:

The India-Pakistan nuclear arms race will create a very fragile 'balance of terror' in South Asia. Some people argue that mutual fear of a nuclear exchange will make conflict unlikely, and thus that possessing the bomb can prevent crises from escalating into war. But, the 'balance of terror' between India and Pakistan is not comparable to the mutual deterrence in effect between the superpowers during the Cold War. Unlike the Cold War situation, neither antagonists has a survivable or credible second-strike capability, nor assured destructive power against all high-value targets. More importantly, neither side has experience of mutual deterrence. It is true that the explicit nuclear capability now demonstrated will make the leaders of India and Pakistan more prudent in their calculations over any

19 Dr Devin Hagerty, 'South Asia's Big Bangs', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 53, no. 1, April 1999, p. 25.

20 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 150.

potential conflict. But their nuclear stand-off is not likely to reproduce the kind of crisis stability that existed over an extended period between the major nuclear powers.²¹

7.25 Dr Yasmeen argued that the Pakistani tests have given stability to the region in the short term; that in conducting its own tests Pakistan has restored the defence/offence strategic balance between the two countries which has eased the immediate tension. She argued that had Pakistan not followed suit, a sense of crisis would have prevailed in the country.

7.26 In the long term, however, she pointed out that the tests have added a major element of regional and international instability. She thought that if both adversaries have nuclear weapons and if there is a possibility of weaponisation then 'something could happen'. Dr Yasmeen could see that having broken the barrier of undeclared nuclear weapons by becoming declared nuclear weapons there existed the possibility of their going a step further.²² She stated:

Given India and Pakistan's geographical proximity, short aircraft or missile flight times (2–5 minutes) leave little time to analyse and verify false alarms from the other side in a crisis situation. Also given the history of animosity between them, it is possible that in a tense crisis situation signals from the other side can be misinterpreted and lead to a decision to start conflict. Even if the crises do not turn into conflicts, the use of nuclear weapons as a part of the crisis management language would be destabilising.²³

7.27 Agreeing with Dr Yasmeen, Dr Hanson accepted that the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests would stabilise rather than destabilise relations between the two countries, and that, indeed, in having revealed their nuclear capability India and Pakistan have provided a degree of deterrence. Nonetheless, she asserted:

This does not lessen the fact, however, that the volatile internal politics of both countries render any such stability highly fragile. Nuclear elimination analysts argue that the risks of retaining nuclear arsenals, even in relatively stable regions, far outweigh any possible benefit imputed to their ability to deter acts of aggression. But in any case, the wider strategic issues, especially the fact that these tests may prompt other states to violate the non-proliferation norm, point to them being a significant setback for international security.²⁴

7.28 Professor Dibb and Mr Prince also pointed out that the risk is made all the greater because the leaders of India and Pakistan seem to have abandoned a cautious

21 Richard W, Hu, 'Beyond the N-Tests: Managing the Nuclear Arms Race in South Asia', *Disarmament Diplomacy*, ibid.

22 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 184.

23 Submission no. 30, vol. 2, p. 140. See also *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, pp. 174–75.

24 Submission, no. 20, vol. 1, p. 202; see also *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 66.

approach, and now wield their nuclear weapons capability as ‘a proclamation of national power’. They concluded:

The combination of aggressive ‘nuclear nationalism’ and newly developed missile attack systems makes the situation on the Indian sub-continent extremely volatile.²⁵

7.29 The weight of evidence is the existence of a qualified stability in South Asia as a result of the tests but not without some risks. Some evidence suggests a level of deterrence exists, even though it is not necessarily deterrence in traditional terms; that is, that each side has a second strike capability. The lack of reliable information about weaponisation of Indian and Pakistani nuclear capabilities and their locations might, however, signal the need for caution to a potential aggressor.

7.30 The general state of relations between India and Pakistan gives cause for concern. Despite a well-publicised meeting between Prime Minister Vajpayee and President Shariff in early 1999, relations between the two countries have been poor for a long time. Continuing armed conflict on the Siachen Glacier, tit-for-tat missile launches, an escalation of fighting in Kashmir in late May/June 1999 and a caretaker government in India do not herald an early rapprochement between the two sides. As the timing of the nuclear tests was largely determined by the domestic political situation at the time, one cannot rule out the use of Hindu nationalism and anti-Muslim rhetoric during the long election period for domestic political purposes. If this happened, it would only serve to heighten tension once again in South Asia and the wider region.

Extremist groups

7.31 Concerns were expressed during the inquiry about the possible transfer of nuclear weapons and technology into the hands of third parties, especially extremist groups.

7.32 Professor Copland thought there was a possibility, albeit a slim one, of Indian or Pakistani nuclear weapons or related technology passing into the hands of ‘local extremist groups - Islamic fundamentalists in Karachi with links to Libya and the Palestine Hezbollah - and ethnic insurgents such as the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), who are said to have Pakistani connections’.²⁶

7.33 Dr Malik was less confident about India’s and Pakistan’s ability to contain the spread or leakage of nuclear weapons or technology. He told the Committee that the possibility of nuclear weapons falling into the hands of extremists, for example the Kashmiri separatists or religious fanatics, could not be ruled out. He added: ‘Anybody

25 Submission no. 42, vol. 3, p. 90.

26 Submission no. 4, vol. 1, p. 19.

who is familiar with the region knows how lax security controls are in that part of the world'.²⁷

7.34 Professor Dibb accepted that the risk of nuclear technology coming into the hands of extremist groups had been present since nuclear programs were first developed on the subcontinent. Nonetheless, he surmised that were:

“Pakistan to share its nuclear weapons know-how with its Islamic colleagues in the Middle East - a prospect arguably more likely now - the risk of terrorist access would greatly increase. This is not least the case because of the direct links between some Middle East terrorist organisations and governments in the region.”²⁸

7.35 It should be noted that both India and Pakistan have held up their record as responsible international citizens to dismiss claims about the possibility of their nuclear weapons or technology passing on to third parties. On 11 May 1998, the Indian Government announced in a press statement that it would like to reaffirm categorically that it would ‘continue to exercise the most stringent control on the export of sensitive technologies, equipment and commodities especially those related to weapons of mass destruction’. It emphasised that its ‘track record has been impeccable in this regard.’²⁹ The Pakistani Prime Minister clearly acknowledged that his country had an obligation to handle its nuclear weapons system responsibly and pledged that it would ‘not transfer sensitive technologies to other states or entities.’³⁰

7.36 Of the two countries, witnesses held greater concern over Pakistan’s ability to manage and maintain control over its nuclear weapons system. Dr Yasmeen pointed out that anyone arguing that nuclear weapons could fall into the hands of fundamentalist groups is probably not aware of the ‘secrecy and control’ that has marked the development of Pakistan’s nuclear weapons program. She maintained that Pakistan’s nuclear program had moved ahead and, despite the last 10 or 12 years of extreme instability in that country, any idea that nuclear weapons or technology would come into the hands of other groups has not happened.

7.37 The Committee does not believe that the risk of extremist groups obtaining Indian or Pakistani nuclear devices or technology is significant or is higher now than it was before the tests. Pakistan’s record in maintaining the security of its nuclear programs is unblemished. In fact, the security of Russia’s nuclear weapons – fissile material and nuclear technology – is of much greater concern than nuclear security in South Asia. Nevertheless, there is always a risk of a security breach with any nuclear program. The more programs in existence, the higher is the risk of theft from them.

27 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 55.

28 Submission no. 42, vol. 3, p. 192.

29 Press Statement, Shiv S. Mukherjee, Minister (Press, Information & Culture), Embassy of India, 11 May 1998.

30 Text of Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif’s Statement at a Press Conference on Pakistan Nuclear Tests, Islamabad, 29 May 1998, *Government of Pakistan Homepage* (17 August 1998)

7.38 Dr Yasmeen admitted that she would find it difficult to imagine Pakistan allowing its nuclear technology to come into the hands of third parties. Even so, she was concerned about the parlous state of the Pakistani economy and the damage that the imposition of sanctions could have on it. She was concerned that the economy could deteriorate to such an extent that the present government could be overthrown and replaced by an unstable government. She told the Committee, 'that is being really talked about in Pakistan; the possibility of an Islamic fundamentalist government'.³¹

7.39 Professor McPherson was similarly concerned about Pakistan's weak economic situation and its implications for security. He described Pakistan's economy as being 'in a state of near collapse, internal law and order remains a chronic problem and democratic institutions are far more fragile than in India.'³² He suggested that an immediate danger could be an act of military desperation by Pakistan 'cornered by foreign censure and surrounded by neighbours perceived to be hostile'.³³ Put simply, he explained:

In a breakdown of law and order and a breakdown of the state there is a possibility for maverick elements to take control of these systems and that worries me.³⁴

7.40 DFAT, Dr Saikal and Dr Maley all drew the Committee's attention to Pakistan's difficult economic circumstances and the dangers this held for the stability of the political system and, ultimately, the control of nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, in the twelve months since the tests, there is nothing to suggest a deterioration in the situation in Pakistan. The Pakistani economy has not collapsed as the more pessimistic commentators thought might happen. Even so, the economy is by no means robust and there is still cause for concern although an economic crisis does not appear to be imminent.

Islamic bomb

7.41 Some commentators have seen Pakistan's nuclear weapon development as the rise of an 'Islamic bomb'. In other words, it was suggested that Pakistan, as the first Muslim nation to acquire nuclear weapons, would help other Muslim nations to develop such weapons. Several Muslim nations, including Iraq and Iran, are known to have aspirations of becoming a possessor of nuclear weapons. The concept of an 'Islamic bomb' was, however, given no credence in the inquiry. Dr Yasmeen told the Committee that 'the Pakistan government is very clear about not sharing its nuclear technology with anyone, Muslim or non-Muslim, to identify it as an Islamic bomb is

31 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998.

32 Submission no. 5, vol. 1, p. 27.

33 *ibid*

34 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 221.

really a misnomer'.³⁵ As mentioned above, the Pakistan Government has stated unequivocally that it will not transfer nuclear technologies to other states.

Triggers

7.42 Professor Robin Jeffrey suggested that the risks are less from 'formal' war between India and Pakistan than from rogue elements in both militaries, from theft by terrorists, from 'leakage' to other countries, and from accident and maintenance disasters.³⁶

7.43 Accepting that there is the possibility of a nuclear exchange between the two countries, a number of witnesses pointed to situations likely to trigger a serious confrontation. Kashmir in particular, has been cited as a possible flash point. India and Pakistan have fought two wars - 1948 and 1965 - over Kashmiri territory and it remains a 'major thorn in their bilateral relations'. Kashmir is one of the most militarised regions in the world. It has troops positioned on either side of a ceasefire line. They engage in regular skirmishes which have the potential to flare into serious exchanges between the Indian and Pakistani forces.³⁷

7.44 Dr William Maley asserted that it was the combination of nuclear capability with points of friction that could lead to unintended escalation in a conventional conflict. In referring to India and Pakistan, he noted:

What sets this pairing of nuclear states apart from, for example, the pairing of the United States and the Soviet Union is that they did not have territorial disputes which brought them into immediate eyeball to eyeball confrontation, whereas in the case of India and Pakistan there are major territorial disputes in Kashmir and in respect of the Siachen Glacier. Those are literally situations in which Indian and Pakistani conventional forces are staring right down each other's barrels. That creates the danger of some small incident which can blow up to something slightly bigger, to something slightly bigger again and end up with a consequence which nobody particularly intended or desired in which the sense of state honour leads elites away from a very hard-headed, rational appreciation of the dangers in which they are placed into behaviour which, looked at from the outside, would be massively self-destructive.³⁸

7.45 He pointed out that this sense of danger is heightened by the development of missile technology:

It creates a situation of extreme risk of pre-emption because there is so little opportunity to interdict a nuclear weapon once it is launched in

35 *ibid.*, p. 185.

36 Submission no. 32, vol. 2, p. 152.

37 See evidence presented before the Committee by Raspal Khosa, *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 168.

38 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 160.

circumstances of short warning times that if a crisis develops the only way in which it may seem possible to save one's country is to strike pre-emptively against the other side before they can strike against you...³⁹

Nuclear weapons and national greatness

7.46 Mr Alan Oxley approached this problem of nuclear weapons and a nation's perception of its security interests from a different angle. He asserted that 'basic economic strength is now the instrument through which nations have a role and exert some influence'.⁴⁰ Based on studies of historical adversaries France and Germany; and Argentina and Brazil, he concluded:

...when traditional rivals strive to achieve security by achieving military supremacy, they do not achieve security and they deny opportunities for increasing prosperity because they can not secure the benefits of economic integration.

Where they have eschewed military competition and sought economic integration, they have increased economic prosperity and have secured greater military security.⁴¹

In applying this theory to India, he maintained:

India has sought to achieve its position in the world by achieving a certain military position and strength and has neglected its economic strength. That is probably why it exerts a far smaller role in global affairs than it would aspire to.⁴²

7.47 In brief, he stated that military competition between India and Pakistan, clearly demonstrated in their race for nuclear superiority, 'pre-empt the conditions for economic integration, for economic prosperity, and for mutual security'.⁴³

7.48 The Pakistan Government clearly appreciated the advantages that would come to its people by turning away from military build-up and toward social and economic development.

Pakistan recognizes that economic deprivation and increasing poverty are among the basic causes of global instability. In such circumstances, the arms race is a cruel contradiction as it consumes precious resources, diverting them from the noble goal of uplifting humanity from hunger and disease. Pakistan, therefore, recognizes the complementary relationship between disarmament and development and fully endorses the view that precious

39 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 162.

40 *Committee Hansard*, 7 August 1998, p. 350.

41 Submission no. 45, p. 209.

42 *Committee Hansard*, 7 August 1998, p. 350.

43 Submission no. 45, p. 211.

material and human resources should not be squandered on arms build-up. Promotion of the regional peace and security through a military balance at the lowest level of armaments is an objective which would effectively promote an environment where more resources could be allocated to economic development.⁴⁴

7.49 Professor Hu suggested that since India and Pakistan have detonated their nuclear bombs, the international community should accept this development as a *fait accompli* and now focus on 'how to manage and prevent a potentially catastrophic nuclear arms race in South Asia'.⁴⁵

Security concerns in the Indian Ocean

7.50 Relating the South Asian nuclear tests to Australia's specific interests, DFAT argued *inter alia* that they have the potential to affect Australian security concerns adversely because they: create the potential for nuclear confrontation in a region contiguous to Australia's area of immediate strategic concern; and could lead to a more general degradation of regional and global security environments.⁴⁶

7.51 Professor Paul Dibb and Mr Peter Prince held more immediate concerns about possible developments in the Indian Ocean. They offered the following assessment:

With its current leadership, India clearly believes a nuclear weapons capability gives it greater international standing, influence and power. Thus Australia will face a more assertive India in the Indian Ocean. While the two countries do not have extensive overlapping interests in the region, they have clashed in the recent past - for example over former Foreign Minister Gareth Evans' attempts to create a multilateral body of Indian Ocean states.

Should India develop - with Russian help - a sea-based nuclear weapons capability, deployable across the Indian Ocean, this would be of major concern to Australia, relevant in this context is Russia's eagerness to swap key military technologies for foreign currency, which provides India with a ready source of nuclear and related technology, including systems for naval deployment. This points to a greater requirement for Australian surveillance of the Indian Ocean area, in coordination with its friends and allies.⁴⁷

7.52 The Committee believes that, although remote, the possibility of rising tensions in the Indian Ocean should not be discounted. The importance of surveillance and intelligence gathering in this region underscores the need for Australia to re-establish defence links with India and Pakistan, especially the reappointment of Defence Advisers in India and Pakistan, and to strengthen political ties with Indian Ocean rim and South Asian countries.

44 *Government of Pakistan Homepage* Internet site: <http://www.pak.gov.pk/govt/fp13.htm>

45 'Beyond the Nuclear Tests', *Government of Pakistan Homepage*.

46 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 86.

47 Submission no. 42, vol. 3, p. 191.

Implications for India and China

7.53 Dr Malik told the Committee:

In the south Asian context, the nuclear proliferation chain started with China when China conducted its first bomb test in 1964. India's nuclear weapons program was a response to China's nuclear weapons program. So, in the beginning when India refused to sign the 1967 NPT, Pakistan was not a consideration. In 1974, when India tested its first nuclear bomb, Pakistan was not a consideration. In fact, if Pakistan were the only security concern, India would have liked to see south Asia remain a nuclear-free zone because India's superiority in conventional arms provides India with a huge leverage vis-a-vis Pakistan.⁴⁸

As India continues to have a conventional arms superiority over Pakistan, Pakistan's only real threat to India's security is its nuclear weapon capability.

7.54 According to Mr Oxley:

As China starts to acquire significant global nuclear capability, we do not need people to stimulate it to acquire a bigger and greater capacity. We need China to consider that it can build its security by economic and trade relationships. It is not in our interests that China emerge as a nuclear superpower in the region. India's actions have a significant impact on encouraging China to go down that route.⁴⁹

China was aware of India's undeclared nuclear capability and appears not to regard India's recent tests as increasing the security threat to itself. There is no evidence to suggest that China intends to upgrade its nuclear capability on the basis of developments in South Asia. DFAT/Defence submitted that:

China has concerns at the outbreak of a nuclear arms race between India and Pakistan, and the addition of more destabilising factors to an already turbulent situation to its south. Given India's desire to rival China and the strength of China's traditional ties with Pakistan, China is a critical factor in assisting in the reduction of tensions in South Asia. It is notable that China's reaction to the outbreak of nuclear testing in South Asia has been restrained, but also firm in pressing support for the international nuclear non-proliferation regime.⁵⁰

7.55 During the second hearing with DFAT on 4 December 1998, the Ms Stokes, in her opening statement, said: 'Another significant concern is that India may seek to close what it perceives as a strategic vulnerability vis-a-vis China; this may lead India

48 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 46.

49 *Committee Hansard*, 7 August 1998, p. 357.

50 DFAT/Defence, Submission no. 33, vol.3, p. 11.

to divert additional resources into its nuclear program'. This comment was amplified in a subsequent written statement by DFAT.

7.56 Until the election of the BJP led coalition, relations between India and China had been improving over the previous decade. Nevertheless, throughout this period, China had allegedly been supplying missile and nuclear technology to Pakistan. It is inconceivable that China would not have known that such transfers would increase instability in South Asia. However, Dr Malik went as far as asserting that this was a deliberate policy to distract India from competing against China in economic development and in becoming an influential player in Asia. It is also understandable, from an Indian perspective, that China's military assistance to Burma's military government and its consequential access to the Indian Ocean would be seen by India as a threatening move by the Chinese Government. Dr Malik cited the two moves as an attempt by China to encircle India.⁵¹

7.57 The Committee agrees with the DFAT/Defence assessment cited above that 'China is a critical factor in assisting in the reduction of tensions in South Asia'. Since 1962, India has regarded China as its main security threat and rival in Asia and many of China's actions over the last decade have reinforced this view. It was this threat which prompted India to initiate and continue to develop a nuclear weapon capability.

7.58 It is also understandable that China would be 'firm in pressing support for the international nuclear non-proliferation regime'. It is a legal nuclear weapon state under the NPT and it is obviously in its national interest for India to dismantle its nuclear weapon program and join the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state.

7.59 At the hearing on 4 December 1998, Ms Stokes, in her opening statement, said that 'Another significant concern is that India may seek to close what it perceives as a strategic vulnerability vis-a-vis China; this may lead China to divert additional resources into its nuclear program'.⁵² In a subsequent letter, DFAT amplified this statement:

India's sense of strategic vulnerability vis-a-vis China dates from their 1962 war, and acquired a nuclear dimension following China's detonation of a nuclear device in 1964. On 4 May 1998, one week prior to India's first series of nuclear tests, Defence Minister George Fernandes said in a televised interview that China was India's "potential threat number one". Following India's nuclear tests, Prime Vajpayee cited the security threat posed by China as the main reason for India conducting the tests. *The Times of India* on 12 May 1998 quoted an unnamed Indian military source as follows: "Given that universal nuclear disarmament is utopian, and that China is merrily proliferating, there was no option but to take steps to perfect our deterrent." The statement by Smt. Vasundhara Raje, Indian

51 See *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p.48.

52 *Committee Hansard*, 4 December 1998, p. 375.

Minister of State for External Affairs in the general debate at the Ministerial Meeting of the Non-Aligned Coordinating Bureau in Cartagena de Indias on 19 May 1998 contains the following statement: "... in our region the strategic situation became steadily intolerable. We have found ourselves surrounded by nuclear weapons, either overtly or covertly deployed. Our government had to take steps to ensure that, if the security of our people ... was threatened, we would have the same capability to defend them as those which the nuclear weapons states consider essential for themselves."

An intent by India to develop a strategic capability vis-a-vis China is further indicated by its active development of the *extended range AGNI (ER-AGNI)* ballistic missile with a planned range of 2,500 kilometres. India does not require such a range to strike Pakistan nor would it afford India a significant second-strike capability against Pakistan. The Indian Government has announced its intention to test the *ER-AGNI* in 1999. Pakistan's missile development program is focused solely on countering a perceived threat from India.⁵³

7.60 Although there is some basis for arguing that India will further develop its nuclear weapon capability, there is no evidence to suggest it is trying to match China's nuclear capability.

7.61 China, for its part, began its nuclear weapon program because of perceived threats from the USSR and the United States. There is no evidence available to suggest that China's nuclear weapon program was intended for use against India or that China has any designs on Indian territory. Although a part of the border between the two countries is still in dispute, neither side has shown any interest in trying to wrest away the disputed land from the other since the border war of 1962, unlike the armed conflict which has bedevilled the Line of Control between India and Pakistan over the last decade.

7.62 China sees India as a rival in Asia but not as a security concern in the same way as it sees the United States and Russia, or even Taiwan and Japan. As relations with the United States waxes and wanes, so does China's concerns of its own security. In the same way as India perceives China's so-called encirclement of India, China has often accused the United States of trying to encircle China.

It is probably fair to say that 1996 was the lowest point in Sino-U.S. relations in twenty-five years, and between China and Australia as a spin-off. the Taiwan Strait crisis and the unqualified Australian support for U.S. actions, the reinterpretation of the U.S.-Japan security alliance, the reinvigoration of the U.S.-Australian security alliance, and the Agreement on Maintaining Security between Australia and Indonesia cumulatively sapped the strength of the Australia-China relationship.⁵⁴

53 DFAT, letter dated 9 February 1999 to the Committee.

54 Ramesh Thakur, 'Australia's Regional Engagement', *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol. 20, no. 1, April 1998.

7.63 India's nuclear tests probably contributed to a rapprochement between China and the United States in 1998, albeit of short duration, as other issues achieved prominence which removed the gloss once again from the relationship.

Proliferation beyond South Asia

7.64 Some witnesses believed that the tests could provoke nuclear proliferation beyond South Asia and that other nuclear threshold nations might seek to join the nuclear club.⁵⁵ They suggested that the nuclear tests could spur countries, such as Iran, Libya, North Korea and some Latin America countries to develop a nuclear capability.⁵⁶

7.65 Professor Saikal recognised that the nuclear tests could possibly entice a number of other regional forces, notably Iran, to seek their own nuclear weapon capability. The Pakistani tests probably confirmed Iran's fear that it is surrounded by nuclear states - Israel to the west and Pakistan to the east.⁵⁷ Iran's security concerns also include Iraq. It would also have wider strategic interests in developing a nuclear weapon capability.

7.66 In keeping with the views of other witnesses, Dr Hanson considered 'we may well see other states - Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Syria - either initiate their own programs or reactivate their agendas to acquire a similar capability'.⁵⁸

7.67 DFAT also recognised the possibility that India's and Pakistan's demonstrated nuclear weapons capability could arouse more interest in weapons development in Iraq, Libya, Syria and Iran and fuel their nuclear aspirations. It submitted:

A worst-case scenario could see a Middle East state using India's and Pakistan's claim to be nuclear weapon states as the public justification for exercising its right under Article X of the NPT to withdraw from the Treaty.⁵⁹

7.68 Professor Dibb and Peter Prince added their voices to the concern about Indian and Pakistani preparedness to proclaim their nuclear capability and its influence on other states. They maintained:

Israel in particular must be alarmed by the open demonstration of a nuclear weapons capacity by Pakistan, given that country's religious and political links to fellow Islamic nations in the Middle East.

55 See Medical Association for Prevention of War (WA Branch), Submission no. 21, vol. 1, p. 210.

56 H. Rashid, Submission no. 10, vol. 1, p. 58; The Australian Greens, Submission no.15, vol. 1, p. 159; Dr Samina Yasmeen, Submission no. 30, vol. 2, p. 139 and *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 175; Professor Amin Saikal, *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 146.

57 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 147.

58 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 63.

59 Submission no. 33, vol. 3, p. 12.

Pakistan's neighbour, Iran, is one of the four 'high risk' nuclear weapons states (along with Iraq, Libya and North Korea), considered to be well on the way to producing its own nuclear bomb. In addition, Iran is thought to be developing its own medium range missile which could be used to deliver such a weapon.⁶⁰

7.69 In looking to the broader Asian region, they pointed to the 'demonstrator effect' of the Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests which could send a message to developing countries, including Australia's regional neighbours, that one way of gaining domestic prestige and international status is by acquiring nuclear weapons. They saw the Asian economic crisis as a further complicating factor in the region. They noted that the possibility of regional nations suffering economic and social chaos turning to weapons of mass destruction to bolster their national and international standing as 'an issue that Australian security planners need to confront'.⁶¹

7.70 Any proliferation of nuclear weapons has the potential to encourage other states to develop their own nuclear weapon programs. By openly declaring their nuclear weapon capabilities, India and Pakistan spurned international norms, even in the knowledge that they would be subject to sanctions. Such a stand might give succour to other states seeking a nuclear option. It has certainly not lessened the risk of further nuclear proliferation.

7.71 It must be remembered that Indian and Pakistani nuclear weapon capabilities were already widely known. India had tested a nuclear device as early as 1974. And as neither is a member of the NPT, the tests did not transgress international law. However, the tests have put pressure on the global non-proliferation regime.

Non-Proliferation Regime

7.72 The nuclear tests have raised doubts about the viability of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Dr Malik stated:

...the danger is that its defiance of global nonproliferation norms by India will prompt others to follow suit. The domino theory has it that nuclear proliferation in South Asia opens the possibility of similar development in other areas of regional tension, the Middle East (Syria, Libya, Iran and Iraq) and Northeast Asia (North Korea, Japan and Taiwan). In Southeast Asia, Vietnam is seeking nuclear and missile technology from India...The biggest worry is that a bankrupt Pakistan may be tempted to share its nuclear-weapons technology with other Islamic states, in exchange for financial aid or step up drug trafficking.⁶²

60 Submission no. 42, vol. 3, pp. 190–91.

61 Submission no. 42, vol. 3, p. 189. See also Dr Samina Yasmeen, Submission no. 30, vol. 2, p. 139.

62 Submission no. 24, vol. 2, pp. 17–18.

7.73 Dr Hanson supported the view that the recent nuclear tests could erode the achievements of the international community toward non-proliferation and weaken the global non-proliferation regime.⁶³ She asserted:

The last two years have seen a decline in expectations that significant arms control proposals can go any further. There is increasingly a sense that the international community cannot move towards new non-proliferation agreements and may not even be able to implement those agreements already achieved. Some of the advances made in recent years are in danger of being unravelled.⁶⁴

7.74 In summary, DFAT and Defence outlined both the regional and global concerns sparked by the recent nuclear tests. They maintained:

Weaponisation and deployment of nuclear arm[ed] missiles by India and Pakistan in the current environment of heightened bilateral tension, volatile domestic politics and rudimentary command and control systems, as well as the immediate geographic proximity of the two countries, create a serious risk of the use of nuclear weapons. The nuclear tests also run counter to international resolve to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons – a resolve which has seen in recent years the nuclear non-proliferation treaty extended indefinitely and the conclusion of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty.⁶⁵

7.75 Although the potential for nuclear proliferation to increase beyond South Asia, there is no evidence yet that this has happened noting, of course, that some states were seeking to fulfil nuclear ambitions before the tests took place. The NPT has weathered the threatened withdrawal of North Korea, Iraq's clandestine nuclear program and, so far, the Indian and Pakistani tests. The widespread recognition of the importance of the NPT to global security has enabled the NPT to withstand such trials. Nevertheless, the international community needs to remain vigilant to ensure that the non-proliferation regime is not eroded, particularly from within its own ranks.

Lack of Commitment to Nuclear Non Proliferation and Disarmament

7.76 Some regarded the South Asian nuclear tests as a sign pointing to a failed global nuclear non proliferation regime rather than a cause contributing to that failure. More specifically, they saw the tests as 'a symptom of the failure of the international community to fully commit itself to control the spread of nuclear weapons - and to work toward substantial reductions in the numbers of these weapons'. There is a view that the nuclear weapon states are not making significant headway in reducing their stores of nuclear weapons.⁶⁶ In support of this argument, Dr Hanson told the Committee:

63 Submission no. 20, vol. 1, p. 196.

64 Submission no. 20, vol. 1, p. 198.

65 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 86.

66 Press Release: 'Nine Minutes to Midnight', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 11 June 1998.

Essentially, there exists a widespread and growing view that the existing nuclear weapon states are not moving towards serious nuclear disarmament and appear unlikely to relinquish their own nuclear capacities. This is despite pledges from these states to reduce their own arsenals.⁶⁷

7.77 She suggested that this situation has only fuelled the nuclear aspirations of states such as India and Pakistan. She pointed out that China, France and Britain have indicated that if the two major nuclear powers move towards serious reduction, they will follow suit. She stressed that the initiative has to come from the US and Russia - they are 'the circuit breakers'.⁶⁸

7.78 In strong agreement, Dr Pitty pointed out that the fundamental weakness of the non-proliferation treaty is that the obligations imposed on the nuclear weapon states under Article VI to move in good faith towards nuclear disarmament have not been fulfilled.⁶⁹

7.79 DFAT conceded that during the Cold War, Article VI was 'definitely respected more in the breach than the observance, and that was very disappointing.' Nevertheless, Mr Griffin believes that the end of the Cold War has opened up new possibilities in terms of nuclear arms elimination. He referred to the START I and the START II processes.⁷⁰ This will be considered in more detail in Chapter 8.

Sub-critical tests

7.80 Some commentators believe that some of the nuclear weapon states are using sub-critical tests and computer modelling to further develop their nuclear weapon capabilities, and not just for nuclear safety reasons.

7.81 On the matter of sub-critical tests, DFAT told the Committee that the nuclear weapons states are undertaking or will conduct sub-critical experiments for the purpose of 'maintaining the reliability of their stockpile'. Mr Griffin explained that the nuclear weapon states made clear throughout negotiations on the CTBT that they would need to conduct non-explosive experiments in order to maintain the safety and reliability of their arsenals. He went on to explain:

It has been alleged by those who have problems with the CTBT—including India—that this is all a trick and nuclear weapons states will enhance their arsenals and will have more and more sophisticated nuclear weapons through non-explosive testing.

67 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 61.

68 *ibid.*, p. 70.

69 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 267.

70 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 114.

Mr Griffin insisted that the nuclear weapon states were not flouting the CTBT and that there was no evidence to support the contention that they are or will use sub-critical tests to refine or further develop their nuclear stockpile.⁷¹

7.82 The issue of sub-critical tests - defined by Colonel Daniel Smith, USA (Retd.) as a 'nonself-sustaining nuclear chain reaction - remains clouded. Colonel Smith noted that the US Department of Energy's planned sub-critical tests were designed to ensure the 'safety and reliability of the US nuclear arsenal'. He made plain, however, that 'this means testing some plutonium to make sure it will explode should nuclear weapons ever be used'. In further explanation, he pointed out: 'While technically not violating the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty ...these tests are contrary to the spirit of the Treaty'.⁷²

7.83 The Committee accepts that DFAT's assessment of sub-critical tests may well be correct but is nevertheless concerned that a number of individuals and organisations hold strong suspicions about the intentions behind sub-critical testing. The Committee believes that this uncertainty only further undermines confidence in the non-proliferation regime and highlights the need for greater transparency in the whole area of nuclear weapon activity.

71 *Committee Hansard*, 4 December 1998, pp. 382, 406.

72 Colonel Daniel M. Smith, 'Sowing - and Reaping - the Whirlwind', *Weekly Defense Monitor*, vol. 2, no. 22, 4 June 1998.

CHAPTER 8

THE WAY AHEAD

The Genie is Out of the Bottle

8.1 By conducting nuclear tests, India and Pakistan have removed any remaining vestige of ambiguity about their possessing nuclear weapon capabilities.

8.2 The international community reacted to the tests, rightly, with concern and indignation and called on India and Pakistan to accept the nuclear arms control norms of the international community. In response, India and Pakistan have refused to meet the terms of the international community.

8.3 As India has remained apart from the international community in relation to nuclear weapons for more than 20 years, it is unlikely now to succumb to international pressure to eliminate its nuclear weapon program and accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state. Pakistan's nuclear program is more recent but it too has taken a stance similar to that of India. Their recent nuclear tests received overwhelming popular support in their countries. Given the role of domestic politics in the Indian and Pakistani decision-making processes for the tests, any policy reversal is unlikely in the foreseeable future unless the security concerns underpinning the nuclear programs of both countries are addressed to their satisfaction. Even the recent downfall of the BJP coalition Government is unlikely to alter in any meaningful way public support for India's nuclear weapon capability.

8.4 If India and Pakistan do not relent in the face of international pressure and continue their longstanding positions, the international community has to manage these changed strategic circumstances.

8.5 Since the end of the Cold War, there has been a global move towards the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. The Chemical Weapons Convention, with its stringent verification regime, is now in force. Negotiations have been progressing to give the Biological Weapons Convention a similarly stringent verification regime to ensure compliance with the provisions of that treaty. Some moves have also been made to give effect to Article VI of the NPT.

8.6 All states, except India, Pakistan, Israel, Cuba and some island states, are members of the NPT. Brazil and Argentina, which were moving towards acquiring a nuclear capability, decided to disband their programs and sign the Treaty of Tlatelolco. Both are now non-nuclear weapon states under the NPT. All members, except for the five designated nuclear weapon states, have agreed, by becoming members of the treaty, not to possess nuclear weapons. Even the five nuclear weapon states have agreed, under Article VI, to move towards disarmament. In other words, most states do not rely on nuclear weapons for their security. For those states that are

ostensibly covered by the American nuclear umbrella, this umbrella only applies to defence against a nuclear attack.

8.7 Opinion on the value of nuclear weapons from the point of view of national security is still divided. Possession of nuclear weapons still has strong adherents. But the contrary view, that nuclear deterrence is vastly over-rated, is growing. The latter position was enhanced by the Canberra Commission, which made a persuasive case for eliminating nuclear weapons and set out a framework for achieving that aim.

8.8 It is unfortunate that India and Pakistan believe that nuclear weapons are necessary for their security when most states, including Australia, take a contrary view and have demonstrated their commitment to this view by joining the NPT as non-nuclear weapon states.

Progress on Non-proliferation and Disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament

8.9 The nuclear tests came at a time when progress on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament was at low ebb.

8.10 Since the United Nations General Assembly adopted the CTBT in 1996, further progress on nuclear weapon arms control and disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament had, until recently, stalled. This had been due partly to dissension within the Conference on Disarmament about nuclear weapon priorities - whether to proceed with a Fissile Materials Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) or a nuclear disarmament convention - and partly to interest in non-nuclear arms control issues, such as landmines.

8.11 Although the Conference on Disarmament had reached consensus on a mandate to establish an ad hoc committee to negotiate an FMCT as early as 23 March 1995, its failure to resolve differences among members on competing priorities had brought the process to a standstill. A number of member states, including India, wanted to negotiate a nuclear disarmament convention rather than approach nuclear disarmament on an incremental basis, an FMCT being one step in this process. On the other hand, the nuclear weapon states have opposed a mandate for negotiations towards a nuclear disarmament convention.

8.12 While the Conference on Disarmament remained racked with disunity, nuclear weapon disarmament faded as a topical issue in the public arena. Other arms control issues, such as landmines and a verification regime for the Biological Weapons Convention, took centre stage. However, the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan stirred the world from its complacency. Once again, nuclear weapons were brought back to the forefront of international attention.

8.13 Indubitably, the nuclear tests have created a headache for the international community. But amongst the gloom, there are bright spots. India and Pakistan dropped their opposition to an FMCT in the Conference on Disarmament and this

breakthrough enabled an ad hoc committee to be established on 11 August 1998 to begin negotiations towards a treaty. The two states have also agreed in principle to support the CTBT. They still have to ratify the treaty, as do many other states, but the announcement is a welcome step towards the CTBT's entry into force. The new conciliatory approach by India and Pakistan to multilateral arms control and disarmament is a breath of fresh air. There is renewed hope that further progress can now be made towards global nuclear disarmament.

8.14 How then should the international community respond to these changed circumstances and what should be Australia's role?

No Rewards for Tests

8.15 DFAT/Defence made it clear in their submission that:

there should be no question of re-negotiating treaties and re-designing institutions (particularly the NPT and the Security Council) to give the appearance of recognition or reward for India[n] and Pakistani tests. Nor, in the view of Australia, should there be any premature 'deals' with India and Pakistan in the nuclear field until the pressure of international opprobrium elicits from them a significant gesture of rapprochement towards the nuclear non-proliferation regime. It is unlikely, however, that India with its long-standing major power ambitions and its greater resilience to sanctions, will be prepared to make compromises in the short to medium term. Inevitably, Pakistan's actions in this area will be conditioned by what India does.¹

8.16 Mr Griffin (DFAT) told the Committee:

It is very clear, from the soundings it is taking with a range of international governments, that India is feeling a little isolated and is looking for ways to regularise its situation vis-a-vis the international community. I think that is clear. It is important not to do premature deals, if you like, not to bring India in from the cold in such a way that you undermine the very institutions that you are committed to protecting. Basically, what India has to offer is what will be acceptable to the rest of the world in terms of regularisation of their status vis-a-vis the regime, and that is the stage of the game we are at at the moment.²

8.17 India and Pakistan have always criticised the NPT for being an inequitable two-tiered institution, which conferred special advantages on the five nuclear weapon states. On the basis of their long-standing and resolute opposition to membership of the NPT, it appears unlikely that either would accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state in the foreseeable future. It would be contrary to their long-term

1 DFAT/Department of Defence, Submission no. 33, vol. 3, p. 14.

2 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 95.

rhetoric, which has always been advocacy for nuclear disarmament, not horizontal non-proliferation.

8.18 As the NPT restricts the number of nuclear weapon states to five, Indian and Pakistani accession to the treaty as nuclear weapon states would require revision of the terms of the treaty. Any attempt to increase the number of nuclear weapon states would not only put the treaty into a position where it might unravel but, more importantly, would send the wrong signals about nuclear non-proliferation. After all, the NPT was designed to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons and, ultimately, provide for nuclear disarmament. If the number of nuclear weapon states under the NPT were increased to accommodate India and Pakistan, it might also encourage other states to develop a nuclear weapon capability, which would defeat the purpose of the treaty.

8.19 Dr Roderic Pitty stressed that the only way to get a solution to the increasing threat posed by nuclear weapons proliferation in South Asia is to undertake a multilateral approach. - the problems are fundamentally ones of international security at a broad multilateral level. He underlined this point:

‘the only solutions are multilateral or at an international level. It is because of the status of nuclear weapons internationally that the Indian and Pakistani governments were able to derive the domestic political benefit. If the weapons did not have some legitimacy internationally there would have been no such domestic political benefit.’³

8.20 Mr Hamish McDonald suggested that an immediate step would be to begin to break down the notion that greatness in world affairs is connected with possession of nuclear weapons. He suggested that one initiative could be to have countries, such as Japan or Germany, as members of the Security Council.⁴

8.21 Dr Samuel Makinda proposed that all efforts should be directed toward discrediting the belief that possession of nuclear weapons, great nation power status and a permanent seat on the Security Council go together.⁵

8.22 If India and Pakistan believe that a declaration of possession of nuclear weapons confers additional status on the possessor, they should be disabused of the idea. The fact that the five nuclear weapon states happen to be the five members of the United Nations Security Council is an accident of history. In the contemporary world, economic strength and the contribution made to the international community are more important factors than possession of nuclear weapons in determining the status of a state. Germany is no less important in Europe than is France or the United Kingdom and Japan is no less influential than China. Germany and Japan are often

3 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 262.

4 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 81.

5 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 198.

touted as future permanent members of the United Nations Security Council because of their leadership roles in the global economy. Neither depends on nuclear weapons for their positions of influence. On the other hand, Indian aspirations of permanent membership would have evaporated with the tests. The Committee sees value, however, in attempting to channel India's and Pakistan's energies toward economic integration as a means of protecting and promoting their security interests and of earning international recognition.

8.23 A number of submitters mentioned India's failure to obtain membership of APEC as contributing to India's feeling of international isolation and therefore becoming a possible factor in the decision to conduct the nuclear tests. Nevertheless, the question of India's future membership of APEC is a matter for APEC itself and should not become a bargaining point in the future of the Indian and Pakistani nuclear weapon programs. The Committee comments on the question of India's membership of APEC in more detail in its report on APEC.

Reduction in Tensions between India and Pakistan

8.24 Mr Griffin told the Committee that, because of the danger of inadvertent or accidental use of nuclear weapons, the most challenging short-term task is to try to lower bilateral tensions and to remove the flash-point between the two countries. He said that transparency between the two sides needs to be improved because 'the enemy of stability in these circumstances is uncertainty about what the other side can do and what you need to do to match and outstrip it. So confidence building measures, lowering of the temperature, is an urgent task'.⁶

8.25 The United States State Department spokesman, Mr Jamie Rubin, while supporting the imposition of sanctions, said that the question now was how to work with India and Pakistan to bring them back into the mainstream of the international community. He said:

The goals are very clear - how can we and the international community work with India and Pakistan to bring them back into the international non-proliferation consensus, to reduce tensions between them and address their security concerns at the same time.⁷

8.26 Relations between India and Pakistan have remained tense ever since Partition in 1947. This tension has resulted in three wars between the two states. Two were fought over Kashmir. In the third, India helped East Pakistan to separate from West Pakistan to become Bangladesh.

8.27 The enmity and deep divisions that characterise relations between India and Pakistan are not going to be resolved in the short term. The bitterness and political

6 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 97.

7 USIA Department of State Daily Briefing, 20 July 1998.

and social differences are too entrenched for that to happen. That is not to say, however, that some amelioration in the relationship cannot be achieved, provided that both sides are prepared to work towards that end. Kashmir is by no means the extent of the differences between the two states but it is a key issue.

Kashmir

8.28 Apart from a direct security threat between the two countries, Kashmir is a festering sore. Pakistan's support for the Muslim insurgency in Kashmir has served to keep tensions high and to make it difficult to develop trust between the two sides. This has been accentuated over the last decade with continual armed conflict between the two sides along the Line of Control on the Siachen Glacier. In late May and June 1999, heavily armed Muslim insurgents took up positions on the Indian side of the Line of Control leading to heavy fighting with Indian defence forces. High-level diplomatic efforts to end the fighting broke down without achieving anything. Such incursions only worsen relations between the two states and make a settlement more difficult to achieve.

8.29 Until the long-term and seemingly intractable dispute over the future of Kashmir is resolved and relations between the two sides achieves some measure of normalcy, Pakistan is unlikely to feel secure enough to dispense with its nuclear force.

8.30 Unfortunately, India and Pakistan cannot even agree on the modalities for negotiating a settlement. India maintains that the dispute is a bilateral issue and has refused to accept any attempt at mediation by third parties, including the United Nations. Pakistan, on the other hand, has sought United Nations involvement in the negotiations. This basic disagreement epitomises the difficulties of reconciling differences between the two sides, especially when both territorial and religious issues are involved. The BJP's advocacy of Hindu nationalism, which is a departure from the secular approach taken by previous Indian Governments, has created a climate in India that makes a settlement over the largely Muslim populated Kashmir more difficult to achieve. Although the BJP government fell recently, it will be some time before a new government is elected and its policies towards Kashmir are known.

8.31 The hardened attitudes on both sides should not deter the international community from at least encouraging them to begin taking steps that might reduce tensions. A settlement was finally achieved in Northern Ireland in 1998 after decades of violence and bitterness.

8.32 An Independent Task Force, which was co-sponsored by the Brookings Institution and the Council on Foreign Relations in the United States, considered this long-running dispute and reported:

Kashmir remains the most dangerous point of contention between India and Pakistan. It is the issue with the greatest potential to trigger a conventional or even nuclear war. That said, the dispute is not ripe for final resolution. It is not even ripe for mediation by the United States or anyone else.

Consistent with these realities, diplomacy aimed at now resolving the permanent political status of Kashmir is bound to fail.

Instead, using public and private diplomacy, the United States should work to encourage India and Pakistan to:

- refrain from provocative public rhetoric;
- convene bilateral talks (as well as three-way talks involving Delhi, Islamabad, and those representatives of the inhabitants of Kashmir who are willing to eschew violence) devoted to discussing ways of calming the situation in Kashmir;
- accept an increase in the number of international observers on both sides of the Line of Control to monitor troop dispositions and to discourage any armed support for militants; and
- accept a thinning of Indian and Pakistani forces along the Line of Control.

In addition, India should be urged to:

- grant increased political and economic autonomy to the inhabitants of Kashmir;
- reduce the size of its forces stationed in Kashmir that carry out policing functions: and
- accept an increase in the number of international observers monitoring human rights conditions within Kashmir.

At the same time, Pakistan should be urged to:

- eschew any use of military force in or near Kashmir;
- provide no material support to insurgents operating in Kashmir; and
- deny safe haven to any Kashmiri insurgent group. Pakistan's willingness to forswear any and all support for armed resistance against India is likely to be a condition for India's taking the steps suggested above.⁸

8.33 The BJP's Hindu nationalist rhetoric, the conduct of the nuclear tests and the popular support for those tests do not provide a climate conducive to resolving such an emotional issue, especially one which has been the bone of contention between the two states ever since Partition more than 50 years ago. The inflammation of popular

8 Richard N. Haass and Morton H. Halperin, Co-Chairs, Report of the Independent Task Force, co-sponsored by the Brookings Institution and the Council on Foreign Relations, *After the Tests: U.S. Policy Toward India and Pakistan*, 1998, p. 9.
Internet site: <http://www.foreignrelations.org/studies/transcripts/after.html> (22 October 1998)

sentiments on both sides of the divide in 1998–99 has made it even more difficult to effect a short-term improvement in the situation let alone long-term solutions.

8.34 Although foreign minister talks between the two states were resumed in October 1998 on this issue, there is yet no indication of India and Pakistan coming to terms over Kashmir. Public utterances since the meeting offer no expectation of an early breakthrough in the widely divergent positions taken by the two sides. Talks in June 1999 between the two sides on the incursion by Muslim insurgents in Indian Kashmir broke down.

8.35 The proposals put forward by the Independent Task Force are sensible measures that could lessen tension both in Kashmir and more widely between the two states. Some of these measures could be adopted in the short term but others would take time to garner sufficient domestic support for their adoption. In any event, trust and confidence take time to be established, especially after more than 50 years of enmity. The international community must give both sides every encouragement to negotiate first a ceasefire and then a long-term settlement of their disputes, particularly over Kashmir. Indian rejection of mediation should not deter the international community from continuing to offer their good offices to help bring normalcy to the region. Although it is a bilateral dispute, any major conflict, especially if nuclear weapons were used, would have a detrimental effect on surrounding countries as well as on India and Pakistan themselves. Those other countries have, therefore, an interest in the amelioration in relations between India and Pakistan and a lessening of the risks of use of nuclear weapons.

8.36 Mr Christopher Snedden argued that the Kashmiri conflict must be resolved and that ‘Australia has a significant opportunity to take an initiative which positively encourages India and Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir issue in a way that is acceptable to the peoples of Kashmir’.⁹

8.37 The Australian Council for Overseas Aid urged the Australian Government to take steps to assist India and Pakistan to settle the conflict over Kashmir and to build confidence between India and China.¹⁰

8.38 DFAT pointed out that one of the most challenging immediate tasks is to lower the bilateral tensions between the two countries. It stressed the importance for India and Pakistan to establish a substantial meaningful bilateral dialogue.¹¹

8.39 Mr Gareth Evans submitted that:

Former chief of the Indian Navy, Admiral Ramdas, succinctly identified the real interests of India and Pakistan at stake in all of this when he said

9 Submission no.19, vol. 1, p.191 and *Committee Hansard*, 7 August 1998, p.300.

10 Submission no. 22, vol. 1, p. 219.

11 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p.97

recently: 'It should be possible to recognise that we are not each other's enemies, but that poverty, hunger, illiteracy and disease of the millions of our peoples is the real enemy. We must agree to cut down our respective defence budgets to enable us to divert funds for urgently needed developmental activities.'¹²

8.40 Australia should continue to urge India and Pakistan to at least arrange a ceasefire along the Line of control and in Kashmir and then to begin negotiations on a long-term settlement of this long-running simmering dispute that has twice resulted in war between the two countries.

8.41 When tensions run high, there is always the possibility of an incident occurring that might lead to an accidental, inadvertent or miscalculated use of nuclear weapons. The lessening of tensions is therefore a key objective for the international community. High tensions combined with relatively unsophisticated command and control systems, vulnerable nuclear capabilities and short distances to potential targets do not provide any margin for error. Until the political climate between the two sides improves, it is important for measures to be taken to avoid the possibility of inadvertent use.

Lessening the risk of inadvertent use

8.42 There are both immediate and longer-term measures that can be taken to minimise the risk of accidental or inadvertent use of nuclear weapons. These issues were addressed at some length at a Dialogue on Security and Disarmament in the Asia Pacific organised by the National Centre for South Asian Studies and the Monash Asia Institute in Melbourne in late August 1998, which included attendance by high-level academic advisers from South Asian countries. A communique was issued at the end of the Dialogue which, in part, stated:

Our conclusions have stressed the urgency to encourage those processes which will lead us towards minimising the risks of nuclear, conventional and other forms of conflict in the coming decades. We call on all governments and the policy making communities to commit themselves to the ultimate elimination of all nuclear weapons. Specifically we urge that the following steps be taken to minimise the risk of nuclear accidents and confrontations:

- treat all nuclear weapon states, including India and Pakistan, equally so that effective arms control measures can be introduced more quickly;
- take nuclear forces off alert;
- remove warheads from delivery vehicles;

12 Gareth Evans, QC MP, Submission no. 46.

- appeal to all countries, including India and Pakistan, to sign and ratify the CTBT;
- support the decision by the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to commence negotiations on a ‘cut-off’ treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes;
- give serious and urgent consideration to ways of curbing missile development, transfers and use;
- consider the Report of the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons;
- undertake a range of confidence-building measures, dialogues and restraint to prevent crises and conflict and encourage the resolution of disputes and the alleviations of tensions;
- take concrete steps to safeguard the security of non-nuclear weapon states;

8.43 In discussions with the Indian and Pakistani Governments, the international community should stress the importance of keeping their nuclear weapons in a non-alert state and not have them deployed. Nuclear warheads should also be kept separate from delivery vehicles. These measures would go along way to minimise the accidental or inadvertent use of nuclear weapons.

8.44 In addition to the above measures, both India and Pakistan should re-assert commitments not to strike at each other’s nuclear facilities. During the period of tests, the Pakistani armed forces were put on alert putatively in response to intelligence reports indicating an Indian threat against their nuclear facilities. The threat was denied by the Indian Government but lack of confidence and transparency between the two sides made it difficult to determine the credibility of the threat. The fact that this incident happened indicates the lack of trust between the two sides and the difficulty ahead of them in easing tension and building confidence and trust.

8.45 The Indian Government has offered a no first strike agreement between the two sides but the Pakistani Government has not reciprocated. Pakistan’s nuclear weapon program was established not only to deter an Indian nuclear attack but also an invasion of Pakistani territory by Indian conventional forces, which have always been stronger than the Pakistani armed forces. Pakistan’s reluctance to agree to a no first strike is consistent with a weaker state seeking not to give away its ultimate deterrent against a stronger adversary.¹³

13 *Committee Hansard* (Dr Maley), 21 July 1998, p. 166; and see also *Committee Hansard* (Dr Yasmeen), 22 July 1998, p. 192.

8.46 Dr Hanson held out some hope ‘that a no first use pledge is worth pursuing and that that is something that will take some of the pressure off the very volatile situation that we see in the subcontinent at the moment’.¹⁴

8.47 Although a no first strike agreement between India and Pakistan is a desirable goal, the Committee is not sanguine that Pakistan would agree to enter into such an arrangement. A no first strike agreement, which includes both nuclear and conventional forces, might eventually be more acceptable to Pakistan. With all negative assurances, which are based on both sides acting honourably, there has to be mutual confidence in the assurances given. That will obviously take some time to achieve. The international community should encourage India and Pakistan to move towards a political climate conducive to the development of a no first strike agreement for both nuclear and conventional forces.

8.48 As part of the international community, Australia should press India and Pakistan to take measures that will reduce the likelihood of accidental, inadvertent or miscalculated use of nuclear weapons.

Role of China

8.49 Although India’s nuclear weapon program was instigated as a result of perceived threats from China following their 1962 border war and the 1964 Chinese nuclear tests, relations between the world’s two most populous nations are far less tense than those between India and Pakistan. Until recently, relations between the India and China had been improving, notwithstanding Indian perceptions of a Chinese encirclement of India and of Chinese assistance with Pakistan’s nuclear, missile and conventional weapon programs. The Indian Defence Minister’s anti-Chinese rhetoric prior to the tests and the tests themselves have not provoked any particular reaction from China. The state of the bilateral relationship does not therefore give rise to any particular concerns about possible armed conflict between them.

8.50 DFAT/Defence noted that given India’s desire to rival China and the strength of China’s traditional ties with Pakistan, China is a critical factor in assisting in the reduction of tensions in South Asia. As two-way trade between India and China was estimated at US\$ 1.8 billion in 1996-97, ‘there is no fundamental economic imperative to set aside political difficulties’. The two departments went on to say that:

Recent statements by Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee expressing a wish for a return to the previously positive trend in Sino-Indian relations are encouraging. China, for its part, appears to be waiting for further, more significant steps from India before it would be willing to resume more positive engagement.¹⁵

14 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 72.

15 DFAT/ Defence, Submission no. 33, vol. 3, pp. 11-12.

8.51 Dr Malik argued that the UN Security Council and G-8 resolutions calling for an end to India and Pakistan's nuclear weapons programs will lead nowhere because they do not address the underlying cause of nuclear proliferation - the China-India rivalry. He argued that Pakistan's fear of India and India's security concerns regarding China coupled with its desire to be ranked strategically with China, make it unlikely that either will ever renounce its nuclear weapons.¹⁶ He told the Committee:

If a non-proliferation regime does not enhance security, if it undermines security, then it is very difficult to get nation states to comply with the non-proliferation regime.¹⁷

8.52 The South Asian nuclear weapon problem is, after all, a tripartite affair. China is inextricably linked in the South Asian nuclear equation. Although the Indian-Pakistani relationship is the more volatile and provides the higher risk of a nuclear exchange, any long-term resolution of the problem would have to include China.

8.53 India established its nuclear weapon program because it believed that possession of a nuclear weapon capability would enhance its security and deter any future Chinese aggression. Although it could not match the size and sophistication of the Chinese nuclear weapon capability, India considered that by just having a nuclear weapon capability would be a sufficient deterrent.

8.54 India believes it has as much right as China to possess nuclear weapons. It argues that if China needs nuclear weapons for its security, India should not be denied the same capacity to defend itself. India is not a party to the NPT and is therefore not bound by the terms of the treaty. Although it has arguably a moral responsibility to join the international community in its non-proliferation and disarmament efforts under the NPT, it is not obliged by any international law to rid itself of its nuclear weapon capability.

8.55 The nub of the problem is that while India continues to perceive China as a threat, it is unlikely to forego its nuclear weapon program. Pakistan has adopted the same position in relation to India. Hence the need to take into account the security needs of all three countries in resolving the nuclear issue in South Asia.

8.56 Mr Gareth Evans submitted that India and Pakistan should be engaged in dialogue with China and other major security players:

At the wider regional level, a serious effort now needs to be made to engage India and Pakistan in a dialogue – especially with China, but desirably with all the major security players in Asia – so that underlying strategic anxieties can begin to be seriously addressed. New frameworks could be created for this purpose, for example the US-initiated mechanism proposed by Senator Joe Biden, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations

16 Submission no. 24, vol. 2, p. 18.

17 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 45, see also p. 55.

Committee, whereby India would be invited to sit at a table with China, Japan, Russia and the US. But a ready-made option also exists with the ASEAN Regional Forum, the security dialogue forum embracing all the significant Asia Pacific security players: India, albeit not yet Pakistan, recently became a full member of ARF. India in particular has been notoriously reluctant – primarily because of its preoccupation with Kashmir – to multilateralise any security issue in which it has had an interest, but it needs to start thinking of dialogue processes of this kind as opportunities rather than constraints.¹⁸

Australia's Role

8.57 The Australian Government has, as have many other governments, registered displeasure at the actions of the two South Asian governments through a variety of diplomatic and other measures. The point has been well made. However, it is now time for serious discussions to be held on the future of the Indian and Pakistani nuclear programs and the political and military tensions which continue to sour relations in South Asia and place in jeopardy the security of the region.

8.58 Australia's relationships with India and Pakistan have been cordial but not particularly close, with most emphasis placed on trade and investment. Business and trade links have increased in recent years, supported by the Australian Government's New Horizons trade promotion in India in 1996 and the 1997 Year of South Asia promotion.

8.59 Economic ties have been more productive than have political relations between the two countries. India was displeased, to say the least, with Australia's resourceful bypassing of the Indian veto in the Conference on Disarmament to enable the United Nations General Assembly to endorse the CTBT and its lack of support for India's application for membership of APEC. Nevertheless, Australia has played significant roles in multilateral economic and security matters over the last decade, and it should use that experience in discussions with India and Pakistan to try to achieve some reduction in tensions in South Asia and avert a security crisis. Australia may not necessarily exert much influence over India and Pakistan in relation to the future of their nuclear weapon programs but that is not a valid reason for not trying to achieve these goals.

8.60 Reflecting on Australia's past relations with India, Professor Kenneth McPherson argued that without a full understanding of the Indian position, particularly in Australia, 'we are less able to deal with the consequences and to perhaps change future developments'. He argued that Australia must incorporate India and Pakistan in its pattern of dialogue much more effectively; that it has been too

18 The Hon Gareth Evans, QC MP, Submission no. 46.

intermittent and inconsistent. 'I think at the moment we are in a position where our ability to dialogue with both Pakistan and India has been severely curtailed.'¹⁹

8.61 It is in the interests of both Australia and India and Pakistan to develop a rapport as Indian Ocean littoral partners and as countries that share many similar interests. Lack of a prime ministerial visit by either side since Prime Minister Hawke visited India reflects the state of relations between Australia and South Asia. Once relations between Australia and India and Pakistan have returned to normal, consideration should be given to a Head of Government visit, which could give greater impetus to the development of relations between Australia and South Asia.

8.62 Australia should also continue to liaise with other states, which have more influence with India and Pakistan, to try to persuade the two countries to take measures to reduce tensions between them and to avoid the possible accidental or inadvertent use of nuclear weapons.

8.63 Australia and the international community should continue to urge India and Pakistan to sign and ratify the CTBT. The treaty cannot enter into force until 44 specified states, including India and Pakistan, have ratified it. Both countries have indicated that they support the CTBT in principle but the treaty cannot become operational until they and the other requisite states ratify it. Although the treaty does not ban all experiments relating to nuclear weapons, its entry into force would be another step towards the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament.

Indian isolation

8.64 Any feeling of isolation on the part of India before the nuclear tests must be attributed, at least partly, to India itself. Until recent years, the Indian Government restricted foreign investment in its economy, thereby minimising business links between India and the rest of the world. For many years, it was an ally of the USSR, thereby putting itself at arms length from the West. The demise and disintegration of the Soviet Union left India more exposed. Greater integration with the international community through expansion of trade and business and through greater people to people contact will help India and Pakistan to feel less isolated and exposed.

Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co-operation

8.65 The Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co-operation (IOR-ARC) seeks to 'build and expand understanding and mutually beneficial cooperation through a consensus-based evolutionary and non-intrusive approach'. Although a fledgling organisation, it offers potential for greater economic and commercial cooperation for its members including India. It also provides an ideal forum for India and Australia, as well as other Indian Ocean rim countries, such as South Africa, to work towards

19 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, pp. 212, 215.

improving relations and to build a peaceful and constructive environment in which all members can enjoy economic prosperity.

8.66 Mr Brent Davis of the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) told the Committee that Australia has spent a lot of effort with India building up the Indian Ocean regional equivalent to APEC.²⁰ The ACCI submitted that:

successive Australian Governments and the ACCI have been working patiently to develop a greater sense of regional co-operation and integration in the Indian Ocean. This effort has come to fruition with the formation of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co-operation and Development (IORARC).

The IORARC brings together a good number of countries from around the Indian Ocean (including Australia and India, and prospectively Pakistan) to examine means for closer working relations across a range of activities of interest to business and government.²¹

8.67 The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade agreed that the IOR-ARC provides a very useful vehicle for Australia-India co-operation.²² The IOR-ARC is restricted to enhancement of economic interaction and co-operation and is not a forum for pursuing security issues. However, development of economic co-operation would strengthen the bilateral relationship, which would facilitate bilateral security discussions in other fora.

Recommendation

As a means to help India become part of a community seeking to build an environment conducive to economic prosperity, the Committee recommends that the Australian Government take a more active role to invigorate the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co-operation and Development.

Lack of sound understanding of South Asia

8.68 If Australia were to develop closer relations with South Asian countries, it needs to have a pool of people who have knowledge and expertise in South Asian languages, culture, economic affairs and, particularly, foreign affairs and security issues.

8.69 Associate Professor Vicziany, Director of the National Centre for South Asian Studies, Monash University, pointed out that Australia's understanding of Indian needs and sensitivities has been poor because:

20 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 127.

21 ACCI, Submission no. 7, vol. 1, pp. 35-6.

22 DFAT to Committee, letter dated 9 February 1999.

- We have too few experts who properly understand the logic behind India's defence and foreign policies;
- Australian governments, companies and journalists are reasonably well informed about matters of Indian trade, economy and society but there is little understanding of the security issues in South Asia;
- Australian foreign policy concerns have focussed on the East Asian region and little attention has been paid to South Asia - moreover, the exclusion of India from regional forums such as APEC have meant that at the highest levels of government, there has been little opportunity for Australia to come to an understanding of how India herself views East Asian countries such as China and Korea.²³

8.70 Australia has focussed its attention on East Asia to a much greater extent than South Asia in relation to business and trade, security issues, tourism, education and in most other areas. Following an inquiry by this Committee in 1989, the Australian Government did set up the Australia–India Council and increased business and official contacts with India. Australian commercial interests in India have grown since India lifted strict rules against foreign investment but is still very low compared with Australian trade and investment in East Asia. This lack of focus has meant that few people in government, academia or in the business world have developed expertise in South Asian affairs. It has, in turn, also meant that less contact takes place between Australia and South Asia, keeping the profile of that region low in Australia and the profile of Australia low in South Asia, except, of course, in relation to cricket.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that resources be allocated to increasing the pool of people in Australia with knowledge and expertise in South Asian culture, economic affairs and, particularly, foreign affairs and security issues.

Funding of research centres

8.71 In a related area, Dr Cohen criticised the meagre resources directed toward peace studies in Australia. He noted that it 'is extraordinary in an advanced, relatively wealthy and civilised country that we can spend \$10 billion dollars or more a year on so-called defence and that we can spend so little, an infinitesimal amount of money, on peace studies. One of the first acts that this current government did...was to shut down the defence peace research institute in Canberra...or certainly to downsize it.'²⁴

8.72 The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade submitted that:

23 Submission no. 28, vol. 2, pp. 62–3.

24 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 237.

The decision to reduce funding to the Peace Research Centre at the Australian National University was not an indication of any change in the priority the Government accords to arms control issues. These remain a central component of the Government's foreign policy objectives. DFAT funding of the Peace Research Centre was always intended as seed funding and it had made clear to the Centre and the University that the Government expected them to secure alternative longer-term funding arrangements.

Consistent with this approach and in the interests of helping to reduce the national budget deficit, DFAT funding for the Centre was reduced from July 1997, and was designed to cover the salary of the Director until termination of his contract with the University on 30 June 2002. This arrangement was superseded, and the Centre closed by the University, when the then Director resigned in early 1998 to take another job.²⁵

8.73 Australia has been in the forefront of international moves aimed at global disarmament of weapons of mass destruction, arguing that it is in our own interests for all such weapons to be eliminated. A lot of time, effort and expense has been devoted to fulfilling this goal. Yet, intellectual studies in academia on these issues have been made more difficult because of the closure of the Peace Research Centre at the Australian National University through departmental funding cuts. The Committee believes this is a short-sighted view given the importance attached to elimination of weapons of mass destruction by the Government in the interests of Australia's security.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that consideration should be given to the establishment of a Peace Research Centre to rebuild Australia's academic expertise in regional security, peace and disarmament.

South Asian naivety about nuclear weapons

8.74 Mr Christopher Snedden and Dr Samina Yasmeen also raised the problem of naivety within India and Pakistan about the meaning of nuclear weapons.²⁶ Dr Yasmeen told the Committee that:

people in Pakistan and India have very little knowledge of what nuclear weapons really mean. They have this romantic idea that it is good to go nuclear but little concept of the realities of going nuclear and what it involves in terms of having a strategic doctrine and command and control systems and the effect of a nuclear war not being known. Because of that the antinuclear movement has been slightly stronger in India, but basically

25 DFAT, letter dated 9 February 1999 to Committee.

26 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 175 and 7 August 1998, p. 305.

weak when you compare the movement in India and Pakistan with the rest of the international antinuclear movements.²⁷

8.75 Dr Yasmeen suggested that the Australian Government, the people, academics and other groups establish an information inflow into South Asia on the horror and destructiveness of a nuclear conflict.²⁸

Global Nuclear Disarmament

8.76 As mentioned earlier, India has remained outside of the framework of the NPT for more than 20 years and Pakistan for a lesser but still significant period of time. India has made it clear that it will not renounce its nuclear weapon program while China maintains its nuclear arsenal. Pakistan has adopted the same position in relation to India. They are unlikely to 'come in from the cold' unilaterally to support a treaty which they have regarded as insupportable in its current inequitable form. The slowness with which nuclear weapon disarmament is happening has provided India and Pakistan with a cogent argument for staying outside of the NPT.

8.77 Some see the Indian and Pakistani tests as 'a symptom of the failure of the international community to commit itself fully to control the spread of nuclear weapons - and to work toward substantial reductions in the numbers of these weapons. No nuclear state is moving significantly toward nuclear disarmament'.²⁹

8.78 Mr McDonald pointed out that the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty does not preclude what are known as sub-critical tests, which he believes 'contradicts the whole thrust of nuclear non-proliferation and gives rise to justifiable charges of hypocrisy by the nuclear threshold states.'³⁰ Mr Doherty also argued that the United States is 'the powerhouse pushing the development of nuclear weapons. It is not in any way pushing disarmament or non-proliferation. It has broken the spirit of the Non-Proliferation Treaty by sub-critical testing and cyber-testing'.³¹

8.79 Dr Hanson told the Committee that there exists 'a widespread and growing view that the existing nuclear weapon states are not moving towards serious nuclear disarmament and appear unlikely to relinquish their own nuclear capacities. This is despite pledges from these states to reduce and eliminate their own arsenals'³². She pointed out that China, France and Britain have indicated that if the two major nuclear powers move towards serious reduction, they will follow suit. She stressed that the

27 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 175.

28 *ibid.*, pp. 175-76, 190.

29 Press Release: 'Nine Minutes to Midnight', *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, 11 June 1998.

30 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 76.

31 *ibid.*, p. 35.

32 *ibid.*, p.61.

initiative has to come from the United States and Russia; that they are ‘the circuit breakers’.³³

8.80 At the time the NPT was negotiated, five states had declared their nuclear weapon capability but many others were nuclear weapon capable, threshold states or interested in acquiring nuclear weapons. There was a widespread view that proliferation would increase the risk of accidental, inadvertent or miscalculated use of nuclear weapons as well as the risk of such weapons or fissile material getting into the hands of terrorists or rogue states. The NPT was designed to reduce those risks by stemming proliferation of nuclear weapons.

8.81 Australia delayed acceding to the NPT for two years, as it wanted to keep its nuclear options open. But, in the end, it decided to throw its support behind the NPT and, later, other non-proliferation measures as a means of providing national and regional security. It has pursued vigorously the non-proliferation approach, often taking the lead in non-proliferation treaty negotiations and in measures to restrict the development of weapons of mass destruction. This policy has been largely successful, with only three nuclear capable states now outside the NPT.

8.82 The non-nuclear weapon states agreed to waive their rights to acquire nuclear weapons on the basis that the nuclear weapon states undertook in good faith to move towards disarmament. Under Article VI of the NPT, the nuclear weapon states are already legally obliged to eliminate their nuclear weapons. The text of Article VI provides that:

Each of the Parties to the Treaty undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

8.83 No serious moves towards disarmament were expected during the Cold War, but once those constraints were removed, it was expected that the nuclear weapon states would keep faith with their commitments under the NPT. Although some movement towards disarmament has been recorded since the end of the Cold War, it has not been enough to satisfy many non-nuclear weapon states. This perceived recalcitrance on the part of the nuclear weapon states has given rise to irritation and frustration, especially as the arsenals of the United States and Russia are considerably larger than that which are needed for their security purposes under any circumstances. There is also a growing concern about the security of Russia’s nuclear weapons and fissile material.

8.84 Some states believe that at least some of the nuclear weapon states are still upgrading their nuclear weapons rather than eliminating them. None of the nuclear weapon state governments has indicated that nuclear weapons will not remain an integral part of their defence force structures for the foreseeable future and nor has any

33 *ibid.*, p. 70.

made any effort to prepare the public for complete elimination of their nuclear arsenals.

8.85 Many authorities and commentators were concerned about the effect that either the North Korean threat to withdraw from the NPT or the recent Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests would have on the future of the NPT. The more negative commentators forecast the degradation or even demise of the NPT. In the end, North Korea was persuaded not to leave the NPT and the recent nuclear tests have not undermined in any measurable way the effectiveness of the NPT.

8.86 DFAT/Defence submitted that:

Although there are no current indications of its happening, the tests by India and Pakistan have the potential to tempt some non-nuclear weapon states party to the NPT towards nuclear 'breakout' – or, in the case of the five nuclear weapon states, to re-think their commitment to the CTBT. Additionally, a weakening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime could complicate efforts to maintain and strengthen the other weapons of mass destruction...control regimes and arrangements.³⁴

8.87 It is possible that the tests could weaken the NPT. The Committee believes, however, that the greatest danger to the NPT is not from these incidents but from the perceived unwillingness of the nuclear weapon states to fulfil their obligations under Article VI. The indefinite extension of the NPT was not a foregone conclusion at the NPTREC in 1975. There was significant opposition to indefinite extension from non-nuclear weapon states, which were unhappy with progress made by the nuclear weapon states towards adherence to Article VI. In simple terms, they questioned why should five states continue to possess nuclear weapons contrary to their undertakings and obligations under the NPT while all the remaining states were not allowed to acquire them. They also questioned why it was necessary for those five states to depend on nuclear weapons for their security when other states were denied that option.

8.88 The Committee understands that Article VI adherence has been a significant and divisive issue in the annual meetings of the Preparatory Commission for the 2000 NPT Review Conference. It will almost certainly be a key issue in that Conference. The Indian and Pakistani tests have also played their part in putting the spotlight on this issue.

8.89 The danger is that perceived lack of progress by the nuclear weapon states to continue the process of disarmament may lead to some questioning about the future of the Treaty. The non-nuclear weapon states that negotiated the Treaty accepted the two-tier system on the basis that the five nuclear weapon states would honour their commitment enshrined in Article VI to eliminate their nuclear weapons.

34 Submission no. 33, vol. 3, p. 14.

United States and Russian disarmament

8.90 The United States and Russia did begin staged reductions of their nuclear arsenals with the negotiation and ratification of START I (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) but START II, although concluded, has not been ratified by the Russian Duma. The Duma has, for a long time, refused to support this treaty. Negotiations towards START III are awaiting ratification of START II.

8.91 The stalled ratification process in the Russian Duma points to another complexity in the nuclear disarmament debate, as in other areas of arms control and disarmament. Even if the United States Administration and the Russian Government are convinced that a disarmament process is in the interests of both countries, there is no guarantee that their legislatures support it. Both governments face hostile legislatures, which are ideologically opposed to many of the views of their governments. Since the end of the Cold War and the emergence of the United States as the sole superpower, Russia has been having second thoughts about nuclear disarmament in view of the superiority of NATO conventional forces. In the United States, public opinion is still supportive of the nuclear deterrent as a fundamental element of their security. This view is also reflected in the Republican-dominated Congress. Until the people and legislatures in the United States and Russia change their views about the role of nuclear weapons, there will be difficulty in securing ratification of disarmament measures that might be supported by their governments. The road to nuclear disarmament is strewn with obstacles and progress along it will be made only with determination. But the process must continue, otherwise the patience of the non-nuclear weapon states will wear thin, putting at risk 28 years of effort to prevent proliferation of nuclear weapons.

8.92 At Helsinki in March 1997, President Clinton and President Yeltsin issued a Joint Statement on Parameters on Future Reductions in Nuclear Forces. They 'underscored the importance of prompt ratification of the START II Treaty by the State Duma of the Russian Federation and reached an understanding to begin negotiations on START III immediately once START II enters into force'. They went on to say they had:

also reached an understanding that START III will establish by December 31, 2007 a ceiling of 2,000-2,500 strategic nuclear weapons for each of the parties, representing a 30-45 percent reduction in the number of total deployed strategic warheads permitted under START II and more than a 65 percent reduction in the number of total deployed strategic warheads permitted under START I.

8.93 Despite the agreement reached by the two presidents, and their acknowledgement of the need to ratify START II as soon as possible, the Russian Duma has still not ratified the treaty, now six years since its signing in 1993. A number of factors have contributed to this delay. Some are domestic, relating to the hostility between the Russian Government and the communist and nationalist dominated Duma. Others include the acknowledged inferiority of Russian conventional forces compared with those of the West and the enlargement of NATO,

both of which are perceived as threats to Russian security. The Russians objected to missile attacks against Iraq and proposed unspecified changes to the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty. The NATO bombing of the Bosnian Serbs and, more recently Serbia, against the strong objections of Russia, has served to provide another excuse for the Duma to withhold ratification of the treaty. So, too, have anomalies within the START II Treaty, which are disadvantageous to Russia. On the other hand, there is the incentive of reducing the heavy cost of maintaining the large nuclear arsenal, once the total holding is reduced in line with the treaty. However, the prospect of ratification will diminish the closer it gets to the 2000 presidential and parliamentary elections, when the attention of the Duma will inevitably become more distracted by domestic political matters.

8.94 The United States is awaiting entry into force of START II before proceeding with negotiations towards START III. If the Duma continues to defer ratification of START II, an option for the United States would be to commence negotiations with the Russian Government on START III, notwithstanding inaction on START II. These negotiations might include a revision of the anomalies in START II, thereby removing an obstacle in the ratification of that treaty. In fact, it has been suggested that START II and III be considered together by the Duma.

8.95 In a statement to the Preparatory Commission for the NPT Review Conference on 8 April 1997, the nuclear weapon states expressed their 'determination to continue to implement fully all the provisions of the Treaty, including those of Article VI'. They drew attention to recent steps taken along the road to disarmament including the conclusion of the CTBT, proposals for an FMCT, nuclear free zones and the Joint Statement issued by President Clinton and President Yeltsin in Helsinki.

8.96 The CTBT, once it enters into force, will make it difficult for non-nuclear weapon states to develop a nuclear weapon capability. It will also restrict but not ban testing by the nuclear weapon states as it allows computer simulations and sub-critical tests. Data from earlier tests will enable the nuclear weapon states to take advantage of these experimental techniques to develop their nuclear weapon capability as well as ensure the safety of their stockpiles. Although the CTBT might restrict nuclear experimentation, its passage does not result in a reduction in nuclear weapons held by the nuclear weapon states.

8.97 The FMCT is similar to the CTBT in that it, too, is basically a non-proliferation rather than a disarmament measure. The nuclear weapon states do not need more fissile material because they already possess nuclear weapons and any enlargement of an existing arsenal would be in blatant disregard of the NPT. The main purpose of an FMCT is, therefore, to prevent non-nuclear weapon states from acquiring fissile material to build nuclear weapons. A ban on production of fissile material for nuclear weapons is a beneficial step in stemming horizontal nuclear proliferation but it should not be regarded as a disarmament measure. Its entry into force would not result in any reduction in existing nuclear arsenals.

8.98 Both an FMCT and a CTBT would, however, be integral elements of an eventual global nuclear disarmament agreement, which would provide for a zero nuclear weapon world.

8.99 The United States, Russia, the United Kingdom and France have all reduced their stockpiles to various degrees in recent years. Under START I, the United States reduced its strategic forces nuclear warheads from 10,563 in September 1990 to 7,958 in January 1999 and Russia reduced its warheads from 10,271 to 6,578 over the same period.³⁵ The START process has been stalled for some time and the United Kingdom and France are expected to maintain their arsenals at current levels for the time being. China has stated that it will not begin eliminating its arsenal until the United States and Russia reduce their arsenals to China's level.

In all of this the basic underlying reality is that we are not seeing any real fear on the part of these governments, or their republics, that any kind of nuclear catastrophe is remotely imminent. We are not seeing any sense at all that unless urgent and sustained remedial steps are taken, and the occurrence of such a catastrophe is only a matter of time. In the West there is still almost a prevailing view that the Cold War balance of terror was no bad thing, and that maybe some ultimate nuclear deterrent capability is needed to guarantee security. And in India and Pakistan the unhappy reality appears to be that going nuclear has generated more exultation than anxiety.

But there *are* many grounds for real and genuine fear, by everyone in the world, so long as any nuclear weapons remain in existence. It's simply a matter of recognising three basic points, made repeatedly and with stunning simplicity in the Canberra Commission report:

- So long as any state has nuclear weapons, others will want them.
- The proposition that nuclear weapons can be retained in perpetuity by any state and never used – accidentally or by decision – defies credibility.
- Any use of nuclear weapons would be catastrophic.³⁶

8.100 With little movement on the part of the nuclear weapon states to eliminate their arsenals in the foreseeable future, it is understandable that many non-nuclear weapon states have become more frustrated with the nuclear weapon states with regard to compliance with Article VI.

8.101 Much of this frustration has been channelled into proposals for the development of a nuclear disarmament treaty. Attempts to establish an ad hoc committee in the Conference on Disarmament have been stymied by the nuclear

35 *Arms Control Today*, March 1999.
Internet site: <http://www.armscontrol.org/ACT/march99/famr99.htm> (16 June 1999)

36 The Hon Gareth Evans, QC MP, Submission no. 46.

weapon states. There have also been other moves outside the Conference on Disarmament to develop such a treaty. Proposals have included both fixed and open-ended periods for the elimination of all nuclear weapons.

8.102 It appears highly unlikely that United States and Russian Governments would begin negotiations towards, let alone support, either a protocol to the NPT or a separate treaty to give effect to nuclear disarmament based on a fixed timetable. It would take time for each state to develop sufficient confidence in the other and win enough public support for the complete abolition of nuclear weapons before both were in a position to countenance a zero nuclear weapons option. Therefore, any attempt to impose a timetable on the nuclear weapon states would be doomed to almost certain failure, a point highlighted in the Canberra Commission report.

8.103 It is also unlikely that, in the foreseeable future, the nuclear weapon states would even countenance a nuclear disarmament treaty which is open-ended. None has shown any inclination to go beyond the current NPT regime.

8.104 Eventually, a nuclear disarmament treaty will have to be negotiated to provide for zero nuclear weapons globally and a verification system to ensure full compliance by all states. Negotiations towards such a treaty are provided for in Article VI, which reads in part, 'and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control'. However, the timing for such negotiations is the crucial question. The nuclear weapon states obviously want to defer any negotiations towards such a treaty while many of the non-nuclear weapon states prefer early negotiation, presumably to put pressure on the nuclear weapon states to adhere more faithfully to Article VI.

8.105 There is, of course, a precedent for the negotiation of an arms control treaty outside of the Conference on Disarmament. When supporters of a global ban on landmines were unsuccessful in achieving consensus in the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc committee to negotiate a treaty to ban landmines, they convened a convention in Ottawa to negotiate an agreement to give effect to their aims. Many countries, including Australia, which initially opposed the proposal (arguing instead that the matter should be negotiated in the Conference on Disarmament) were eventually drawn into the process in Ottawa and committed themselves to the global ban agreed at the conference.

8.106 As Ms Stokes pointed out on 9 June 1999, the ban on landmines does not have universal membership: 'a number of key countries are outside of the Ottawa Convention and it is unlikely in the foreseeable future that they will join'.³⁷ However, the circumventing of the United Nations framework enabled progress to be made on the issue, which probably would not have occurred if it had remained in the Conference on Disarmament.

37 *Legislation Committee Hansard* (proof), 9 June 1999, p. 361.

8.107 The dependence of the Conference on Disarmament on consensus among its members allows one or a few states to frustrate the work of the overwhelming majority. India, alone, prevented the Conference from approving the CTBT and, if it were not for a procedural move, which enabled it to bypass the Conference and be put directly to the United Nations General Assembly, it would probably still be languishing in the Conference on Disarmament.

8.108 The nuclear weapon states would need to be involved in the preparation of any nuclear disarmament treaty as the text and verification regime would have to be acceptable to them.

8.109 The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade argued against negotiations towards a nuclear disarmament treaty. During an estimates hearing of the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee on 9 June 1999, Ms Stokes said:

We do not share the assessment of the new agenda advocates that nuclear disarmament has not been proceeding fast enough. It is important to recognise that US and Russia, the largest nuclear weapons states, have more than halved their holdings of strategic nuclear weapons in the current decade. It is a significant step forward, and that bilateral process is the key. We believe that seeking to introduce some kind of multilateral nuclear disarmament process will not help that endeavour at all.³⁸

8.110 At the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, indefinite extension of the treaty was by no means a foregone conclusion in the face of significant criticism from non-nuclear weapon states, which were unhappy with the pace of disarmament by the nuclear weapon states. Since then, the annual meetings of the Preparatory Commission for the 2000 Review Conference have been racked with disunity over this issue. The frustration of many non-nuclear weapon states has given rise to the New Agenda Coalition seeking to negotiate a nuclear disarmament treaty. The issue has not yet reached a point of crisis but the frustration appears to be deepening.

8.111 Support for the New Agenda Coalition has been growing. Mr Gareth Evans submitted that the Coalition:

produced an important UN resolution, passed through the First Committee on 13 November 1998, the centrepiece of which was a call upon the Nuclear-Weapon States to 'pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to the elimination of' nuclear weapons. the most interesting feature of the vote - 97 in favour to 19 against, with 32 abstentions - was that the abstentions included, very much against the will of the US, Germany and eleven other NATO partners.³⁹

38 *ibid.*

39 The Hon Gareth Evans QC MP, Submission no. 46.

8.112 Despite difficulties with their respective legislatures, the United States and Russia still hold the key to progress on nuclear weapon disarmament. Both sides need to reduce their arsenals for reasons of maintenance and cost. The security of Russian nuclear weapons, fissile material and nuclear technology is also a matter of concern. Both governments should give serious consideration to next moves in their progress towards disarmament.

8.113 A number of witnesses during the inquiry remarked on Australia's credentials in the field of arms control and disarmament. For example, Dr Hanson submitted:

Australia has consistently indicated its favourable view of arms control and disarmament and has explicitly signalled that it is not prepared to leave these issues to the major military powers alone. Australia has made its voice heard in major international forums, notably at the United Nations' General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, has appointed an Ambassador for Disarmament, has dedicated technical capabilities to the seismic monitoring of underground nuclear tests and has participated in specific international programs to prevent and detect the spread of weapons of mass destruction. One of Australia's major objectives has been the conclusion of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; since 1972 it had co-sponsored (with New Zealand) an annual resolution in the UN General Assembly supporting a comprehensive ban on the testing of nuclear weapons. While remaining a loyal supporter of its nuclear US ally, Australia has also been a firm advocate of arms control and disarmament through respected multilateral forums, thereby acquiring a considerable degree of respect from the non-nuclear states also.⁴⁰

8.114 In view of its arms control and disarmament credentials and as an ally of the United States, the Committee believes Australia is well placed to play a creative role in nuclear weapon disarmament. It could play, for example, an innovative brokering type of role between the nuclear weapon states and the New Agenda Coalition as it did in negotiations for the Chemical Weapons Convention and the CTBT. The growing dissatisfaction with the recent lack of progress cannot be ignored. Unless the nuclear weapon states continue to move discernibly towards nuclear disarmament to placate the many dissatisfied non-nuclear weapon states, the NPT itself may come under pressure.

Report of the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (August 1996)

8.115 Mr Alan Oxley, Dr Samuel Makinda and Dr Roderic Pitty commended the work of the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons in evidence to the Committee. Although Australia presented the Commission's report to the United Nations General Assembly, neither Australia nor any other country moved to have the recommendations adopted. Dr Makinda thought the Australian

40 Submission no. 20, vol. 1, p. 197.

Government should have sold more vigorously the Canberra Commission recommendations than it has done.⁴¹

8.116 In relation to the Canberra Commission Report, Dr Hanson suggested that it was being received better in mid 1998 than it was in 1996. She stated:

Indeed for most of the organisations involved in the arms control debate, the Canberra Commission report has come to be the chief, and possibly the best, reference point. It is seen as comprehensive and credible.⁴²

8.117 In light of the valuable contribution made by the Commission, Dr Hanson recommended that the Australian Government reconvene the Canberra Commission.⁴³ Alternatively, she suggested that the Australian Government seek to have the Commission Report adopted by the UN General Assembly or the report taken to the Conference on Disarmament for adoption. In this way she suggested it could be discussed and used as a basis for an elimination process.⁴⁴ In addition to reconsidering the Canberra Commission Report she also made the following recommendations:

- The Australian delegation to the Non Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in 2000 explore a position which places emphasis on nuclear disarmament by the existing nuclear powers;
- Australia's delegation to the Conference on Disarmament continues to pursue a Cut-Off Convention as well as a No-First Use Treaty.⁴⁵

8.118 A number of submitters have endorsed Dr Hanson's recommendation that Australia should build on its record of active involvement in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Several have recommended that the Australian Government should take a second serious look at the Canberra Commission Report.⁴⁶ The Australian Council for Overseas Aid pointed out that Australia's role in establishing the Canberra Commission gives it solid credibility in this area, and it should now join other middle level powers to push for the implementation of the Canberra Commission's recommendations. It considered that the spread of nuclear weapons would be halted only by a global response.⁴⁷

8.119 In addressing the matter of the Canberra Commission, Mr Griffin acknowledged that no action was taken to have the report officially endorsed in the

41 *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 202.

42 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 63; see also comments by Dr Yasmeen, *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 191; comments by Dr Samuel Makinda, *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, pp. 197–98; Dr Roderic Pitty, *Committee Hansard*, 22 July 1998, p. 264.

43 Submission no. 20, vol. 1, p. 201.

44 *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 64.

45 Submission no. 20, vol. 1, p. 202.

46 Dr Bhattacharya, *Committee Hansard*, 20 July 1998, p. 12.

47 Submission no. 22, vol. 1, p. 219.

United Nations. He surmised that this was because people might have regarded further action as ‘counterproductive since most of the recommendations, all but one in fact, relate to actions to be taken by the nuclear weapon states in detargeting and strategic escrow for nuclear weapons’. Mr Griffin added that it was a question of whether positive moves toward nuclear disarmament by the nuclear weapon states would be best achieved by pressuring them publicly or by dialogue and simply maintaining the debate.⁴⁸

8.120 Ms Stokes pointed out that the Report did recommend that negotiations proceed expeditiously on a fissile material cut-off treaty and that the Australian Government was actively pursuing this initiative.⁴⁹ Dr Peter Howarth, Director, Nuclear Non-Proliferation Section, DFAT said that a cut-off treaty was a principal priority for Australia and that Australia was engaged in activities to try to get an agreement in the Conference on Disarmament to activate a mandate, agreed to in 1995, for the negotiation of a cut off treaty.⁵⁰

8.121 In response to a suggestion that the Canberra Commission be invigorated and its findings adopted by the UN, Mr Griffin stated that since the report was not adopted at the time of its presentation ‘it would conceivably send the wrong signal to India and Pakistan’s defiance of the international regime for the international community now to say the established nuclear weapons states must take the following steps’.⁵¹ Rather, he added that attention should be centred now on what India and Pakistan need to do to normalise and regularise their situation in accord with international norms. He noted:

Nuclear disarmament remains an important goal but for the focus now to be on what nuclear weapon states need to do, as though they have done something wrong, would seem to be misguided.⁵²

Mr Griffin agreed that the Canberra Commission report ‘has certainly nourished ongoing debate on the way forward on nuclear disarmament’.⁵³

8.122 The Committee appreciates the view that any action taken by the international community should not be seen as a reward to India and Pakistan. Even so, the Committee believes that the Canberra Commission made such a valuable contribution to the debate on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament that its report warrants further consideration. The lack of a timetable is the key point in the Report as it does not provide an unrealistic and unachievable commitment, which the nuclear weapon states could legitimately use as a basis for not supporting it.

48 *Committee Hansard*, 21 July 1998, p. 87.

49 *ibid.*, p. 88; see also p. 111.

50 *ibid.*, p. 111.

51 *ibid.*, pp. 90–91.

52 *ibid.*, p. 91.

53 *ibid.*, p. 87.

8.123 While the nuclear weapon states are perceived by many non-nuclear weapon states as not acting in good faith towards nuclear disarmament, India and Pakistan are given an excuse for not disbanding their nuclear weapon programs. Notwithstanding the renunciation by most states of nuclear weapons for their security, insistence on the part of the five nuclear weapon states that nuclear weapons are still necessary for their security enables India and Pakistan to mount a similar case. Moreover, the five nuclear weapon states are under a legal obligation to move towards nuclear disarmament but the obligations of India and Pakistan are only moral, not legal.

8.124 The Committee believes that the Australian Government should resubmit the Report of the Canberra Commission to the United Nations General Assembly for adoption. The Report provides a framework for universal nuclear disarmament, including possessors of nuclear weapons that are not NPT nuclear weapon states. As all members of the NPT have made a commitment to universal nuclear disarmament, the resubmitting of the Report for adoption is in line with that commitment. It would send a clear signal to all possessors of nuclear weapons that the international community wants all of them to dismantle their arsenals.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government seek formal adoption of the recommendations of the Canberra Commission through appropriate resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament.

**John Hogg
Chairman**

ADDITIONAL STATEMENT FROM SENATOR MARGETTS

The report rightly points out that India sees China via Pakistan as its major security threat. From China's point of view, India is just one of their security concerns. Others include the former Soviet Union, Japan and South Korea, each of which poses an actual or potential nuclear threat.

What is missing from the report is the positive initiatives Australia can take in reducing regional tensions.

Statements about what Australia can do in the context of the interconnected threats in the region, must take account of Australia's role in providing nuclear raw materials to Japan and South Korea. The build up of plutonium in Japan in particular contributes to China's insecurity which in turn leads them to build up their nuclear weapon arsenal. This is then perceived by India as threat to its security and is a significant factor in India's decision to demonstrate its nuclear weapon capability.

Australia withdrawing from supply of uranium would not in itself diffuse these tensions but it would send a signal that we understand the fears of the region and are not willing to be part of the build up of nuclear threat.

The section of the report dealing with the New Agenda Coalition (8.108-8.112) gives a good explanation of the case for the initiative. The proposal in 8.112 that Australia could play an innovative brokering role between the nuclear weapons states and the New Agenda Coalition has some merit. However, signing on to the initiative at the United Nations would be a stronger indication of Australia's commitment to nuclear disarmament and would be a position of greater integrity.

Recommendation: That Australia sign on to the initiative of the New Agenda Coalition at the United Nations.

There is little doubt that the NPT negotiations are reaching one of the most critical points in their history. It is up to Australia to decide whether to continue following the line of the nuclear states or to try to pull together a wider consensus.

It is feared that unless something is done to bring a real timetable for disarmament into the negotiations, the NPT may cease to exist.

Recommendation: That Australia supports moves for an enforceable timetable for nuclear disarmament within the terms of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Final comment: While the Committee noted the need for there to be greater expertise available in Australia in relation to South Asia, it stopped short of drawing attention to the obvious inadequacy of advice from our own Department of Foreign Affairs.

APPENDIX 1

LIST OF SUBMISSIONS, SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSIONS, WRITTEN RESPONSES TO EVIDENCE AND OTHER DOCUMENTS AUTHORISED FOR PUBLICATION BY THE COMMITTEE

Submissions

Anfiloff, Mr W.

Australian Anti-Bases Campaign Coalition and Pax Christi NSW

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Australian Council for Overseas Aid

Bhattacharya, Associate Professor Dr D.

Campaign for International Co-operation and Disarmament

Conservation Council of South Australia

Copland, Associate Professor I.

Cowburn, P.

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Australian Defence Organisation, and the Australian Safeguards Office (Joint submission)

Dibb, Professor P. and Prince, Mr P.

Evans, Mr D.

Evans, Hon. Gareth, QC MP

Flowerpott, Ms K.

Friedlander, Dr P.G.

Hanson, Dr M.

Jeffrey, Professor R. FAHA

Jones, Mr P.

Kennan, Hon J. QC.

Krishnasamy, Mr K.

Lawther, Mr N.

Leaver, Mr R.

Makinda, Dr S.

Maley, Dr W.

Malik, Dr M.

Masselos, Dr J.

McDonald, Mr H.

McPherson, Dr K.

Medical Association for Prevention of War (Australia)

Medical Association for Prevention of War (WA Branch)

Oxley, Mr A.

People for Nuclear Disarmament

Pitty, Dr R.

Rashid, Mr H.

Schnelbögl, Mr P.

Snedden, Mr C.

Takao, Dr Y.

Tang, Ms A.

The Australian Federation of University Women Inc.

The Australian Greens

Vicziany, Associate Professor M.

Weeraratna, Mr S.

White, Mr G.

Whiting, Mr E.

Winter, Mr L.

Yasmeen, Dr S.

APPENDIX 2

LIST OF WITNESSES WHO APPEARED BEFORE THE COMMITTEE AT PUBLIC HEARINGS

Monday, 20 July 1998

Dr Debesh Bhattacharya

Mr Denis Doherty, National Co-ordinator, Australian Anti-Bases Campaign Coalition, and State Secretary, Pax Christi of New South Wales

Dr Marianne Hanson

Dr Mohan Malik

Dr James Masselos

Mr Hamish McDonald

Tuesday, 21 July 1998

Department of Defence

Mr Allan Behm, Head, International Policy Division

Australian Safeguards Office

Mr John Carlson, Director of Safeguards

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Mr Brent Davis, Head of International Group and Director, Trade and Policy Research

Mr John Martin, Executive Director

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Mr Timothy George, Assistant Secretary, South Asia and Indian Ocean Branch

Mr John Griffin, Director, Conventional and Nuclear Disarmament Section

Mr Peter Howarth, Director, Nuclear Non-Proliferation Section

Ms Deborah Stokes, First Assistant Secretary, International Security Division

Australian Defence Organisation

Ms Adrienne Jackson, Director General, Major Powers and
Global Security Branch

Australian Geological Survey Organisation

Dr Kenneth Muirhead, Research Group Leader, Seismic Monitoring

Australian National University

Professor Amin Saikal, Centre for Middle Eastern and Central Asian
Studies, Faculty of Arts

AusAID

Mr Murray Proctor, Assistant Director General, Corporate Policy and
South Asia Branch

Mr Raspal Khosa

Dr William Maley

Mr Harun Rashid

Wednesday, 22 July 1998

Medical Association for Prevention of War

Ms Judith Blyth, Branch Coordinator
Dr Harry Cohen, Vice-President
Dr Peter Masters, Acting Treasurer

People for Nuclear Disarmament

Mr Graham Daniell, Committee Member
Ms Patricia Keady, Member
Ms Brenda Roy, Treasurer

University of Western Australia

Mr Kabilan Krishnasamy, Doctoral Candidate, Department of
Political Science

Dr Samuel Makinda, Senior Lecturer in International Politics,
Department of Political Science

Dr Roderic Pitty, Visiting Lecturer in International Relations,
Department of Political Science

Miss Angelina Tang, Masters Student, Department of Political
Science

Dr Samina Yasmeen, Senior Lecturer in International Politics,
Department of Political Science

Curtin University of Technology
Professor Kenneth McPherson, Director, Indian Ocean Centre
Mr Alexei Mouraviev, Director, Section of Russia's Studies,
Asia-Pacific International Relations/Strategic Studies
Research Group, School of Social Sciences and Asian
Languages
Dr Yasuo Takao, Senior Researcher/Lecturer, Asia-Pacific
International Relations/Strategic Studies Research Group,
School of Social Sciences and Asian Languages

Friday, 7 August 1998

Monash University
Associate Professor Ian Copland, Director, Centre of
South Asian Studies

La Trobe University
Dr Peter Friedlander, Open Learning Hindi Co-ordinator
Australia-India Business Council
Mr Alister Maitland, Chairman

International Trade Strategies
Mr Alan Oxley, Director

People for Nuclear Disarmament
Ms Brenda Roy, Treasurer

Hon James Kennan QC

Mr Christopher Snedden

Associate Professor Marika Vicziany

Friday, 4 December 1998

Department of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

Ms Deborah Stokes, First Assistant Secretary, International Security Division

Mr Graeme Lade, Director, South Asia and Regional Issues Section

Dr Peter Howarth, Director, Non-Proliferation Policy Section

Mr John Griffin, Director, Conventional and Nuclear Disarmament Section

Mr Robert Owen-Jones, Executive Officer, Conventional and Nuclear Disarmament Section

Mr Guy Summers, CTBT Desk Officer.

APPENDIX 3

COMMUNIQUE BY THE MELBOURNE GROUP

Friday 28 August 1998, The Windsor Hotel, Melbourne, Australia

During the last three days, the Melbourne Group has brought together around the table experts on Asia-Pacific affairs from a number of countries, not least of them India and Pakistan, to discuss ways in which we can strengthen regional security. We have engaged in constructive discussion of a range of issues affecting security in the region as a whole, and we have done so in a meed of goodwill and even friendship. A report on the dialogue will be issued shortly. The Melbourne Group has reached consensus on a number of matters which we seek to bring to the attention of governments, journalists, business houses, students and scholars, and the general public in the various nations which make up the Asia-Pacific region.

Our conclusions have stressed the urgency to encourage those processes which will lead us towards minimising the risks of nuclear, conventional and other forms of conflict in the coming decades. We call on all governments and the policy-making communities to commit themselves to the ultimate elimination of all nuclear weapons. Specifically we urge that the following steps be taken to minimise the risk of nuclear accidents and confrontations:

- treat all nuclear weapon states, including India and Pakistan, equally so that effective arms control measures can be introduced more quickly;
- take nuclear forces off alert;
- remove warheads from delivery vehicles;
- appeal to all countries, including India and Pakistan, to sign and ratify the CTBT;
- support the decision by the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva to commence negotiations on a 'cut-off' treaty to ban the production of fissile for nuclear weapons purposes;
- give serious and urgent consideration to ways of curbing missile development, transfers and use;
- consider the Report of the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons;
- undertake a range of confidence-building measures, dialogues and restraint to prevent crises and conflict and encourage the resolution of disputes and the alleviation of tensions;
- take concrete steps to safeguard the security of non-nuclear weapons states;
- take measures to encourage enhanced economic links, people-to-people contacts and regional and subregional cooperation.

In the course of its deliberations, the Melbourne Group became aware of the extent to which the Australian government had disengaged from India and Pakistan. In the light of this, and in order to further the positive goals set out above, we urge the Australian government to take steps to re-establish official visits and dialogue with India and Pakistan.

As part of the process of confidence building, which we recommend, the Melbourne Group wishes to maintain an on-going dialogue amongst its original participants and also to broaden that dialogue. We recognise that an important factor in building trust and confidence is the ability to share information and expertise, and to do this in a way which is quick and timely. Hence, the Melbourne Group proposes to establish a South Asia Security Network. The components of the network will be as follows:

- an information service providing timely summaries and news and analysis throughout the region;
- a policy forum on-line on South Asian Security to facilitate the sharing of data, documents and ideas;
- a repository for important documents, agreements and texts;
- an international, collaborative research program to promote the analysis of regional security questions;
- a series of further round-table discussions in Washington, Beijing, Tokyo, Dhaka, Colombo, Islamabad, New Delhi and other capital cities as a way of informing governments and the general public about the conclusions reached by the Melbourne Group.

The steps which will be taken to implement this network are:

- identify institutions willing to act as autonomous nodes in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Australia, United States and other countries;
- identify funding sources and seek support for the network;
- establish appropriate links between this network and the existing Nautilus Institute Northeast Asia Peace and Security Network