

## **ROLE OF MILITARY IN CONFLICT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION: A CASE STUDY OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN**

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### **Abstract**

*Due to its omnipresent nature, national interest of states often clash and conflict erupts. Conflict can be resolved through peaceful means (negotiation, mediation, arbitration and adjudication) or coercive means (use of force). But due to shifting balance of power coercive means become a necessary requisite to further a state policy. Due to incompatible positions, states often exert their will to further their interests through the use of military power. Hence, military acts a tool of not only initiating conflict but a factor of conflict resolution as well as is apparent in the case of India and Pakistan where both states while trying to maintain their sovereign positions employed military means to resolve their mutual clashes. Since Pakistan's birth out of the bloody partition of British India, its history has been punctuated by an overarching influence of its military. The grave fault lines between the military and civilian leadership in Pakistan led to the emergence of military as the sole guardian of state interests thereby overruling civil leadership of the state by intervening in policy making and justifying its influence. This paper aimed at to analyze the role of military in exacerbating conflict and resolve conflicts. The descriptive analysis reveals that the organizational structures and relationship between these countries are influenced by the military. Moreover, notable events since 1947 have been elaborated by implying content analysis.*

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### **Introduction**

Conflict is an inherent characteristic of human life and existence. It is arduous to imagine a situation without conflict. Conflict is as old as the hills and has existed since men started organizing themselves into societies and it would be pertinent to note that “conflict is a theme that has occupied the thinking of men more than any other, save only God and love” (Rapoport, 1960). Due to its omnipresence, it is idealistic to perceive that a society can ever be conflict free. The term conflict has been derived from ‘*confligere*’, a Latin word that means ‘*to strike together*’ which implies the overt use of force arising out of competing and clashing interests. In that regard, Himes has outlined conflict as: “purposeful struggles between collective actors who use social power or remove opponents and to gain status, power, resources and other scarce resources” (Himes, 1980). Mark and Synder have suggested an overarching approach towards an empirical understanding of the phenomenon of conflict by pinpointing four conditions necessary for the initiation of a conflict: the existence of two or more actors, position of incompatibility, recurrent behavior should be aimed to hurt each other and a situation of resource and position scarcity. Similarly, Peter Wallenstein has declared conflict as “a social condition in which a minimum of two actors/parties strive to acquire at the same moment in time an available set of scarce resource” (Wallenstein, 2012). About 2000 years ago a Roman philosopher Seneca said: “*Of war men ask the outcome, not the cause*”. But today in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it would not be sagacious and prudent if one does not question the evolution of the circumstances that shapes our world at large. According to Walker (2005), Pruitt and Rubin (1986) defined conflict as: “Conflict means perceived divergence of interest, or a belief that the parties' current aspirations cannot be achieved simultaneously”.

### **Level of Analysis**

Broad generalizations about the causes of conflict have provoked a contentious and quarrelsome debate but level of analysis can help us to minutely review its intricacies. Level of analysis with respect to conflicts and war is organized at four levels: Individual level, Domestic level, Inter-state level and Global level.

**The Individual Level:** It includes rational decision of national leaders of both parties when they made calculations to achieve their objectives by making war.

**The Domestic Level:** Features of states and societies determine that either they will go for war or avoid war.

**The Interstate Level:** It focuses on the two states interaction with each other in terms of power relations in international arena.

As the focus of this study is centered at the inter-state level in which the theories describe wars and conflicts in terms of power relations among the major parties of the global or international system. For instance, the 'Theory of Power Transition' posits that conflicts lead to large-scale wars when the element of power is relatively distributed and to some extent equal among contesting states and a powerful and rising state threatens and exploits the overall position of the declining hegemon. At this juncture, deterrence can help de-escalate violence by power-build up on both sides and on the same point threatening its use hence putting a stop to wars of any kind. But the Theories of Arms Race have extended this notion that such actions provide an impetus towards war rather than to its prevention. However, many analysts and academics have adopted a statistical perspective in approaching conflict while analyzing facts and figures in the evolution of conflict studies. This has shifted attention towards the role of democratic factors, structure of the government, role of military, economic welfare and the role of international organizations of the involved countries.

### **Types of International Conflict**

Conflict can occur over ideas or interests and hence it is important to consider the following generalizations (Goldstein, 2008):

Conflict of Ideas:

- Ethnic conflict
- Religious conflict
- Ideological conflict

Conflict of Interests:

- Territorial conflict
- Governmental conflict
- Economic conflict

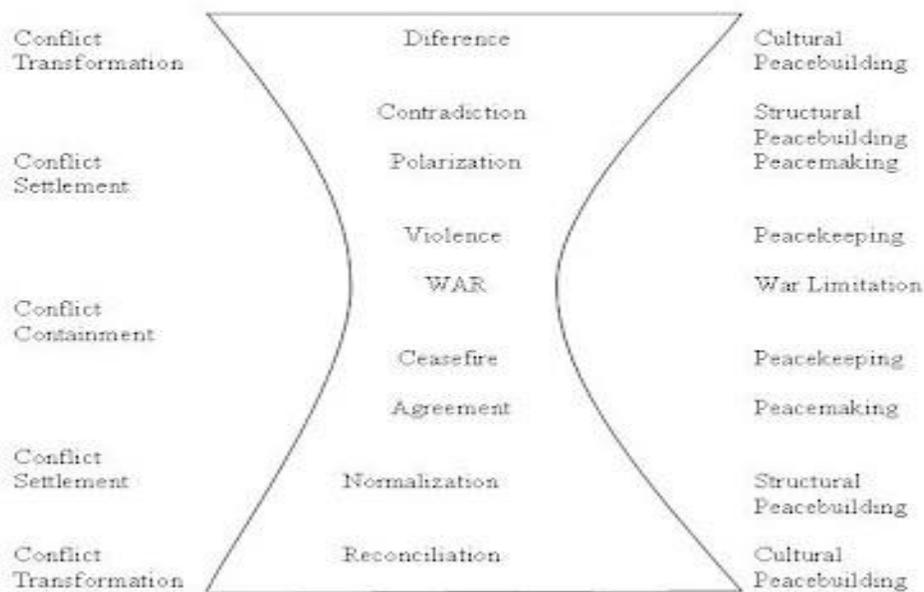
These conflicts in practice will overlap and are not mutually exclusive as the international system is comprised of states driven towards conflict on the pretext of nationalism, ideological differences, ethnic animosities, religious fervor, and economic strife. As is illustrated in the case of India and Pakistan tussle over Kashmir presents a blend of afore-mentioned conflicts.

### **Conflict Resolution**

Hence, to understand the containment of conflict Morton Duetsch (1949, 1973) has differentiated between destructive and constructive conflict. This distinction between the two types illustrates that as constructive conflict is an essential and

valuable aspect of man's creativity but destructive conflict should be avoided as it may escalate and has the tendency to engulf the whole system that further deteriorates the societal fabric. In a similar vein, conflict resolution as a field emerged in the 1950s for the transformation of destructive conflicts and demands that conflict resolution should be multi-level, multidisciplinary, multicultural, analytical, normative, theoretical and practical. As the international system is highly unpredictable and so is the escalation and de-escalation of conflicts. A simple escalation and de-escalation model illustrates the dynamic nature of conflict from the initial stage of differing positions to overt violence and war through the trend of normalization by the employment of measures in resolving conflict. Similarly, if this escalation/de-escalation model is combined with Galtung's model of conflict, violence and peace it will further our understanding regarding the transition from conflict to de-escalation of force.

**Gambar 3**  
**Model Hourglass : Isi Konflik, Penanganan Konflik dan Transformasi Konflik**



<http://lisabauman.blogspot.com/2012/04/introduction-to-conflict-resolution.html>

### **Military Power**

The role of military has usually been related with the use of force, yet it is equally important for military forces to refrain from conflict and instead focus on conflict prevention, management or resolution. Nature of conflicts today has changed

from inter-state to intra-state. Stages of conflict differ from conflict prevention, peace-keeping, peace-making and peace building. Nevertheless, the role of military differs in inter-state and intra-state conflict. In an inter-state conflict militaries can promote peace by helping the states or the governments to address the root causes of the conflict. On the other hand, in the inter-states conflicts, militaries can help to promote the confidence building measures (CBMs) to reduce misperceptions and confusions (Quilop, 2010).

The armed forces or the military of a country are essentially government sponsored defence, fighting forces and organizations which exist to serve state interests and to deter internal and external threats and aggression. Similarly, Pakistan Armed Forces have evolved over the years to strengthen its territorial integrity and to protect its sovereignty from unwarranted aggression. Pakistan's military serves the purpose of a center of gravity as the very survival of the nation depends on it. The role of the military can be understood by its three pronged defense policy (Shah, 2014):

1. Conventional force
2. Nuclear deterrence
3. Asymmetric warfare

The history of the origin of the Indo-Pak military can be traced back to the acceptance of the British Cabinet Plan (1946) which paved a way for a constitutional settlement of the making of two separate and independent nations. But, the leaders of Muslim League (ML) expressed their apprehension that Congress would try to abolish the autonomous position of Muslim provinces if the division of British Indian Forces is not materialized before partition. In that regard, Khawaja Nazimuddin (former 2nd Governor General and 2nd Prime Minister of Pakistan) had expressed his concern about the instability of the future nation to Viceroy Lord Mountbatten as Pakistan without an army of its own "would be like a house of cards" having "no earthly chance of survival" (Hali, 2012).

#### **Division of Military Assets (1947)**

Despite ardent opposition from British government, the apprehension were considered as valid reasons of concern and the British Indian Forces (BIA) were effectively split into two wings. As reflected by the Hindu-Muslim communal balance the division of military assets took place on the ratio of 64:36. Hence in 1947, out of a total of 410,000 soldiers, 140,000 came to Pakistan's share. In terms of percentages, Pakistan finally received approximately 30 percent army, 20

percent air force and 40 percent navy. Furthermore, to overcome the shortage of officers some 500 British officers were recruited for this purpose.

It is pertinent here to understand the dilemma Pakistan had faced as a nascent nation in 1947, as a nation it lacked coherent historic roots and ideology as Ayub Khan had aptly explained in the following words (Haqqani):

### **INDO-PAK WAR (1947-1948)**

#### **Towards Conflict**

Pakistan after its birth was consumed by a chaotic and a traumatic atmosphere, but the biggest blow as perceived by the Pakistani leadership was the fear of annexation of Kashmir by Indian forces. At this juncture, Pakistan's civilian leadership while intending to maintain the territorial integrity of the newly born state planned to seize the Kashmir Valley by the use of force. Direct attack or invasion was ruled out as it would have suicidal for the disorganized state lacking proper resources and infrastructure to wage a war.

#### **Towards Conflict Resolution**

As a result of prolonged and protracted negotiations between the warring parties, a ceasefire was agreed by both sides. UN played the role of a mediator laid out the resolutions on which the final ceasefire took place. This resolution demanded that Pakistan would draw back its regular as well as regular forces, while India was allowed to minimize its army presence. The Kashmir led to the death of 1500 soldiers on both sides. Pakistan gained about 2/5th of Kashmir while India acquired about 3/5th territory of Kashmir. Following the generalization of the conflict hour-glass model, Kashmir war eventually de-escalated while moving downward: acceptance of ceasefire, agreement of demarcating the territory and temporary normalization of relations. However, the conflict was transformed but as proper steps towards reconciliation was not taken which led to hatred and suspicion on both sides of the border. The fate of the Kashmiris was to be decided through a plebiscite, ensured by UN Articles 47 of 21 April 1948 and 51 of 3 June 1948 (Hali, 2012).

### **INDO-PAK WAR (1965)**

#### **Towards conflict**

Kashmir was regarded as an unfinished business of the colonial power and over the years it assumed the status of a Jugular-vein of Pakistan. At the height of the Cold war, Pakistan sided with US to procure arms and ammunitions, modern weaponry and army personnel training under the guise of the military pacts of

1950s; CENTO and SEATO. While the other state institutions faced grave challenges, the military officer's belief was consolidated as the sole guardian of state interests. Presumptuous and bold, the upper echelons of military sought to exploit the golden opportunity presented by India's defeat against China in 1962. Sino-Indian war (1962) had occurred between the two states over the dispute of Himalayan border along with other issues. It was a miscalculated move as the Pakistani military planned the 'Operation Gibraltar' under the auspices of General Akhtar Hussain Malik on the pretext that India will not be able to defend itself after losing to China. Following developments in the decade of 1960s acted as a catalyst in the realization of Operation Gibraltar:

- The Rann of Kutch encounter of the Indian and Pakistani forces in 1965, with Pakistan achieving an edge.
- Disappearance of a holy relic from the Hazrat Bal Shrine in Srinagar in December 1963, created turmoil among Muslims in the Kashmir Valley, which was perceived by Pakistan as conducive to stage an uprising in Indian held Kashmir.

These factors bolstered Pakistani command's thinking that through the use of clandestine means would force a resolution in Kashmir (Hali, 2012). However, the plan was blown off as Kashmiri herdsmen informed the Indian authorities regarding the Pakistani intruders. What followed was an Indian attack across the ceasefire line to sabotage guerilla bases in Pakistani controlled Kashmir. In order to sever the road link between India and Kashmir, Pakistan undertook another offensive attack to gain supremacy in Akhnur. For this purpose the offensive plan was code-named 'Operation Grand Slam' which deployed army's 12th Division in Murree. To this the Indian forces retaliated by attacking on Pakistan's eastern front (primarily the sectors of Lahore, Sialkot and Kasur) which led to full-fledged war between the two states. The war of 1965 exhibited new trends of warfare as both the antagonists engaged not only in land warfare but fought voracious aerial warfare and to some extent a limited naval warfare (notably Operation Dwarka) as well. The war also witnessed the greatest tank battles since World War II with well-equipped tanks.

### **Towards Conflict Resolution**

As the warring states exhausted their military arsenal, the war eventually was led towards a stalemate and threatened regional peace which became the concern of the global powers. Hence, Prime Minister Alexei Kosygin undertook the initiative

by offering his good offices to normalize and pacify relations between India and Pakistan. As a result of the meeting of the Pakistani and Indian delegation headed by Ayub Khan and Lal Bahadur Shastri a declaration named as the Tashkent Accord was signed. It provided measures to eliminate the causes and consequences of war, withdrawal of armed forces from both sides to their pre-war position, resumption of normalization of relations by resuming diplomatic missions, and by furthering measures to restore economic and commercial ties between the India and Pakistan. The declaration provided a practical approach for the resolution of disputes. Tashkent Accord was widely criticized through the length and breadth of Pakistan as it declared the victory of India while Indian forces subdued the efforts of Pakistani military to gain control of Kashmir.

**Table No: 1 Military Strength of India and Pakistan during 1965 war**

<b>Indian Military Strength</b>	<b>Pakistan Military Strength</b>
720 Tanks	150 aircraft
628 Artillery	756 Tanks
700,000 Infantry	552 Artillery
	260,000 Infantry

Source: Singh, Lt.Gen Harbaksh (1991).War Dispatches. New Delhi: Lancer International. p.7.

## **INDO-PAK WAR/BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR (1971)**

### **Towards Conflict**

The Failure to resolve a political problem through political means, power was abused by some megalomaniac politicians along with miscalculation of the martial law regime, Pakistan resorted to military action in East Pakistan on night 25/26 March 1971 leading to an all-out war with India and an insurgency in Bangladesh (22 November 1971- 17th December 1971). The Pakistani failure to accommodate demands for autonomy in East Pakistan in 1970 led to secessionist demands in 1971. In March 1971, Pakistan's armed forces launched a fierce campaign to suppress the resistance movement that had emerged but encountered unexpected mass defections among East Pakistani soldiers and police. The Pakistani forces regrouped and reasserted their authority over East Pakistani. It has been alleged that Pakistan through its 'Operation Searchlight' conducted horrendous atrocities against the Bengali populace that many term it as 'Genocide'.

As a result of these military actions, millions of Bengalis died at the hands of the Pakistani army. Resistance fighters and nearly 10 million refugees fled to West Bengal (Indian state). Meanwhile the Indian leadership had fashioned a strategy designed to assist the establishment of the independent nation of Bangladesh. As part of this strategy, in August 1971, India signed a twenty-year Treaty of Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation with the Soviet Union. One of the treaty's clauses implied that each nation was expected to come to the assistance of the other in the event of a threat to national security. Simultaneously, India organized, trained, and provided sanctuary to the MuktiBahini (meaning Liberation Force in Bengali), the East Pakistani armed resistance fighters. With an Indian blockade of East Pakistan Dhaka crumbled and fell to Indian and MuktiBahini forces on 16th December 1971 bringing the conclusion of the war.

**Towards Conflict Resolution**

The war was a shameful and a miserable defeat for Pakistan. However, the strategic response towards conflict after the war included elite peace-making in the form of Simla Agreement (1972) in which Pakistan recognized the independent status of Bangladesh in exchange for the return of 90,000 POWs in five subsequent months. The accord also gave back more than 13,000 km<sup>2</sup> of land that Indian troops had seized in West Pakistan during the war, though India retained a few strategic areas.

**Table No: 2 Military Strength of India and Pakistan during 1971 war**

<p><b><u>Indian Armed Forces:</u></b> 500,000 <b><u>MuktiBahini:</u></b> 175,000</p>	<p><b><u>Pakistan Armed Forces:</u></b> 365,000</p>
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It is crucial to develop this understanding that Pakistan at being a weaker position had little chance of success against India by waging total wars hence its military initiated the use of non-state actors in the form of Jihadis and Pushtun tribesmen to gain supremacy over the enemy state of India. But owing to operational and tactical failures of Pakistan’s strategic planning, the plans backfired when in the first two wars India retaliated and a full-fledged war started between the two states. But the 1971 war, the role of the military in suppressing the Bengalis proved to be the highest level of lewdness and wantonness when the operation turned into Genocide. Here, the initial objective was to contain the separatist movements of Bengalis but the frolicsome role of the military instead of resolving the conflict provided an opportunity for India to intervene and exploit the situation. This was followed with the most dismal and tragic episode in the history

of Pakistan as it was cut from its eastern wing along with the humiliating surrender of the Pakistan army's surrender.

### **Siachen Conflict**

Once the 1971 war was over, a full scale fight occurred between the two states in 1984. This time the area concerned was Siachen Glacier, declared the world's highest battlefield. The glacier was another territory that was disputed. When Pakistan started arranging some tourist activities up there, India got furious and started an Operation Meghdoot and captured the top most place of Glacier by setting up a military base up top. That it maintains by using US\$ 1 Million per day. Pakistan tried to retake it in 1987 and 1989 but was unsuccessful. The Pakistanis control the glacial valley just five kilometers southwest of Gyong La. The Pakistani Army has been unable get up to the crest of the Saltoro Ridge, while the Indians cannot come down and abandon their strategic high posts. The line between where Indian and Pakistani troops are presently holding onto their respective posts is being increasingly referred to as the Actual Ground Position Line.

### **Kargil War**

After the failed attempt of regaining the Glacier territory back, Pakistan army devised a much more sophisticated and complicated plan that comprised of blocking the main supply lines of India reaching the Indian base at the top of the glacier. The plan was all set for action. In late 1980s but was put on hold for a comparatively very longer time for the fear that this become a reason to full scale war. Since Pakistan had already been put under the sanctions by US for developing nuclear weapons and also Pakistani military hierarchy didn't believe that they have proper military deterrent if the war like situation arises.

General Pervez Musharraf was the leading strategist behind the Kargil conflict. In 1999, from March till May, Musharraf ordered the Kashmiri troops to secretly infiltrate into the Kargil district. India got furious after discovering the infiltration. This led to an almost full scale war. Nawaz Sharif, prime minister but that time withdrew the support of the insurgents in the border conflict in July because of the heightened international pressure. The rumors of a possible coup were now in the air and the army antagonized Shari. Soon after that Musharraf and Sharif dispute on who was responsible for the Kargil conflict and the Pakistani withdrawal.

This strategic operation was met with great hostility and enmity in the public sector as well as on the media grounds it was far off criticized. Musharraf had then faced serious consequences involving the serious altercations with his even senior officers. Ultimately the Admiral Bokhari ordered for a full-fledged joint service court martial against General Musharraf, whereas the other General Kuli Khan remarked the war the disaster even bigger than the East-Pakistan tragedy. He believed that the plan was “flawed in terms of its conception, tactical planning and execution” that ended in “sacrificing so many soldier. The chief of air staff Parvez Mehdi also refrained from participating or authorizing any air strike to support the elements of any army operation in the Kargil region. Musharraf faced great criticism and the senior military officials including the civilian officials like PM accused Musharraf of wasting time and effort and resources in a useless act of war at this point. The director of Military intelligence lieutenant-general Jamshed Gulzar Khan criticized him in a meeting. After Prime Minister Nawaz went to the United States on emergency situation, an impression was attempted to create in the print media that Prime minister was at fault to surrender there. Lieutenant-General Kiyani maintained that this “impression” was created by General Pervez Musharraf which was totally wrong.

### **Standoff with India**

Attack on the Indian parliament on December 13th, 2001 in which fourteen people died including five attackers, India claimed that Pakistani based and Pakistani supported active militant groups of Kashmir were involved in the attack plans. India named out Lashkar e Taiba and Jaish e Muhammad, both of whom were backed by Inter-Services Intelligence agency, a charge that was definitely denied by Pakistan. This blame game actually led to a standoff between the India and Pakistan that also resulted in the amassing of the troops on either side of the International Border and then along the Line of Control in the Kashmir region. In the western media, the issue of the standoff was publicized as the likely threat of a full scale war between the two nations, possibly a full scale nuclear war. Tensions de-escalated following international diplomatic mediation, which resulted in the October 2002 withdrawal of Indian and Pakistani troops from the International Border.

### **Cease fire in 2003**

Pakistan and India, nuclear arms rivals by then decided to take one significant step towards better relations and resolving one of the major conflicts in 2003. They finally agreed on a cease fire to end cross-border gun battles in the Kashmir region that is still disputed. One analyst described the accord, which restricts the countries' conventional armies from attacking each other, as more "symbolic than

substantive."Under the pressure for the Europe and US, Pakistan and India decided to take real steps towards the normalization of relations in the region. This cease fire was intended to buy these two rival neighbors some time to devise a comprehensive strategy on the Kashmir issue. Both the states had come at the verge of the fourth war after India put a blame on Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence agency for the Mumbai attacks.

### **Analysis/Conclusion**

Interestingly, both Indian and Pakistani militaries when broke free from British India Army inherited the same organizational infrastructure, fighting doctrines and norms of the bureaucracy but only the Pakistani military is targeted on the account of its forceful and strong strategies. But as the political atmosphere was uptight with incapable and selfish politicians, this largely led to the totalitarian and authoritarian tendency of the armed forces in pursuing territorial integrity through overt and covert means. To some extent it was due to faulty misinterpretations and overambitious plans of the Pakistani military that largely defines the volatile situation of Pakistan. The major full scale military wars and one implicit war in Kargil with major military standoffs and terrorist threats have led to present day relations.

"Indo-Pak rivalry is an uncompromising struggle of two ways of life, two concepts of political organization, two conflicting ideological foundations, two scales of values, and two spiritual attitudes that found themselves locked in a deadly conflict". In the 67 years of history of Pakistan, it has been under the military rule and four times making its organizational structure to be largely influenced by military. The military rule under the military dictators has always played a major role in the Indo-Pak relations. The major conflicts whenever tried to be resolved through peace talks and negotiations were always either failed or again influenced by either military parties. Both the nations had always spent largest of their budgets on military and the security issues. It is still thought that 2014 will turn out to be a year of more challenges for Indo-Pak relations. Earlier when Soviet withdrew from Afghanistan, the mujahedeen turned their course towards India and the local insurgency in the region of Kashmir got to a new extreme, something similar could be expected when NATO forces will withdraw from Afghanistan. To make the matters even worse, the NATO in Afghanistan has given rise to the newly created Taliban group known as Tehrik e Taliban Pakistan. This comparatively fresh group is a bigger threat to Indo-Pak relationship. To counter such terrorist activities, military will have to get involved. Military is the only option left. The current ongoing Operation Zarb e Azb in the North Waziristan is another proof and a justification of the fact that

Pakistani military and Government is keen to make Pakistan terrorist free land and to improve the Indo-Pak relations. After both India and Pakistan have become nuclear powers, they tend to manage their conflicts through non-military means such as CBMs, track II diplomacy and negotiations at government level which considerably started in 2008. Military is used for coercive diplomacy; there are incidents of border skirmishes and exchange of fire across borders and in some instances military is mobilized too but this is only for making verbal threats credible. The violent conflicts are managed through mediators in which US is at forefront or by bilateral channels of communication.

The Nuclear deterrence of both sides is itself a conflict management tool which is exercising effectively. For example, after Mumbai attacks there were many violent conflict between two states in which India openly accused Pakistan for harboring terrorists and gave threats but both states never resorted to full scale war or even limited war as they did in 1965 because of robustness of nuclear deterrent. Nuclear weapons have emboldened Pakistan's leadership and secure that India has no good options to respond. While India is forging a new military doctrine to respond to Pakistan without escalating conflicts to nuclear level. It is recommended that both states should resort to non-military tactics of conflict management to avoid conventional or a nuclear stand-off.

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