

# Future Scenarios of Pakistan–India Relations

May, 2015

- As part of the Friedrich–Ebert–Stiftung (FES) efforts for enhancing regional cooperation and peace in the South Asian region, the offices in Pakistan and India jointly organized a track 1.5 dialogue titled “Pakistan–India Peace Process: Scenarios for the Future” from October 13–15, 2014 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- Leading figures from politics, military, former diplomats, economists, media and civil society of the two countries participated in this scenario–building exercise.
- During this trust–building dialogue, the dignitaries from both countries discussed the Pakistan–India relations, military cooperation and security management, bilateral trade, role of media and civil society on both sides of the border.
- At the end of the conference, participants developed worst case, business–as–usual and best case scenarios.

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# Foreword

FES is a German Political Foundation committed to the values of Social Democracy. Through its vast international network and offices in more than 90 countries, FES promotes democratic political culture, socially inclusive economic development as well as peace and stability. In conflict-prone South Asia, many of its regional initiatives have focused on providing platforms for mutual understanding and policy dialogue. In 2003, FES India took the initiative to establish a track 1.5 dialogue between India and Pakistan in order to discuss the delicate bilateral relations and to build trust between both sides. Since then, retired diplomats, security experts, senior journalists, policy makers as well as representatives from civil society have exchanged views on the different dimensions of the dynamics between the two countries.

In 2014, we brought an innovation to the traditional track 1.5 conferences: with the help of an experienced trainer, we developed future scenarios for the relations between India and Pakistan. In an inter-active methodology, the probability and plausibility of certain developments were discussed amongst the participants. The three different scenarios developed during the workshop are neither normative visions nor comprehensive academic considerations, but coherent images of a possible future generated by systematic discussions on components of and influences on the bilateral relations.

We would like to acknowledge the role of Taha Siddiqui as the rapporteur of the said conference. On the basis of his report, and with further input and advice of Qazi Humayun, this paper has been finalized. Furthermore, we are grateful to Abdullah Dayo of FES for coordinating this publication.

We hope that the recommendations developed by the participants can be of help for decision makers on both sides at different levels. Certain ideas expressed might lead to an alternative perception or a different narrative, be it on very concrete actions in a short term or on strategic decisions in a rather long term perspective.

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May 2015

# Introduction

In the wake of recent military tensions between Pakistan-India over cross-border firings, it is of utmost importance to defuse tensions by bringing both sides together to discuss the impasse, leading to a resumption of a peace dialogue which has remained suspended since Mumbai attacks in 2008.

For this reason, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung conducted an exercise for a better understanding of the relationship with a possible roadmap to bring these two South Asian neighbors, India and Pakistan, closer.

This was done by involving eminent personalities with diverse backgrounds from both countries, who gave their valuable input focusing on four key areas; first, Political Relations and Foreign Policy - coupled together since they pertain to the same key players on both sides. Second, Military and Security Cooperation – which is a key point of contention between the two countries. Third, Economic and Trade Relations between the two countries and finally, Cultural Exchanges and role of media were discussed keeping in mind the dynamics of people to people relations between the two countries.

In order to have extensive discussion on above mentioned four key areas, the participants of the dialogue were divided into four groups according to their important factors influencing these areas and subsequently, each expertise for discussion on the four areas of focus, and were asked to come up with at least three most important factor was then divided into four different variations.

This was then followed by the participants coming up with a spectrum of scenarios based on a ten years' time frame – ranging from best case, to business as usual, to worst case within a PLAUSIBILITY FUNNEL. The participants came up with a plausible outcome and in the final part of the Conference, they were then asked to construct messages that would help achieve - best-case scenario, unfreeze the situation, and avoid the worst-case scenario. The sessions also included a discussion on 'International Experiences in Peace Dialogues – Common Security as a Normative Framework?' conducted by Professor Herbert Wulf, who focused on the concept of common security and the European experience by focusing on the European experience and the current Ukraine conflict and how Europe and Russia are influencing the policies in a bid to win the country's loyalty.

In the following pages, the construction of these scenarios is discussed, along with what is needed to be done in order to achieve, avoid and unfreeze the likely outcomes. But before we go into that, it is pertinent to explain how the participants arrived at the proposed factors affecting the relationship dynamics between the two countries.

## KEY AREA 1: POLITICAL RELATIONS AND FOREIGN POLICY

The participants from both countries in this group, most of who were retired diplomats and military officials felt that disputes and differences between the two countries had created a serious **LACK OF TRUST** as one of the first key factors between the two countries affecting bilateral relations since they became independent in 1947.

According to the participants, lack of trust is one of the main factors that has influenced the bilateral relationship and is responsible for recurrence of tensions. Given the three wars fought by them, the relationship is an accident prone because of which the two countries have come close to war on other occasions.

The key factor which has bedeviled Pakistan-India relations is the **KASHMIR** dispute. The participants felt Kashmir has been at the center of the conflict for the past 30 years, and could act as a flashpoint for both the countries anytime. Currently, India demands the issue to be resolved through bilateral negotiations to which both countries have agreed to the SIMLA agreement of 1972.

The Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in his 2014 visit to India to attend Prime Minister Narendra Modi's inaugural ceremony said that he intended to "pick up the threads" of the Lahore Declaration, referring to a pledge both countries made in 1999 to cooperate more closely to ease tensions in the light of the SIMLA agreement.

However, Pakistan has been raising the Kashmir issue at the United Nations General Assembly to remind the global community

of their commitment as per the relevant United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) Resolutions of 1948 and 1949.

Another factor which has become equally relevant in the bilateral relations is the post 9/11 scenario of **TERRORISM**. The participants highlighted the accusations often made in this regard from both sides.

Examples of these are the 2001 attack on the parliament in New Delhi and the Mumbai attack in 2008 both allegedly carried out by militants based in Pakistan. On the other hand, Pakistani participants brought up the issue of India allegedly insurrecting the insurgency in Balochistan, Pakistan's restive province where separatists are fighting the Pakistani state. Also, Pakistani participants said their country's leadership has often accused India of supplying arms and funding to the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) who are resorting to terrorism because of Pakistan's support to the US/NATO/ISAF in the Afghan war. Some elements of TTP are comprised of the Mujahideen, who were friendly to Pakistan and fought against the military occupation of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union during the eighties. In this war, Pakistan was the conduit for military support extended by the United States of America, Saudi Arabia and other countries. These groups are not against Pakistan for supporting the US military intervention in Afghanistan and are called TTP.

The participants felt that **TERRORISM** may have been a by-product of the above two factors, but after consultations among the group, they decided to include it as a separate factor.

## KEY AREA 2: MILITARY AND SECURITY COOPERATION

Within this group, the factors that the participants came up with were similar to the ones in the previous focus area, but **KASHMIR** was the main factor as per their assessment. The participants felt Kashmir could act either as a major deterrent to a peace process or could lead to the end of conflict between the two nations.

However, within the plausibility funnel –the participants felt that given the nuclear capabilities of the two countries, total war over **KASHMIR** was unlikely. At the same time, resolution of the Kashmir issue did not appear to be possible within the ten year time-frame. Here examples of terrorist attacks in Pakistan and India, alleged to have been planned on each other's territory, were mentioned in the historical context. The variations within this factor ranged from **a) strategic level triggers** to **b) enhance infiltration and translocation** to **c) low profile triggers**, and **d) over all control of terrorism**.

The third factor was **PAKISTAN-INDIA TERRITORIAL DISPUTES**. These include, firstly – **SIR CREEK**, which is a dispute relating to the un-demarcated boundary of the coast of both countries dividing Gujarat in India and Sindh Province in Pakistan – a water body that comes under disputed territory, and of which poor fishermen on both sides of the country are often victims.

Secondly, the dispute over **SIACHEN** glacier located in the mountainous area of Himalayas. Both India and Pakistan claim sovereignty over the entire Siachen region and the dispute intensified in the eighties. Between 1984 and

1999, frequent skirmishes took place between India and Pakistan. However, more soldiers have died from the harsh weather conditions in the region than from combat. Both India and Pakistan continue to deploy thousands of troops in the vicinity of Siachen and attempts to demilitarize the region have been so far unsuccessful. Prior to 1984, neither country had any military forces in this area. Aside from the Indian and Pakistani military presence, the glacier region is unpopulated.

India is the upper riparian in the flow of five rivers to Pakistan. The two countries signed the **INDUS WATER TREATY** in 1960 which was brokered by the World Bank. In this treaty, as a lower riparian Pakistan's water sharing rights were protected. The implementation of the treaty has led to serious differences between the two countries and is responsible for increased tensions. On the positive side, the treaty remains intact despite many wars, although Pakistan continues to allege that that India uses more than its due share of water and at times, through the dams constructed is said to release more water than the river can regulate downstream. However, Government of India continues to refute this allegation.

The final factor that affects **Military And Security Cooperation** is the **Nuclear/Technological Advances**. In this, the variations suggest that there could be a possibility of **a) total arms race**, **b) nuclear arms race**, **c) conventional arms race** and lastly **d) arms control regime**.

## KEY AREA 3: ECONOMIC AND TRADE RELATIONS

According to the participants, this key area carried the most promising outlook. There appeared to be a consensus that even if the

progress was not possible in the previous two key areas, there was a degree of optimism with regard to improved economic and trade relations. The participants came up with four factors affecting it – a) **Trade Policy**, b) **Transport Policy**, c) **Demand and Supply Dynamics**, d) **Administration of Borders**.

The variations include an idealistic outlook for having no borders, a) similar to the European Union (EU) model, or b) the situation remaining the same as it is today where by the countries remain in economic competition with each other.

The participants in this group, which included those from the business community, pointed out that even with the recent violent border clashes, trade continued uninterrupted albeit on a low level, which reflects that despite the problematic nature of the relationship, money matters.

According to data released in May 2014 by the Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics, Ministry of Commerce and Industry India, the volume of bilateral trade recorded a net increase of \$410 million from April 2013 to March 2014.

Pakistan's exports to India grew by 28% while Indian exports to Pakistan increased by 19%.

Bilateral trade has increased to \$2.4 billion, which may soar to \$6 billion in the next two years if both countries agree to grant "most favoured nation" (MFN) status to each other. Currently, most of the trade between India and Pakistan takes place via Dubai and its volume is estimated at over \$4 billion. The Government of India has granted the MFN status to Pakistan whereas Pakistan has not returned the gesture. The Pakistani Government maintains that it will grant MFN

status to India after the removal of Indian non-tariff barriers which are a major inhibiting factor in the Pakistani export to India.

#### **KEY AREA 4: CULTURAL EXCHANGE**

Cultural exchange between the two countries is a focus area that can bridge the communication gap and improve people to people contact, which can result in pressure mounting on leadership in both countries to improve ties.

With Pakistan and India sharing the same history, before the partition in 1947, cultural exchange can help connect people, although it was noted that both countries have tried to erase their similarities and focus on differences, which has led to misperception on both sides.

According to the participants, the cultural exchanges are adversely affected by difficulties created in travel between the two countries as a result of **SECURITY** concerns.

The variations which include a) a zero-exchange, which has happened during war periods in the country, to b) completely free movement which the participants thought was outside the plausibility funnel.

The second factor to affect the cultural exchange is the **ROLE OF MEDIA**. Earlier the participants wanted to discuss only the news media but later consensus prevailed that the social media and entertainment industry also play an integral role in the relationship dynamics of the two countries. In this regard, the strength gained by the film industry in both countries, especially the Indian one and the accessibility to internet was an important factor. Here the variations ranged from

a) hawks pushing the agenda, which is often seen when tensions are high between both countries b) to media adopting a balanced approach.

Another important factor that drives cultural exchanges is **PUBLIC OPINION**.

Largely shaped by the role of the media and the leadership in both countries, the variations within this factor included a jingoistic approach towards the relationship between India and Pakistan, to a positive relationship that takes its cues from a shared history.

Another factor that was considered important within this key area was **NATIONAL IDENTITY**.

Within this factor – the variations ranged from having separate identities with no inclination to understand the commonalities between the two countries to common history and shared future.

Currently the countries have been moving more towards separation of identities, partly due to disputes and differences, and the lack of cultural exchange.

However, another variation within this factor of **NATIONAL IDENTITY** – confused perceptions was perceived as a more realistic way of defining the relationship between two countries, which as put earlier, is due to a low-level of cultural exchange.

It was felt how this was the case mostly because of the security issues between the two countries which restricts movement.

However, there is a small minority which is trying to promote a common history and a shared future which was the last variation within this factor.

The participants thought that youth could be a driving force behind this factor in helping to achieve positive results, since they do not believe in the traditional rivalries, partly due to the exposure of the younger generation to new-age media i.e. usage of Facebook, Twitter and other social networking channels.

## SCENARIO 1

### MILITARY STANDOFF

*In 2024, within this scenario the participants explained the dynamics of the worst-possible relationship between Pakistan and India.*



Due to a trust deficit, there is a continued deadlock and an absence of dialogue leading to a military standoff. This will be a matter of concern not only for South Asia but also for the international community, since both countries are nuclear-armed and the situation could get out of control. Terrorism will be one of the main factors influencing the relationship and could lead to another war though limited to Kashmir.

The start of this conflict will be a high profile terror attack – which would result in reprisals and counter reprisals and eventually may move towards a serious threat of war but due to international commitments and/or interventions, it is unlikely that a total war may happen.

The terrorist act would most probably happen in the Indian region of Kashmir or mainstream

India. But as mentioned before, due to international pressure, the conflict will be geographically limited to the disputed region of Kashmir only.

In the event of a terror attack in India (similar to Mumbai 2008), the Indian military forces may move into Pakistani territory in a bid to occupy them. It is possible that the Indians may carry out strikes against training camps in Pakistan and the Pakistani region of Kashmir where they allege Kashmiri militant camps exist which will add more fuel to the military standoff that exists between the two countries already.

It was noted that the Kashmir region on the Indian side will remain a major issue of dispute in 2024 – and it will continue to have low intensity conflict, similar to what the current situation is, in the worst case scenario too.

But the participants did feel it could also lead to an opportunity for the Indian-administered Kashmir population to launch a public unrest

movement and convert into an uprising, and there will be a repeat of what we saw in the nineties, a conflict that has left thousands of Muslim Kashmiris in Indian-territory dead and led to a wave of migration, to date.

As far as the territorial disputes are concerned, none of them i.e. Sir Creek, Siachen and the Water disputes will be resolved by 2024.

Given the nuclear status of Pakistan and India, the participants, by and large, ruled out total war, even in the worst scenario. However, it was felt that the two countries had an accident-prone relationship with the festering problem of Kashmir. Even a small conflagration on the disputed border could escalate and get out of control, leading to a nuclear exchange. However, it was felt that the chances of this scenario are quite low within the ten years' framework.

Just like in same old scenario, to be explained on page 10, the military and security situation in the field of nuclear and technological advance by 2024 will see an heightened arms race, with both sides acquiring more fissile material and warheads, along with ballistic and cruise missiles signaling a deterioration of relationship to a point of no return.

As far as economic and trade relations are concerned, by 2024 – within the worst case scenario also, the trade policy will remain the same as old. Both countries will be losing out on mutually beneficial and regional trade, e.g. via Afghanistan.

The participants also felt that the transport policy which involves bus and railway travel will see a further deterioration of

infrastructure in ten years' time, similar to the same old scenario. The demand and supply dynamics of their respective industries will remain in a competitive mode, both in the region and globally as underlined by the participants.

The civil political leadership on both sides will remain the same and have little control over implementation of any commitments that Pakistan India have already made to each other publicly, and even if there is any kind of transactional relationship it will be marred by corruption and lack of awareness of the potential benefit of economic and trade relations.

The participants felt that in the worst-case scenario cultural exchange, even at the lowest level in ten years' time will continue to contribute towards confidence building. There is a likelihood of joint media productions and journalists/academic exchanges along with cultural and literary festivals that are frequently boycotted and interrupted by ongoing conflicts as it is the case now that may serve as a key to reverse the deteriorating bilateral relationship.

However here also, on the news channels, the hawks will be pushing the agenda with a dominant public narrative and will influence the leadership in both countries to take a hard line against each other. And therefore there will be flashpoints which will contribute to further deterioration of the relationship.

There will be open hostility and antagonism in bilateral relations. In this situation even those desirous of a better relationship between Pakistan and India are likely to be marginalized.

## SCENARIO 2

### CONTINUED MISTRUST

*This scenario tries to imagine what the situation will be if the main factors remains as they are today.*



By 2024, within the framework of foreign policy and political relationship, trust between Pakistan and India reflects a half-hearted engagement with a zigzag peace process that moves back and forth with statements that are at times positive and at times negative, although with no results or movement towards peace. This is due to mistrust and suspicions created as a result of serious differences and disputes because of which the leadership on both sides have not been able to build a mutually beneficial relationship.

The scenario discusses the lack of military and security cooperation as it stands today, with Kashmir, the Indian-administered side, being an unresolved issue even in another ten years – accordingly portends that there will be no war but also no peace between the two countries.

Given this scenario, Kashmir will remain a low

intensity conflict area, and may experience increased insurgency leading to continued sense of alienation and insecurity among the Kashmiri population.

Terrorism by 2024 will continue to be of endemic nature, with occasional terror acts, and building up of tensions between the two countries. The participants felt that low profile triggers will continue to exist, with Pakistan's alleged sponsorship of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). Concomitantly, there will be (alleged) support for the Baloch separatist movement from India and the two sides will keep the pot boiling for each other.

The participants also felt that ten years from now, the scenarios are likely to be the same with regards to territorial disputes. Therefore – in 2024, Sir Creek, Siachen and the Water Rights will continue to be major disputes between the two neighbors.

Also, the military and security situation in the field of nuclear and technological advances will lead to a costly arms race, with both sides acquiring more fissile material and warheads, along with new ballistic and cruise missile tests being carried out on a regular basis.

As far as economic and trade relations are concerned, by 2024 the trade policy will remain the same, resultantly both countries, as at present, will be losing potential economic benefits of bilateral trade.

The transport policy which involves bus and railway travel will see a further deterioration of infrastructure in ten years' time.

As far as the demand and supply dynamics of products are concerned, the two countries will be in a competitive mode in the region and globally.

The civil political leadership on both sides in the same old case will remain the same and have little control over implementation of any commitments that Pakistan and India have already made to each other publicly, and even if there is any kind of transactional relationship it will be marred by corruption and lack of awareness by the civilian leadership on both sides, largely unaware of the potential benefit of economic and trade relations.

However, within the cultural exchange framework the participants believe that in ten years' time there will be more positivity. Confidence building measures, e.g. joint media productions will be regular feature of the relationship. Journalists/academic exchanges will continue along with cultural and literary festivals creating better atmosphere in bilateral relations.

The participants also felt that by 2024, even if the situation remains the same old, steps will need to be taken to provide security to artists, sportsmen and students, a concern that was shared by both countries' representatives owing to deterioration in the security environment in recent times.

The media will be dominated by hawks who push the hostile agenda and the public narrative on both sides. Owing to this by 2024, there would be pressure on politicians and governments to maintain the same old position, as the hawks – which would lead to flashpoints.

Continued mistrust will shape the public opinion, and the national identity will continue to be rife with misperceptions about each other.

### SCENARIO 3

#### CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE

*Within this scenario the participants explained the dynamics of the best-possible case between Pakistan and India in ten years' time.*



In 2024, political and foreign relations will be defined by a mutual level of trust between the two countries – that involves a full-hearted engagement with a constructive and sustained dialogue, and a demonstrable step-by-step peace process.

The participants however ruled out the possibility for complete confidence between the two countries in ten years' time.

It was considered as one of the variations when the participants discussed trust as a factor – and they believed that it would also involve multi-layered partnerships and a relationship that can be described as moving towards regional cooperation but while discussing the best-case scenario, this was rejected as a possibility as it was considered

outside the plausibility funnel.

With the Kashmir issue, there will be more dialogue and confidence building measures between India and Pakistan by 2024.

The people to people contacts and trade is expected to increase with a lower public visibility of the military on the border and in the disputed regions. However, this will not lead to a resolution of bilateral differences and disputes in its entirety, particularly the Kashmir dispute. Thus, there will not be absolute peace in the Kashmir region in ten years' time.

As far as terrorism is concerned, in the best-case scenario – there will be cooperation between India and Pakistan to counter

terrorism, leading to improved security.

This will result in a decrease of terrorist incidents because of anti-terrorism mechanisms and cooperation between the two countries and this will further improve the level of trust between the two countries.

While the participants believe that in 2024 the political and foreign policy circles are going to foster cooperation and take effective countering terrorism measures, the military and security relationship may remain tense in some areas and low profile triggers may continue to mar the relationship.

India will continue to accuse Pakistan of sponsored terrorism in Kashmir and in reaction Pakistan will blame India for an alleged support to separatist movements – which will keep the pot boiling but it will not translate into any hostility.

Despite continuing differences over Kashmir, improvement in bilateral relations may help resolve the Sir Creek issue and lead to more substantial discussion on sharing of water rights under the umbrella of the Indus Water Treaty. However, the Siachen conflict will continue.

Within the military and security cooperation, the participants were hopeful of reaching an agreement on an arms-control regime by 2024.

The participants took note of the conventional arms race between the two countries and increase in their ground forces and imparting them special trainings, along with up gradation and acquisition of ballistic and cruise missiles. There was also a mention of

between Pakistan and India, although no such bilateral agreements exist currently.

Concomitantly, with lowering of tension, economic and trade relations are likely to be improved. By 2024, there will be zero tariff regimes between the two countries with the status of MFN granted to each other. This policy will apply on all trade routes and instead of competition; the countries will glide into a complimentary mode.

Also, there will be opening of additional routes, as a part of the transport policy. It will be governed through transparent and digital governance leading to increased trade volumes and economic integration.

For cultural exchanges, the participants suggested that there should be financial incentives and the governments of both sides must work towards multiple-entry and no city-specific visas and removal of police reporting for visitors on each side. They also believed the best-case scenario would allow uncontrolled access to films, TV and newspapers from the other country.

There will be many confidence building measures especially with regards to bringing journalists, academics and activists together, but the security situation may not allow accessibility to all areas in either country.

In this scenario, the media will be a catalyst for a positive change and will adopt a balanced approach by actively seeking cross-border points of view and joint programs. The media can be expected to question their respective governments and military, conjuring an atmosphere of accountability.

Public opinion in ten years' time will reflect an increasing desire for peace, although lack of trust may still remain a challenge.

Lastly, the national identity confusion will not exist anymore more detail as it is the same culture and these artificial barriers are no longer needed and there will be a reach out and an exchange of views by people from both sides.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion of the two-day conference on the Pakistan-India peace process, the participants also came up with recommendations that both sides should create a stable political environment so that by 2024 a) the best-case scenario is achieved, b) the worst-case scenario is avoided at all costs, and c) there is unfreezing of the business as usual situation.

## HOW TO AVOID MILITARY STANDOFF

To begin with, let us first take a look at how the participants thought the countries could avoid the worst-case scenario.

Participants felt that both countries should enter into a serious dialogue for maintaining peace so that through joint efforts to prevent terrorist acts which may trigger a larger-conflict. For example a hotline between the two countries that would connect senior leadership in the civilian and military quarters of both countries. They should also ensure that there is no armed escalation on the Line of Control, the invisible border that divides the disputed territory of Kashmir.

It was also suggested that both governments should reiterate the 2003 ceasefire agreement, as basis of the moving the relationship forward, whenever a flare up on the border happens.

Pakistan and India should look for opportunities to revive the bilateral dialogue with the objective of aimed at seeking a solution to all outstanding issues, especially Kashmir. A debate on this can be initiated through adoption of confidence building measures (CBMs) and consultations with different segments of the informed public, including the media, parliamentarians, public figures, intelligentsia and strategic opinion makers as well as track 1.5 dialogues such as this one.

Conventional military confrontation between the two countries should never be allowed to escalate beyond a point, especially on the Line of Control (LoC). As a preemptive measure both sides should reinforce the existing mechanism of a direct hotline between the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs). The economic and trade relations will improve through two-way energy connectivity, commercial exchanges and investments e.g. introducing new trade routes, improving facilities and infrastructure on existing ones, etc.

Finally to build trust, the two sides should harvest low hanging fruits, e.g. Sir Creek dispute, which many participants on both sides thought was close to a resolution and this may translate into further positivity between the two countries.

## HOW TO UNFREEZE

### *"CONTINUED MISTRUST"*

Even if the worst case scenario is avoided, there is a chance that the existing situation may not improve which was referred to as: "the business as usual scenario."

In order to unfreeze, the participants suggested that the two governments should initiate talks on nuclear and conventional security, as per the 1999 Lahore Declaration, of which the current Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was a signatory.

Also, Pak-India leadership should explore all options on the Kashmir issue as well as the territorial disputes starting with the Sir Creek which is the least contentious.

The participants also believed that a frank discussion on Afghanistan should be made part of the dialogue between the two countries in order to unfreeze the deadlock and the paranoia regarding the alleged interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan.

In order to improve the atmosphere of bilateral relation, the participants suggested increased people-to-people interaction, with removal of ban on the media in both sides, relaxing visa regimes for journalists, athletes, artists, businessmen and other such individuals who can help bridge the political divide.

Also, the government should ensure that the full potential of uninterrupted trade relations is capitalized upon through improvement of infrastructure as well as the removal of non-tariff barriers. For this to happen though, it is important that the business community on both sides lobbies domestically and

internationally.

Lastly, to improve ties, the governments on both sides should avoid interference overtly or covertly, in each other's affairs, but most importantly prevent all non-state actors from creating flashpoints.

## HOW TO ACHIEVE

### *"CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE"*

Given the above suggestions, it was felt that the role of non-state actors is most important in achieving the all is well scenario, as otherwise if not curtailed; it could trigger a war like confrontation between the two countries.

The participants suggested that if the leadership in Pakistan and India adopt a larger vision, peace would be inevitable. It was also suggested that to remove pre-conceived notions, mindsets and stated positions of politicians and the military, youth and the public at large should be mobilized and used as a catalyst.

It was also noted that there are no winners and no losers on the Line of Control. So the militaries and the intelligence agencies should resist scoring points and this 'backing down' from both sides can give impetus to the peace process.

Also, faith-based radical belief and the extremist agenda needs to be marginalized and made insignificant in both countries – as that is the surest way to achieve the dream of Pakistan-India peace, the participants suggested.

They also recommended that the political

leadership should actively pursue and promote trust between the two militaries. This could be achieved by facilitating a dialogue between them which could contribute towards creating mutual trust.

For the Kashmir region, the participants felt that it is the primary duty of Kashmiri politicians firstly - on both sides, to refrain from rhetoric. They should be realistic in their approach to resolve the issue by developing an understanding which is independent of India and Pakistan's interests.

Another important player in the relationship building exercise to its optimum level will be the media which must maintain highest journalistic principles especially when covering Pakistan-India relations.

This includes honest reporting with equal space/time for all opinions to the conflict, not just jingoistic and hyper-nationalistic assertions. Moreover, the media should question their own governments and the military and take care not to push fabricated narratives aimed at seeking to drive India and Pakistan away from their common history and a peaceful future.

Finally, trade has the potential galvanize the Pakistan-India dialogue by creating powerful stakeholders for peace. Accordingly, it is necessary for the governments to unlock the barriers to mutually advantageous trade.

## Annexure I

Participants of  
**Future Scenarios of Pakistan-India Relations**  
 October 2014, Dubai

<b>Pakistani Participants</b>		
<b>S #</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Designation / Organization</b>
1	Mr. Aftab Ahmed Vohra	Economist
2	Lt. Gen (Retd) Hamid Khan	Security Analyst
3	Sardar Khalid Ibrahim	Leader of Jammu Kashmir Peoples Party
4	Ambassador (Rtd) Qazi Humayun	Former Diplomat
5	Mr. Rahimullah Yusufzai	Journalist
6	Mr. Taha Siddiqui	Journalist
7	Ms. Shazia Marri	Member National Assembly
<b>Indian Participants</b>		
1	Maj. Gen. Ashok K. Mehta	Security Analyst
2	Lt. Gen. Ata Syed Hasnain	Security Analyst
3	Dr. Nisha Taneja	Economist
4	Amb. Jayant Prasad	Former Diplomat
5	Mr. Pravin Sawhney	Journalist
6	Ms. Suhasini Haider	Journalist
7	Dr. Shujaat Bukhari	Journalist
<b>German Experts</b>		
1	Herbert Wulf	Senior Researcher
2	Dirk Jung	Trainer
<b>FES Representatives</b>		
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