

The US Nuclear Non-Proliferation Policy towards Pakistan (1990-2000)

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Abstract

The nuclear issue is considered to be one of the most important concerns in the Pak-US affairs since the 1970s. The issue further transpired after May 1998 when India conducted its second nuclear test, followed by Pakistan. Moreover, the US shared its critical concern over Pakistan's nuclear programme since 1990. Afterwards, the US imposed sanctions on Pakistan to penalize the country and restrict the State of Pakistan from developing nuclear weapons. The Indian nuclear tests in May 1998 furthered the overall frustration in the U.S. administration which paved the way for taking some strong economic restrictions against India and Pakistan. It also became a concentrated challenge for the US to avoid any expected nuclear clash between Pakistan and India in the post-nuclear tests scenario. In this article, the US policy of nuclear non-proliferation toward Pakistan in the 1990s has been extensively examined in chronological order to set a proper score of literature for the researchers and academicians. Also, the study is conducted based on the secondary source of data, published interviews and a comparative analysis of US assistance to Pakistan in the 80s and 90s, to bring up the faded facts.

Key Words:

US, Nuclear Non-
Proliferation Policy,
Pakistan, 1990's.

Introduction

The U.S. policy of non-proliferation has had considerable effects on Pakistan's nuclear decision-making throughout the history of its nuclear development. Being an allied member to the US in the 1950s, Pakistan gained enough economic and military assistance from the US that could match India and therefore did not feel for acquiring nuclear weapons. With the eruption of the 1965 war with India, the US imposed an arms embargo on Pakistan and pushed it for obtaining conventional weapons from China, which developed differences between Pakistan and US. In the late 1960s, Pakistan refused to sign NPT (nuclear non-proliferation treaty) and showed its interest in the nuclear program. The 1974 Indian nuclear test and Pakistan's response alarmed the US with the threat of nuclear proliferation in South Asia. The struggle of the US government to cancel the Pak-France agreement on reprocessing plants was the key issue in the 1970s. Since then the issue of nuclear proliferation emerged and remained a dominant factor in the relationship between Pakistan and United States throughout the post-cold war era.

The USSR intervention in Afghanistan in 1979 changed the geo-strategic landscape of the entire region. The US enacted its containment policy of communism and therefore Pakistan was badly needed to support the Afghan resistance moments. Pakistan was declared a frontline state, a strategic partner, and the administration of Reagan continuously certifies that Pakistan did not acquire a nuclear weapon, "as that was the need of the hour". General Zia also took full advantage of the strategic position of Pakistan and besides getting \$ 3.2 billion in aid; he "obtained an assurance from the United States that there would be no interference in Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme" (Matinudin, 2002, p. 90-92). The Reagan administration argued that the aid package would check Pakistan's nuclear weapon programme by providing an alternative means namely advanced conventional arms for the country to protect its national security. Pakistan did not abandon its nuclear program nor did Zia give such assurance.

The Afghanistan event radically changed the framework of Pak-US relations and Pakistan got the opportunity to develop its nuclear option in a friendly atmosphere. Pakistan's nuclear programme continued to progress and there is clear evidence to indicate that by the end of 1984 Pakistan had, through indigenous means and efforts crossed the red line in uranium enrichment to more than 5%. By then "Pakistan had already carried out a cold test of an atomic device" (p. 92).

Regarding Pakistan's nuclear programme, the best-known, and controversial, crises occurred in 1986-87. An unusual aspect of this affair was the interview of Dr. A.Q. Khan, a key player in the

Pakistani nuclear programme, with Kuldip Nayyar (an Indian Journalist) on 28th January 1987. Khan proudly announced that Pakistan has already acquired capability. He told, "Nobody can undo Pakistan nor take us for granted and let me be clear we shall use the bomb if our existence is threatened", (p. 93).

Benazir Bhutto became the Prime Minister of Pakistan after the death of General Zia. During the years, Aslam Beg (Army Chief of Staff) and President Ghulam Ishaque Khan curtailed Bhutto's influence over Pakistan's nuclear programme and she was effectively eliminated from the nuclear loop. However, in March 1990 the president finally took Bhutto into confidence about the issue. At this point, the Bush Administration got alarmed. In April 1990 Bush warned the Pakistan government that American aid to Pakistan would be jeopardized if it did not cease the production of highly enriched uranium and the fabrication of this uranium into the nuclear component known as the nuclear core, crucial to the production of a nuclear device. Subsequently, the Bush administration imposed nuclear sanctions on Pakistan under the Pressler amendment and economic and military aid to Pakistan was curtailed. The imposition of sanctions on Pakistan was counter-productive as well as it harmed Pak-US relations in the post-cold war (*The Daily News*, 1991).

Security Dilemmas of Nuclear-Armed Pakistan Pre-May 1998

When the new Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif came into power, his first address to the nation over radio and television on November 7, 1990, was "Pakistan would carry on an ambitious peaceful atomic plan for the prosperity of its people". The Prime Minister said that rapid peaceful atomic development had become imperative given the then increase in the oil prices. Nawaz Sharif made it clear that Pakistan's atomic plan would be for peaceful purposes. But the US alleged Pakistan that it has accelerated the process of uranium enrichment beyond 5% and foreign aid was halted. The Prime Minister said that his country would not abandon its "peaceful nuclear programme" for foreign aid and that "we will eat dry bread rather than beg for aid" (Chand, 1992, p. 25-26). However, US Ambassador Robert Oakley said that Pakistan's nuclear programme should not be made an issue of controversy between Pakistan and the United State and this issue should be solved at a regional level. Talking to Qazi Hussain Ahmed in Islamabad on January 14, 1991, the ambassador said that if India had acquired nuclear capability, Pakistan should also have the right to do so for its defence (p. 45).

By June 1991, when General Asif Nawaz was nominated as General Aslam Bag's successor, the situation then had also improved somewhat as the Gulf War had just ended. Islamabad sent a high-level delegation to Washington led by Senate Chairman Wasim Sajjad to negotiate with Americans that since Pakistan had recapped its nuclear programme, the aid should be resumed. However, the Bush Administration insisted that capping was not enough and that Pakistan had to roll back its nuclear programme. Though Pakistan desperately needed US economic and military aid, the government of Nawaz Sharif was not capable to suspend its nuclear program without the approval of the army. His government too faced a serious crisis and in 1993 Benazir Bhutto again came into power as Pakistan's Prime Minister. Just a few weeks after returning to power, she declared that Pakistan had capped its nuclear programme some years ago; this created intense political controversy. The nuclear issues resurface in Pakistan with a vengeance to the new US approach towards the problem of nuclear proliferation in South Asia. The Clinton administration wanted to verify that Pakistan had capped its nuclear programme before allowing the delivery of 38 F-16 Fighters, which Pakistan had purchased from the United States. Pakistan, meanwhile insisted that it should be taken at its word and that no verification is necessary (*Newsline*, 1994, p. 24-25).

In April 1994, US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbot came to Pakistan and India with fresh ideas. Talbot visited India and Pakistan with proposals on containing nuclear proliferation in the region. Islamabad did not sound keen about accepting the latest US move of accepting 38 F-16 Fighter planes it had already paid for in exchange for a verifiable capping of its nuclear programme. "If we are unilaterally pressed for capping, it will be discriminatory and Pakistan will not agree to it", declared Prime Minister Bhutto just a day before Talbot arrived in Islamabad. Her announcement followed an equally emphatic statement by the Chief of Army Staff, General Waheed, a week earlier in Washington while speaking to a group of Pakistan embassy staff. "We cannot exchange our national interest for a few pieces of military hardware" (p. 26-27).

The 1990s also saw a significant development on the Pak-Chinese front. There were reports of the supply of Chinese nuclear data and nuclear-capable missiles, which would give Pakistan's military nuclear capability and planning. On March 1, 1993, a 300 MW nuclear plant was also installed at Chashma with the help of China known as the Chashma Nuclear Plant (*The Pakistan Times*, 1993). This further increased the tension between US and Pakistan. On 24th August 1993, the US imposed sanctions on Chinese defence procurement entities as well on Pakistan. The US missile sanction laws outlined; that "this action followed a determination that China had transferred items controlled under the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) to Pakistan in 1992." Both Pakistan and China protested against this decision, claiming that no transfer and violation of the MTRC took place.

On August 23, 1994, saw Ex-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's politically artless statement during a public meeting in Azad Kashmir, when he said, "I confirm that Pakistan has the atomic bomb" (Ahmed, 1998, p. 76), and that it would not refrain from using it against India in the event of war over Kashmir. The news hit the international media like a bombshell. The statement created a fever, especially in India, which claimed that it could quickly assemble a nuclear bomb if necessary to counter foreign threats and terrorism. Salman Khursheed, India's Junior Foreign Minister stated that they were taking all necessary steps to mobilize the international community over the threat posed by Pakistan as a state sponsoring terrorism with a declared intent to use nuclear weapons for resolving its differences with India over Jammu and Kashmir (*The News*, 1994).

The way the United States, the western media and the Benazir government reacted to Nawaz Sharif's proclamation was not strange. An official of the Clinton administration linked the Former Prime Minister's admission of nuclear weapon capability with his political rivalry with Benazir Bhutto, giving an impression as if Nawaz was trying to seek political mileage by exploiting pro-bomb public opinion in Pakistan. The western media that champions the cause of nuclear non-proliferation as usual played the matter. India asked for international punishment for Pakistan and like the Americans, officials of the Bhutto government propagated that by making an "irresponsible" statement on the country's nuclear programme, the leader of the opposition intended to gain political ends (Ahmed, p. 76-77). But Nawaz Sharif stood by his pronouncement. He termed it as a precautionary step taken to prevent the intended rollback of Pakistan's nuclear programme by the Benazir government. The game of the "musical chair," did not stop Pakistan's nuclear programme, even after Benazir Bhutto was again removed and humiliated in 1996 when President Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari dismissed her government on corruption charges and misrule. Mian Nawaz Sharif again came into power by contesting the February 3, 1997 elections, he stated that his government would continue the nuclear programme. Finally, Pakistan proved its nuclear capability by exploding six nuclear devices in May 1998. It was a bold venture taken by Nawaz Sharif by giving a matching response to the Indian five nuclear tests (p. 104).

Pakistan's Nuclear Test, May 1998 and the U.S. Policy

Breaking the twenty-four self-imposed pauses India tested its nuclear devices on 11 and 13 May 1998. In the aftermath of the tests, the Indian Prime Minister rationalized its decision as "We were forced to exercise our nuclear option both for reasons of national security and as a powerful challenge to the practitioners of nuclear apartheid with this firm action". He said that "we have remained the reminded the nuclear club that the voice of 1/6th humanity cannot be ignored" (Haider, 2002, p. 83-84). Regarding foreign sanctions, he stated that "we have come to understand that we will be denied aid, credit and other assistance and that we will face problems. But in the event of such steps, the country will have to face them squarely". He repeatedly explained to the world community that until and unless the five established nuclear powers China, the UK, Russia, France and the US did not agree to eliminate their nuclear arsenal, India would not give up its nuclear programme. However, his call was repeatedly rejected by the five nuclear powers (Burns, 1998).

The Indian nuclear tests once again put the nuclear issue on the centre stage of US South Asia policy. President Clinton declared the Indian nuclear tests a terrible mistake. He said, "I want to make it very, very clear that I am deeply disturbed by the nuclear tests which India has conducted, and I do not believe it contributes to building a safer 21st century" (Clinton, 1998). In reaction to the Indian test, the administration of Clinton imposed sanctions on India that were followed by Germany, Japan, Denmark and Sweden etc., and announced the cut-off of loan and aid programmes to India (Burns, 1998).

The most severe reaction, quite naturally, came from Pakistan. The nuclear test of India was considered a serious threat by the Pakistani government to its security. To discuss the matter, on 13th May the Defence Committee of the cabinet held a meeting with Nawaz Sharif, which was attended by armed forces Chiefs, Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan and some other military and civilian officials. Participants expressed their views; many were in favour of nuclear tests others were against them. The finance minister warned about the severe consequences of international community reactions and sanctions. Khan told the committee that his team was ready for a nuclear test when desired. He further said: "It is a question of hours and not days to get everything arranged to conduct a more comprehensive nuclear test than those of India which were tested during the last two days." (Dawn, 1998). To gauge the international community's reaction to the Indian nuclear discussion, the next day, the Federal Cabinet hold its meeting. Most of the ministries argued that Pakistan should not trust the so-called western allies for severe actions against India, it failed to impose immediate severe sanctions on India and Pakistan might exercise its right of nuclear tests as an answer to Indian posed threats. Gohar Ayub Khan, minister of foreign affairs warned that Indian nuclear tests possessed an immediate threat to the security of Pakistan and "will not go unanswered." Regarding the United States' response to Indian tests, Gohar Ayub said "the invoking of mandatory sanctions under US laws against India hardly constitutes an effective response". In an interview, Gohar Ayub stated: "It depends

on how effectively the United States, Japan and other actors deal with this whole scenario. This has upset the whole geopolitical and strategic structure of the Indian sub-continent and all of South Asia" (Albright, 2001).

Despite severe economic and political consequences, Pakistan showed its willingness to nuclear test in response to India. Clinton's administration's attention shifted to Pakistan. To put pressure on Pakistan, Clinton telephoned Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and encouraged him "to resist the temptation to respond to an irresponsible act in kind". (Clinton, 1998). Nawaz Sharif did not give any assurance and told that he was under tremendous pressure for replying to India. To peruse the case, Clinton then sent a high diplomatic mission to Pakistan that includes Talbott (Deputy Secretary of State) and General Anthony Zinni, The US envoy "dangled delivery of F-16's and resumption of economic and military aid, argued that Pakistan would gain the moral high ground internationally by not testing—thereby focusing global disapproval on India." The delegation aimed to offer economic and military assistance as well as to put pressure on Pakistan, as severe economic penalties to stop Pakistan from a nuclear test, because the US spy satellite had "detected military equipment and technical" personal "making preparations for a test at the Chagai Hills site" (Weiner, 1998).

The US allies such as Japan, Australia, and Germany etc., also announced a suspension of military contracts and end economic assistance, pressuring Pakistan not to try to match India. However, top leadership in Pakistan as well masses wised nuclear tests, a reply to Indian action. One of the senior diplomats at a UN disarmament conference in Geneva stated: "Indian actions, which pose an immediate and grave threat to Pakistan's security will not go unanswered". Nawaz's Government was under pressure not only from the US and its allies but also from domestic politics. Domestic political pressures "make it exceedingly difficult for Sharif to choose that course. In emotion-charged demonstrators have taken to the streets in several cities... and demand the government reply to India's nuclear tests of its own an". In An interview on the television in London, Benazir Bhutto (Former Prime Minister) said, "India will have the upper hand and will resort to aggression against Pakistan at its own sweet will" (Kinzer, 1998).

Nawaz Sharif's government faced a difficult choice. If Pakistan were tested, the economic cost would be high. It would automatically face the same sanction imposed on India. Pakistan's government would also forego the opportunity for a major change in US policy, once that Islamabad had been seeking ever since 1990. But due to experience with the US, Pakistani officials had little faith in US President's words. On the other hand, if Pakistan would not test, the government would pay a heavy domestic political price, not only from the opposition but also from religious parties as well as the common masses. The government would also face a real threat from India, as India was busy reshaping Kashmir's policy and threatening Pakistan not to ignore the change in the region (Kinzer, 1998). Meanwhile, Pakistan; Chief of Army Staff General Jehangir Karamt visited the line of control to check the situation. On his return, he met with Nawaz Sharif and it was decided to go in for the tests. Indian threats to Pakistan's security, the absence of security guarantees from the USA and other nations and their denial of severe penalties against India, obliged Pakistan to conduct its tests.

On 28th and 30th May 1998, Pakistan conducted its nuclear tests; a total of six detonations, an answer to Indian five, while another additional was cancelled. These tests were underground and carried out in the Ghagai hills, of Baluchistan. The hours before the tests, Pakistan's leadership faced extreme tension. Intelligence Agencies reported that Israel with the cooperation of India wanted a primitive military strike on Pakistan's nuclear facilities in Ghagai. Indian diplomatic envoy in Islamabad was informed by Pakistan about the consequences while the representative of Pakistan to the UN, Ahmed Kamal met with UN General Secretary Kofi Annan, in New York and asked for intervention. Nawaz Sharif made contacts with British Prime Minister Tony Blair and Clinton and seek out cooperation. A statement was issued by Pakistan saying "any Indian attack on the nuclear installations would receive a swift and massive retaliation with unforeseen consequences." However, Indian called the accusation false and vicious propaganda. In an interview with the *Dawn* Newspaper, Thomas Simon stated that "the army forced the tests on Nawaz Sharif by creating the bogey of an impending Indo-Israeli strike on Pakistan nuclear facilities" (Nayer, 1998).

Address to the nation on 28th May Nawaz Sharif stated: "Today we have settled scores with India by detonating five nuclear devices of our own...We have paid them back" (Burns, 1998). He told the international community, that Pakistan was forced by Indian actions to go nuclear and asked the especially US to understand its country's security needs. About US imposition of sanctions, Nawaz Sharif said:

"Western powers will have done US a favour. They will have given the US a chance to affect a revolution in our way of life, to be born to live within our means and to stop this cynical wastage of our national resources. We must conserve every penny of foreign exchange, and treat it like oxygen, essential to our country's survival. We will have to be disciplined, at all times, in all places" (Nayer, p. 244).

In rejecting the US economic and military assistance offer, Nawaz Sharif said he owed to overwhelm domestic political pressure from military chiefs, opposition leaders and religious clerics (Jones, 2002, p. 187-188).

In Washington, after a failed plea for restraint, President Clinton expressed disappointment about Pakistan's nuclear tests and concern over the prospect of escalating tension in South Asia. Clinton commented:

President Clinton was upset by the nuclear tests of Pakistan and stated that "By failing to exercise restraint and responding to the Indian test, Pakistan lost a truly priceless opportunity to strengthen its security, to improve its political standing in the eyes of the world." He further said: "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 according to the Glenn Amendment as is required by law". While commenting on the India and Pakistan nuclear tests, President Clinton said:

"I cannot believe that we are about to start the 21st century by having the Indian sub-continent repeat the worst mistakes of the 20th century when we know it is not necessary for peace, security, prosperity, national greatness, or personal fulfilment." (The White House, 1998).

The U.S. Congressional Actions and Pakistan's Nuclear Program

After the May 1998 nuclear tests, President Clinton used his discretionary powers and imposed sanctions on Pakistan under AECA (Arms Export Control Act). Under the section 102 (b), the sanctions on Pakistan applied to the following areas: (i) Termination of US foreign assistance programme; (ii) Termination of military sales, exports and financing; (iii) Termination of government credits, credits guarantees and other financial assistance; (iv) Opposition of loan by international financial institutions; and (v) prohibition of private bank loans and exports. Sanctions on all the above mention grounds were imposed on Pakistan (and India) by the Clinton administration and the overall implementation of the plan was enacted on 18th June 1998 (Grimmett, 1999).

On commercial grounds, to avoid hurting US agricultural interests, export credits permitting American wheat sales to Pakistan were almost immediately exempted from sanctions. Because some Congress members had argued that sanctions on agricultural goods and US wheat sales to Pakistan could devastate US farmers and ranchers. Given the importance to US wheat growers of agricultural export to the region and especially to Pakistan, the 105th Congress passed Legislation (P.L.105-194) amending the AECA to allow for the purchase of food and other agriculture commodities for one year, and (P.L. 105-277) adding one-year waivers on sanctions.

Since Pakistan was more dependent on foreign aid US sanctions had a significantly greater impact on its economy. Its economy was already affected and weakened due to the US sanctions of 1990 under the Pressler Amendment; and these sanctions further aggravate the situation. US sanctions on Pakistan declined investor confidence and were eventually responsible for the poor performance in Pakistan. Along with US sanctions, domestic political instability and Asian financial crises were also responsible for the poor economic performance in Pakistan. The World Bank lending to Pakistan declined sharply down to "\$440 million in 1998-1999 from \$800 million the previous year". The economic growth of Pakistan slowed from 4.3 percent in 1997-98 to 3.1 percent in 1998-1999. In the same years foreign direct investment falls from 436million US dollars to 296 million (Mistry, 1999, p. 755-758). The following table shows, the decline of US military and economic aid to Pakistan in the 1990s.

Table 1. The US Military and Economic Assistance to Pakistan: Comparison between the 1980s and 1990s (in millions of US dollars)

Year	1981-1990			Year	1991-2000		
	Economic	Military	Total		Economic	Military	Total
1981	76.79	0	76.79	1991	101.27	0	101.27
1982	200.23	0.60	200.83	1992	18.85	5.00	23.85
1983	278.73	260.78	539.52	1993	52.67	0	52.67
1984	307.36	300.78	608.14	1994	49.61	0	49.61
1985	339.23	325.97	665.20	1995	17.12	0	17.12
1986	356.40	311.97	668.37	1996	17.20	0	17.20
1987	351.51	313.65	665.16	1997	43.94	0	43.94
1988	465.77	260.82	726.59	1998	28.26	0	28.26
1989	352.12	230.92	583.03	1999	80.54	0.17	80.71
1990	357.48	184.88	542.36	2000	36.76	0	36.76
Total	3085.62	2190.37	5275.99		446.22	5.17	451.39

Source: Data calculated from U.S. Government, U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants (Greenbook). [Online] Available: <http://gbk.eads.usaidallnet.gov>

Many US observers and policymakers criticized the nuclear tests of Pakistan and India and held responsible US policy in the region of South Asia. A congressman Hetley said; "the sad truth is that Bill Clinton permitted the sale of satellite and missile technology to Pakistan and Iran" and it "prompted India to boost its nuclear weapons programmes, not because it was afraid of Pakistan but because it was afraid of China and then Pakistan upped the ante". (Haider, p. 85)

After the nuclear tests, the Clinton administration reformulated its foreign policy towards Pakistan and India. The five-point agenda of Clinton administration was:

- i. "Signing and ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)".
- ii. "Halting all further production of fissile material and participating in Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT)" negotiation.
- iii. "Limiting development and deployment of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) delivery vehicles".
- iv. "Implementing strict export controls on sensitive WMD materials and technologies".
- v. "Establishing a bilateral dialogue between India and Pakistan to discuss their mutual differences" (Kronstadt, 2000, p. 2).

The Clinton administration moved to pursue a sustained dialogue with Islamabad (and New Delhi) on nuclear non-proliferation issues. Between June 1998 to February 1999, Washington held nine rounds of talks with Islamabad (and Delhi) to resolve the problem of nuclear proliferation in South Asia. Talbot led a US delegation comprised of General Joseph, Bruce Reidel, Karl Inderfurth, and Robert Einborn. Pakistan's delegation included Foreign Secretary Shamshad Ahmed and Ambassador to the United States Riaz Khokhar (and India Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh). These discussions were held in the USA, Europe and South Asia. The details of the negotiations between the two delegations were kept secret by mutual agreement of the parties. However, the talks between the two delegations covered matters related to non-proliferation, disarmament, regional and international development etc.

The secret talks between the two delegations created problems in Pakistan and the government came under domestic pressure "to lift the veil of secrecy and clarify the issues under discussion, as well as to obtain a national consensus before talking nuclear policy decisions". The political parties of Pakistan criticized the government secret talk's policy on the nuclear issue with the US and demanded clarity. When in September 1998, "the Nawaz Sharif Government had moved closer to signing the CTBT and took the issue to the Parliament; the government faced tough questioning about conceding ground on the treaty before the lifting of sanctions and without international involvement in Kashmir (Mistry, p. 759).

As a result of improvement between the two countries Pakistan and the US, on the nuclear non-proliferation issue, the US Congress in October 1998 passed the "Brownback Amendment", which allowed the US president, to waive sanctions for one year against Pakistan and India on 1st December 1998. Some sanctions were maintained by the US government to signal the international community's disapproval of Pakistan's (and India's) nuclear tests, but they were selectively lifted over their first year to prevent an economic collapse in Pakistan. The IMF rescheduled debts and also granted a new \$1.5 billion loan to Pakistan. The World Bank granted \$350 million in "structural adjustment loans" and the Asian Development Bank (IDB) provided \$350 million for development projects. On the visit of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to the United States on December 2, 1998, the White House announced that "it would return \$324 million in cash, plus \$140 million in additional compensation." However, the issue of F-16 aircraft remained unsolved, for which Pakistan had already paid but not received due to legislative restrictions of 1990 under the Pressler amendment (Grimmett, p. 13).

Although Washington marginally eased economic and investment restrictions but tightened its technology embargoes against Pakistan (and India). In November 1998, the US Commerce Department issued a list of three hundred Indian and Pakistani companies and agencies; it was believed that those entities were involved in nuclear, missile and military programmes. It is noted that before November 1998, both countries Pakistan and India had agreed to join in multilateral negotiations looking towards "a ban on the production of fissile material", although they refused to accept an immediate moratorium. Finally, they had expressed willingness in principle to strengthen their controls over exports of nuclear-related items. Through various legislative measures, H.R.D 561, Defence Department Act 2000, R.L 106-7, etc. the United States lifted sanctions on Pakistan. The remaining sanctions on Pakistan were also removed by the US On September 22, 2001, due to its nuclear tests for Pakistan's cooperation in the war against terrorism (Poer, 2001, p. 7-14).

At the beginning of 1999, Talbott once again travelled to Pakistan and India for his round of nuclear discussions with both governments. Talbott delegation had proposed 'a scenario' under which the United States would pursue, the lifting of nuclear-related sanctions on Pakistan comprises "the Pressler Amendment if Islamabad would sign the CTBT, stop its missile corporation with North Korea, agree to participate in the multilateral negotiation to ban the production of fissile material and put in place a comprehensive nuclear export-control

regime". No agreement was final between US and Pakistan as Nawaz Sharif's government put the condition and insisting that "India had to take the lead in adopting the US proposals before Pakistan would do so" (Kux, p. 351).

In September 1998 in the United States, Islamabad followed by India emphasized their commitment to adhere to the CTBT one year before the CTBT conference of September 1999. Nawaz Sharif noted that Pakistan 'is prepared to adhere to the CTBT before this (September 1999) conference'. Despite making positive statements on the CTBT, the treaty was not signed by Pakistan by September 1999, because of regional development and domestic problems. About its adherence to sign CTBT by September 1999, Pakistan took the position that "India planned large nuclear force presented an entirely changed environment, which could make it reconsider its approach to the CTBT."

After Pakistan's nuclear tests and the issue of nuclear non-proliferation remained a core issue between Pakistan and US relations. The issue was set back when India-Pakistan military hostilities erupted in Kashmir from May to July 1999. (Mistry, p. 763-764). The USA played an important role in the conflict resolution of military hostilities between Pakistan and India in the Kargil region of Kashmir.

On July 4, in a joint statement with Nawaz Sharif, Clinton declared that he would take 'personal interest in the Kashmir issue. President Clinton urged Nawaz Sharif's government to move the Pakistan army back to its side and thus facilitating a "de-escalation of the crises". Thus, as a result, a year after India's and Pakistan's nuclear tests, US involvement in South Asia region at least temporarily shifted its primary focus from getting India and Pakistan to sign nuclear arms control treaties to conflict management. (p. 768). In order to give a practical shape to his policy of non-proliferation in South Asia, Clinton paid a visit in March 2000 and described his administration policy in these words:

"The 1998 nuclear tests by India and Pakistan shook the world, intensifying global worries about the spread and potential use of nuclear weapons. Only India and Pakistan can decide now to protect their security. As they do, I hope they will ask themselves; are they safer today before they tested nuclear weapons? I am determined that the United States ratifies the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty because it will strengthen our national security. India and Pakistan should sign the treaty as they have committed to do for the same reason. As the United States and Russia move towards deeper cuts in our nuclear arsenals, South Asia should not be headed in the opposite direction. I also believe that India and Pakistan will not achieve real security until they resume resolving their tensions" (Haider, p. 86-87).

President Bill Clinton urged Pakistan to sign the CTBT. He said "Pakistan's nuclear weapons did not make Pakistan a safe place", had "not enhanced its deterrence capability and did not make the people safer". He further said that "in fact embarking on nuclear arms race...was an expensive way to squander the nation's wealth" (Haider, p. 87). In President Clinton's talks with Pakistan's government; along with economic issues, nuclear non-proliferation and regional stability "topped the list of priorities". However, no tangible development on the issue of non-proliferation, "benchmark was made during the trip". The administration of Clinton also assured Islamabad that "improved US-India relations will not come at the expense of US-Pakistan ties and that an enhanced relationship with India will serve Pakistan's long-term interest as well". However, after President Clinton visited South Asia, the US officials continuously pressed Pakistan to halt nuclear weapons development. On June 15, 2000, the US Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott resumed talks with Pakistan's foreign secretary and other officials on non-proliferation issues and urged Pakistan to sign CTBT (Kronstadt, p. 1-4). Such kinds of developments continued till the 9/11 accidents.

Conclusion

The United States policy directions have had a considerable impact on Pakistan's nuclear decision-making throughout the history of its nuclear development. Islamabad had earlier evidenced some interest in nuclear weapons, but India's 1974 nuclear test spurred Pakistan's nuclear programme and the US administration abruptly became aware of the dangers of South Asia nuclear proliferation. The efforts of the US government to end the Pak-France reprocessing plant agreement were the key issue in the 1970s. In 1980 the nuclear issue was accorded a relatively lower priority with Pakistan when US interests were so dictated by Afghanistan. Once the Soviets pulled out from Afghanistan, the nuclear irritant seemed predominant and has been a major irritant between Pakistan and the United States throughout the post-Cold War period. Confrontation over the nuclear issue between Pakistan and United States during the 1990s led to an American aid cut-off in 1990 under the Pressler amendment and again in 1998 when Pakistan conducted its nuclear tests.

Emerging as the undisputed superpower of the world after the end of the cold war, the United States was determined to enforce its nuclear non-proliferation goals in South Asia and to improve the relationship between Pakistan and India. In the case of Pakistan, the US administration has always shown grave concern over Pakistan's nuclear programme. Its administration exercised its policy of sanctions as a tool to penalize Pakistan for developing

the nuclear programme. Mixed signals were given by the successive US administration to Pakistani nuclear decision-makers. The Clinton administration's official goals, for instance, were to freeze, back roll and ultimately eliminate nuclear weapons in South Asia. However, these declared goals did not shape its South Asian non-proliferation policy. Hence the US administration was disinclined to subject either state of Pakistan or India to punitive measures. In the Pakistani context, the numerous political, economic and strategic interests of the US government were as important as its nuclear non-proliferation objectives.

The administration of Clinton followed an engagement policy with Pakistan that consisted of unrestricted encouragement to influence Pakistan's nuclear behaviour. The US also attempted and pressured China to abandon its nuclear cooperation with Pakistan. All these efforts of the United States failed to stop Pakistan from gaining nuclear capability. The US non-proliferation efforts were half-hearted. It pressured Pakistan or threatened severe restrictions, and even imposed sanctions. However, no alternative arrangement was ever promised by the US, nor any attractive incentive was offered and provided to Pakistan. On other hand, there had been a contradiction in the US policies towards nuclear non-proliferation while dealing with both countries of South Asia, Pakistan and India. Such ambiguity encouraged India to go for nuclear tests which were also followed by Pakistan. After the emergence of two nuclear powers, Pakistan and India, it has become a challenge for the United States to discourage any expected nuclear clash between two rival states.

In response to Pakistan's nuclear tests, President Clinton used his discretionary powers and imposed sanctions on Pakistan. Since Pakistan was more dependent on foreign aid US sanctions had a significantly greater impact on its economy. After the imposition of sanctions on Pakistan, the Clinton administration has moved to pursue a sustained dialogue with Islamabad on nuclear non-proliferation issues. Between June 1998 to February 1999, Washington held nine rounds of talks with Islamabad and Delhi to resolve the problem of nuclear proliferation in South Asia. Pakistan was offered the lifting of sanctions if it signed CTBT and stop missile collaboration with North Korea and other such steps to ban the production of fissile material and put in place a comprehensive nuclear export-control regime. Pakistan insisted that India had to take the lead in adopting the US proposals and Pakistan would follow. Resolution of the issue was set back when India-Pakistan military hostilities erupted in 1999. The US played an important role in the conflict resolution of military hostilities between Pakistan and India in the Kargil region of Kashmir. As a result, a year after India's and Pakistan's nuclear tests, US involvement in South Asia region at least temporarily shifted its primary focus from getting India and Pakistan to sign nuclear arms control treaties to conflict management. America's policy of non-proliferation toward Pakistan's nuclear programme became the major hurdle to an improvement in relationships and has remained in strain until the events of 9/11, which brought tremendous changes in the relations of both countries from a strained and tense position to strategic cooperation.

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