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Security Net

Nuclear Risk Reduction in Southern Asia

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SECURITY NET

NUCLEAR RISK REDUCTION IN SOUTHERN ASIA

LYDIA WALKER and ANNIE SIRIS COOMBS

“Security Net” is a scenario for a future Nuclear Risk Reduction Regime in Southern Asia. It explores what such a regime might look like, how it might come into existence, what are its central challenges, and what might be its ramifications for nuclear proliferation and nonproliferation policy in Southern Asia today.

This study examines the idea of a “Southern Asia” itself and considers the differences between the relationship of regional identity formation to nuclear non-proliferation in Southern Asia in comparison to Southeast Asia and Latin America. It then considers what sort of internal drivers, wild cards, or outside forces could create incentives for regional cooperation on Nuclear Risk Reduction in Southern Asia the future.

I METHODOLOGY & SCOPE

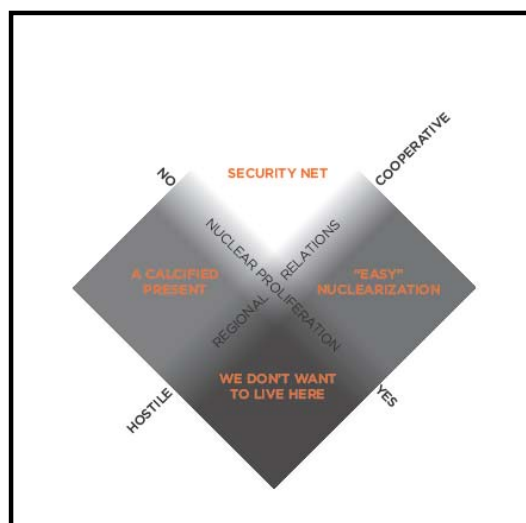
This study uses the intuitive logics school of scenario building created by Pierre Wack at Shell Oil¹ and used by the US National Intelligence Council (NIC) in their Global Trends reports.² In intuitive logics, qualitative research replaces a quantitative model. Scenarios are theoretical exercises in long-term forecasting. They can generate innovative thinking and expose new areas of consideration for seeming immobile situations. “Scenarios deal with two worlds, the world of facts and the world of perception. They explore for facts but they aim at perceptions ... Their purpose is to gather and transform information of

strategic significance into fresh perceptions.”³

Often, scenarios are deployed in sets to show a range of possibilities. This study lays out a range of Southern Asian nuclear scenarios and hones in on one, that of Nuclear Risk Reduction. Then it literally maps nuclear spatial politics in Southern Asia in order to give clarity to an often confusing set of relationships based on politics and technology, overt and covert programs, as well as speculative linkages. This scenario defines Southern Asia as South Asia (the former entity of British India) and China.

This scenario is a thought experiment designed to provide different angles of consideration to nuclear security in Southern Asia. It is not a series of predictions about what may or may not occur in the future. It is a narrative of a possible future – one possibility among many.

II SCENARIO CONSTRUCTION



Harvard Business Review, pg. 140

¹ Schwartz, Peter. 1996. *The Art of the Long View*. New York: Double day.

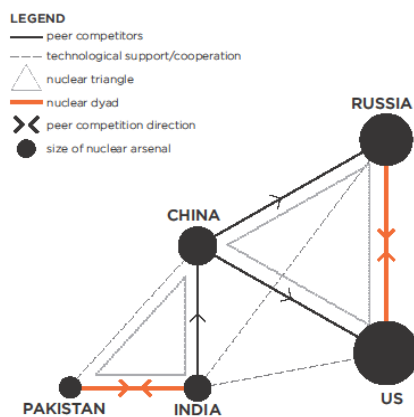
² US National Intelligence Council Global Trends Reports

Four different scenarios are derived from this graph, using nuclear proliferation and regional relations as basic drivers. From left to right, clockwise:

1. Calcified Present (hostile regional relations, no proliferation)
2. Security Net (regional cooperation, no proliferation)
3. Easy Nuclearization (regional cooperation, increased proliferation)
4. We Don't Want to Live Here (regional conflict, increased proliferation)

This study focuses on the second scenario, "Security Net." This is the best-case scenario. Positive scenarios are "hard cases" – seemingly unrealistic, they have the potential to generate novel political thought. Also, threat assessment by nature is pessimistic. This fondness for the worst case is not born out in prediction rates.⁴

III NUCLEAR SPATIAL POLITICS



The dots representing arsenal size are an artistic rendering and do not correspond in a direct, quantitative manner to national nuclear arsenal size

The above image is a simplified rendering of the complex relationships between nuclear powers in Southern Asia and their connections to the United States and Russia. Some its details are under dispute, like the

size of the Pakistani nuclear arsenal.⁵ The purpose of this diagram is to show how strength, threat, technology cooperation and assistance are relational, not finite concepts in Southern Asian nuclear politics.

Pictured is the "difficult" nuclear spatial politics of Southern Asia: The region has the nuclear pair of China-India, the nuclear dyad of India-Pakistan and the nuclear triangle of China-India-Pakistan. This study differentiates between nuclear pair and nuclear dyad – a nuclear dyad is two nuclear countries that view their nuclear capabilities *directly* in relation to each other in a framework of deterrence, such as India-Pakistan and US-Russia -- the strength of one arsenal correlates with perceived weakness of the other. A nuclear pair is simply the relationship between two nuclear nations while a nuclear triangle is the relationship between three. The sides and angles of the Southern Asian nuclear triangle are not equal. In the India-Pakistan nuclear dyad, Pakistan's arsenal is funded and technologically supported by China. In the India-China nuclear pair, India is concerned with Chinese nuclear weapons but China looks towards the US and Russia as "peer" competitors.

Added to these complex regional spatial politics, is the related nuclear triangle of the US-Russia-China. Currently, China views itself more in relation to the US-Russia nuclear dynamic than it does in relation to the China-India-Pakistan nuclear triangle. This is a challenge for reciprocal

⁵ The size of Pakistan's arsenal is classified information in Islamabad and a subject of debate. According to Arms Control Association, Pakistan's nuclear arsenal is between 70 to 90 nuclear warheads (in contrast to India's approximately 100 warheads according to the same organization). Available at: <http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/Nuclearweaponswhohaswhat> According to David Albright (Institute for Science and International security), Pakistan's arsenal may include 110 warheads. Albright. 2010. *Peddling Peril: How the Secret Nuclear Trade Arms America's Enemies*. New York: Free Press. Recent US intelligence estimates as reported by *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* (on 31 January 2011) posit similar numbers to Albright.

⁴ Schwartz, Ibid.

nuclear risk reduction measures in the region of Southern Asia.

IV SOUTHERN ASIAN IDENTITY



Crucial to the development of a regional system, is a sense of regional identity and a shared belief that regional security is a common interest.⁶ This requires the region's nuclear nations to become active participants in the challenge of nuclear risk reduction. How does such a shared identity grow? Why has Southern Asia differed from other regions in this regard?

Regional institutions develop for a number of reasons:

1. When the benefits of cooperation outweigh those of going-it-alone.
2. When conditions are favorable for over-riding the obstacles to cooperation.
3. When it is in the interest of a superpower to form multilateral (rather than bilateral) alliances within a particular region.
4. When there is an outside threat that is great enough to require cooperation.

⁶ Habermas, Jürgen. 2001. Max Pensky trans. *A Postnational Constellation: Political Essays*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

The first of these conditions is not sufficient in and of itself to provide motivation for long-term cooperation and to override long-standing security issues. Regional collective identities matter because they provide the shape and character of the individual nations' interests.⁷ Without a sense of common security goals, regional cooperation is extraordinarily difficult, if not impossible. Southern Asia is a region where superpowers have historically dealt with nations on a bilateral basis, where there is historic inter-state rivalry and armed conflict, and where – so far – no outside threat has provided enough incentive to surmount long-standing internecine insecurity.

There is an established literature on building regional identity in Southeast Asia.⁸ Yet there is near radio silence on regional identity creation in Southern Asia as a political project and a dearth of secondary literature. SAARC (South Asia Association for Regional Cooperation) does its best, but its mandate does not include security issues, China is not a member, and some delegates from member states complain that SAARC meetings denigrate into proxy in-fighting between small states on behalf of large states.⁹ Even SAARC's Peoples Summit believes:

There are no strong mechanisms for promoting regional identity and regional cooperation. The socialization process should be transformed to think beyond the national level and enhance

⁷ Hemmer, Christopher and Peter J. Katzenstein. 2002. "Why is there No NATO in Asia? Collective Action, Regionalism, and the Origins of Multilateralism." *International Organization* 56(3): 600.

⁸ Acharya, Amitav. 2000. *The Quest for Identity. International Relations of Southeast Asia*. Singapore: Oxford University Press. Jönsson, Kristina. 2008. "Unity-in-Diversity? Regional Identity Building in Southeast Asia." Working Paper No 29, Centre for East and South-East Asian Studies, Lund University, Sweden. Smith, Anthony L. 2004 "ASEAN's Ninth Summit: Solidifying Regional Cohesion, Advancing External Linkages." *Contemporary Southeast Asia* 26(3): 416-433.

⁹ Informal conversation with Brig. Muhammad Iqbal, 2 December 2010, Centre for Land Warfare Studies, New Delhi.

regional identity. Unless culture and thought, which at present remain under the hegemonic influence of Western intellectual tradition, are reformulated and brought to the reality of South Asia, *no measure of cooperation will succeed*.¹⁰

In this formulation, the million dollar question of what is non-Western modernization precludes a meaningful discourse on building a Southern Asian regional identity. However, answering that “million dollar” question should be under SAARC’s purview. Instead, it is a conversation road-stop.

Another criticism of regional identity formation, whether in Southern Asia or elsewhere, is that without an accommodating, inclusive, and pluralistic society, the creation of a common regional identity remains an elitist political project and therefore impedes the construction of a shared (popular) identity.¹¹ This criticism has validity for regionalism as a popular project. However, Nuclear Risk Reduction by nature is an “elite,” top-down proposition which requires the proportional cooperation of nations’ security elites.

The most obvious insurmountables to regional identity in Southern Asia are the persisting instability between India and Pakistan and the small nation-larger, more powerful neighbour tensions experienced by the region’s smaller, non-nuclear nations. (Re)establishing regional economic connections in an era when globalization has crafted alternative trade frameworks is more easily said than done. There can be a kind of absolutism to the economic argument that economic growth and interconnectedness will facilitate political stability¹² which does not always

take into consideration nations’ refusal to open their borders to trade and transit. Geography is not economic (or political) destiny and current political tensions are not predetermined in shape or outcome. International markets opened up new patterns of trade which bypass historic regional economic linkages. However, just as historic economic connections changed over time, the current international workarounds for regional trade in Southern Asia are also not fixed.

In the difficult pursuit of regionalism, nuclear security is a promising place to start: It is limited enough in scope yet quite symbolic in action as nuclear weapons are high-status weapons and nuclear technology is a signal of modernization. Also, there is the precedent of Nuclear Weapons Free Zones (NWFZ) which are regional security regimes organized around the control of nuclear weapons. It is for this reason that this study looks towards NWFZ as historic examples of regional regimes designed to combat proliferation. While the nuclear “genie” is very much “out of the bottle” in Southern Asia, the concept of a regional framework developed to limit the risks associated with nuclear weapons is a transferable one from one case to another.

V REGIONAL TEMPLATES

There are severe limitations in directly using non-proliferation “lessons” from one region and applying them to another. Some researchers look to the US-Russia Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) programs as a template for Nuclear Risk Reduction and Confidence Building Measures in Southern Asia.¹³ While there

¹⁰ SAARC People’s Summit. Available at: <http://peoplesummit.sapint.org/regional-identity>
Emphasis added.

¹¹ Jönsson, pg. 24.

¹² For example, International Monetary Fund Director Dominique Strauss-Kahn’s argument that war is

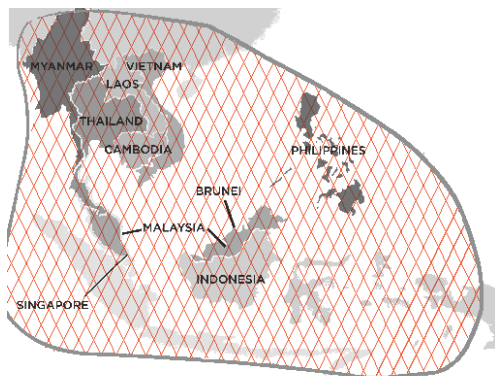
“development in reverse” (23 October 2009). Available at: <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2009/NEW102309A.htm>

¹³ Sethi, Manpreet. 2010. “Strategic Stability: Nuclear Confidence Building Measures and Risk Reduction Measures in South Asia.” Centre for Land Warfare Studies, New Delhi. 2 December. For problems with looking at US-Russia CTR programs in the South Asian context, see Kapur, S. Paul. 2005. “India and Pakistan’s Unstable Peace: Why Nuclear

are obvious reasons for this parallel – it is the largest example of proportional nuclear weapons reduction – the bilateral nature and small scope of US-Russian CTR programs create some limitations for their use in the context of Southern Asia. In addition, the theoretical use of US-Russian CTR programs in the Southern Asian context already has a deep and established literature.¹⁴ For these reasons, this study draws on two examples of regional Nuclear Weapons Free Zones (NWFZ) in Southeast Asia and Latin America to highlight the regional aspects of these efforts.

Obviously, the Southern Asian context is very different from either Southeast Asia or Latin America, and a Nuclear Risk Reduction Regime is a different structure entirely from a NWFZ since it has no aspirations to end the presence of nuclear weapons in a region. This study uses the modality of a NWFZ not as a cookie cutter blueprint for anti-proliferation and disarmament policies in Southern Asia. Instead, it highlights the regional construction of a NWFZ and considers how the development of regional institutions centered on nuclear security, whether a NWFZ or a Nuclear Risk Reduction Regime, can provide valuable insights into seemingly immobile and intractable regional political situations.

SOUTHEAST ASIA



South Asia is not like Cold War Europe.” *International Security* 30 (5)

¹⁴ Krepon, Michael ed. 2004. *Nuclear Risk Reduction in South Asia*. New York: Henry L. Stimson Center Books/Palgrave McMillian.

The Treaty of Bangkok established a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NWFZ) in Southeast Asia in December 1995. Ten Southeast Asian nations signed a treaty which not only covered their regional land mass, but also the signatories’ territorial waters, continental shelf, and their exclusive economic zone.¹⁵ Bangkok is the fourth and most extensive regional NWFZ created by treaty.

Bangkok was an iteration of ASEAN’s (Association of South East Asian Nations) continued attempt to strengthen regionalism in the face of the economic and security interests of great powers in its “fish pond.” Back in 1967, the preamble of ASEAN’s charter stated:

All foreign bases are temporary and remain only with the expressed concurrence of the countries concerned and are not intended to be used directly and indirectly to subvert the national independence and freedom of States in the area or prejudice the orderly processes of their national development.¹⁶

The regional identity of Southeast Asia was formed in reaction to foreign incursion. Part of the purpose of a NWFZ in the region was to stake out the boundaries within which nuclear powers – who are generally superpowers with extensive international interests – cannot venture with their nuclear weapons. The development of ASEAN and The Treaty of Bangkok’s NWFZ show several ways that a regional Southeast Asian identity was formed and transposed into a security framework:

1. ASEAN was formed as a modest bulwark against the intervention by superpowers during the Cold War. Certain states within Southeast Asia sought to limit military involvement of outside powers in the region. ASEAN

¹⁵ Subedi, Surya P. 1996. *Land and Maritime Zones of Peace in International Law*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

¹⁶ *ASEAN Documents Series: 1967-1988* (3rd edn.) 1988. p.27. Available at: <http://www.aseansec.org/1210.htm>

has had ideological ties with the Non-Aligned movement.

2. The focus of ASEAN has been on economic interconnectedness. The declaration of Southeast Asia as an NWFZ grew out of efforts to facilitate economic interdependence.
3. The Bangkok NWFZ (as well it's near contemporary, the NWFZ in Africa) was a product of the immediate post Cold War moment of international realignment.

The regional non-proliferation regime set up by the Treaty of Bangkok shows how the normative legacy of Non-Alignment politics, economic interconnectedness, and immediate absence of superpower conflict-by-stalemate can coalesce into nuclear security. Despite geographic proximity, Southeast Asia has had a very different path towards regional identity formation than Southern Asia. However, the development of the Bangkok NWFZ does offer some avenues of theoretical pursuit for Nuclear Risk Reduction in Southern Asia. It shows the connection between normative identity formation, economic interdependence, and role of superpower presence/absence.

LATIN AMERICA



The Treaty of Tlatelolco is the conventional name for the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the

Caribbean. Drafted in 1967 and ratified in 1968, it created a NWFZ in Latin America.¹⁷ It is the first example of an international-legal regional NWFZ. With the exception of Argentina and Cuba, by 1972 all of Latin America had signed on. By 1979, all Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) recognized nuclear states who held territory in the region ratified an additional protocol to the treaty. Argentina finally ratified (though it had signed on to the draft in 1967) the treaty in 1994. Cuba ratified in 2002. While Latin America is a very different region than Southern Asia for obvious reasons – an absence of nuclear weapons and the direct presence of a superpower are but two – there are several transferable concepts from the Tlatelolco framework:

1. Though the main purpose of Tlatelolco was to halt Brazil and Argentina's proliferation ambitions, neither program ended immediately. And, while both countries – as the regional powers – were the guiding force behind the treaty, Argentina did not ratify the treaty until thirty years after the initial drafting.
2. Yet in that period, a set of non-proliferation norms for Latin America were created. Argentina, though it hadn't signed on to the treaty, invoked the treaty against the British during the Falklands War when the British (who had signed on to an additional protocol), allegedly sent a nuclear submarine into Latin American waters.
3. The US supported the treaty quietly. It signed on to an additional protocol, but

¹⁷ Redick, John R. 1975. "Regional Nuclear Arms Control in Latin America." *International Organization* 29 (2). Redick. 1984. "Non-Proliferation and Latin America: Some Current Policy Options." Conference paper for Non-Proliferation: Attitudes and Motivations, *The Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*. Redick. 1995 "Nuclear Illusions: Argentina and Brazil." *The Henry L. Stimson Center*. Occasional Paper No. 25. Solingen, Etel. 2001. "Middle East Denuclearization? Lessons from Latin America's Southern Cone." *Review of International Studies* 27 (3)

did not use diplomatic or other pressure to generate compliance. Tlatelolco was not a creature of US creation.

In this way, the Treaty of Tlatelolco created a framework where long-term non-proliferation norms were instigated by the region's powers who did not necessarily immediately sign on to the treaty, or abide by its provisions – yet they invoked the treaty when it served their interests. Tlatelolco crafted a Latin American NWFZ through the direct efforts of rival powers Brazil and Argentina; with the tacit, hands-off approval of the US; and with the active participation of the region's smaller, weaker nations.

A Nuclear Risk Reduction Regime and a NWFZ are very different in aim. Yet they are both regional security institutions with a mandate to control (to varying degrees) the use of nuclear weapons.

VI

NUCLEAR RISK REDUCTION IN SOUTHERN ASIA



DRIVERS & WILDCARDS

How would a regional Nuclear Risk Reduction Regime in Southern Asia come into existence? This project identifies a collection of drivers and wildcards. Drivers are the forces that propel trends, similar to what historians call “structural” factors and political scientists call systematic explanations. They are “the elements that

move the plot of a scenario.”¹⁸ Drivers can be social, technological, economic, political, and environmental in form. For Nuclear Risk Reduction in Southern Asia, some driving forces would be increased economic interdependence or a change in trade patterns, the formation of a Southern Asian identity, and an effort to decrease the intervention potential of an outside power.

Wildcards are cataclysmic events that throw a spanner into predictable trends. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 and the Global Financial Crisis are recent examples of wildcards which altered the political landscape in ways that have not yet completely unfolded. While a specific wildcard itself is statistically unlikely to happen, the occurrence of a wildcard is actually more likely than its non-occurrence.¹⁹

In regards to wildcards, the unanswered question then becomes what, rather than if. Obvious wildcards for a Nuclear Risk Reduction scenario are nuclear related: Nuclear weapons falling into the possession of a non-state actor group, a nuclear accident at either a civilian or a military installation, the advent of a new nuclear weapons state,²⁰ or even a detonation by a nuclear weapons state either as a test/show of strength or as an actual offensive move. All of these wildcards would elevate the immediate relevance of collective action for nuclear security in Southern Asia. The nuclear disaster in Fukushima is such a nuclear wildcard. It will have an as yet

¹⁸ Schwartz, pg. 107.

¹⁹ Tangredi, Sam J. 2001. “All Possible Wars? Toward A Consensus View of the Future Security Environment, 2001-2025,” McNair Paper 63. Washington DC: National Defense Defense University.

²⁰ Besides the possibility of a nuclear Iran, there are some unsubstantiated reports that Myanmar has been making moves towards acquiring nuclear weapons although it is a party to the Treaty of Bangkok's NWFZ in Southeast Asia. Reports of this nature in *The Washington Post*, available at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/06/03/AR2010060304859.html> And *The Telegraph*, available at: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/burma/myanmar/7909774/Burma-is-working-on-nuclear-weapons-programme-experts-claim.html>

undetermined impact on nuclear energy politics. Fukushima highlights the importance of tightened nuclear safety measures and may well heighten political controversy surrounding nuclear energy.

Some may advocate a disarmament approach to Nuclear Risk Reduction in Southern Asia.²¹ This study, while it draws concepts from the regional development of Nuclear Weapons Free Zones, looks towards the creation and tightening of a regional security net of shared nuclear use norms and proportional arsenal reduction. It treats nuclear safety and security²² as regional collective action problems and actively encourages the role of small, non-nuclear Southern Asian nations in spearheading measures to address nuclear issues within a regional context.



“Security Net” focuses on nuclear security as a long-term regional project in Southern Asia.

Immediate pressures may drive national decision-makers to consider their own nation’s security as a self-help project. However, increased economic interdependence – driven by modernization in technology, energy creation and

transport – slowly weave a regional net of shared economic interests. At first, state governments negotiate bilateral agreements between individual states to develop local resources. Eventually a plethora of agreements overlay each other and begin to give way to multi-lateral cooperative pacts in the interest of efficiency.

Nuclear energy, while slow to gain traction, becomes an important part Southern Asia energy consumption due to global pressure to limit fossil fuel use and regional status preferences. Just as nuclear weapons possession came to be considered one of the markers of great political power, nuclear energy use becomes a sign of political modernization. Increased nuclear energy use coupled with the aftermath of Fukushima, makes nuclear security a concern for smaller, non-nuclear weapons states in Southern Asia. Nuclear energy to a lesser degree and nuclear weapons to a greater degree are political flash-points for safety and security issues. In addition, nuclear facilities are a small slice of the greater pool of modernization projects. It is for these two reasons – that nuclear facilities are dramatic and dangerous politics and that they are a small portion of state modernization projects – that nuclear security is fertile ground for regional cooperation.

A shared desire for nuclear power coupled with an increased fear of nuclear catastrophe and a desire to work around international institutional interference related to nuclear security could propel the slow, incremental tightening of nuclear cooperation in the region. In addition, the advent of another nuclear wildcard especially after the nuclear accident at Fukushima, could accelerate incentives for a regional cooperation on nuclear security in Southern Asia. Such a wildcard could provide evidence that all nations in the region have a stake in Southern Asian nuclear security.

²¹ Nuclear disarmament is not the focus of this project. However, Evans, Gareth and Yoriko Kawaguchi ed. 2009. *Report of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament*. Canberra: Paragon Press provides a comprehensive road map towards disarmament. Some of their prospective methods – institutionalized forms for collective security, verification mechanisms and safeguards related to the misuse of nuclear (weapons) materials and design – could function as Nuclear Risk Reduction Measures.

²² For the purposes of this project, nuclear safety is protection from external accidents while nuclear security is protection from intentional use.

What might this “Security Net” look like?

It would have interlocking strands of accepted nuclear norms, limited and proportional arms control agreements, and standardized safety measures.

- Norms: Codification of nuclear weapons as *political weapons* – that is, weapons whose purpose is to protect the “hard shell” of a state’s “existential” sovereignty. In this way, nuclear weapons are no longer considered weapons of war-fighting. Instead, they are the ultimate, visible reminder of state sovereignty on parade.
- Arms Control: Along with an acceptance of nuclear weapons as political weapons, comes an effort to limit them to strategic use. Particular classes of tactical nuclear weapons could be limited and then eliminated.
- Safety Measures: Nuclear facilities (first civilian and then military) would adhere to a set of safety measures. This would demonstrate that nuclear safety is a shared, regional concern. Standards could be drawn up first, and verification mechanisms would follow. This aspect would be an ideal place for the region’s smaller, non-nuclear weapons states to take the lead.

Like many ambitious multi-actor projects, regional nuclear security in Southern Asia as narrated by “Security Net” articulates a change in perception: A change in perception for how the region’s states view nuclear weapons, how they view nuclear security, and even how they view themselves as a region. How to generate such “ideational change”²³ remains an unanswerable, a subject of much speculative meditation. Scenarios as thought exercises accept these limitations.

²³ Paul, T.V. 2011. “Building Sustainable Peace in South Asia.” Presentation at The Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi. 20 January. Wendt Alexander. 1995. “Constructing International Politics,” *International Security* 20 (1).

They seek to circumnavigate these difficulties by articulating a narrative of possibility, not a recipe for policy. The point of a scenario project is to generate creative thinking about political problems. The following is a brief overview which circles back to the possible current ramifications for the future narrative outlined in “Security Net.”

VII CONCLUDING SUMMARY

The world articulated by “Security Net” is a world where the nations of Southern Asia – including China – construe nuclear security as a pressing regional problem requiring a regional solution. In this world, regional identity and economic interdependence form a causal circle of incremental change over time. Nuclear security, as both a crucial, high-stakes issue with a particular, limited scope, becomes an ideal place for a regional security framework to form. Another nuclear-related wildcard, in addition to Fukushima, could catalyze regional nuclear security in Southern Asia, providing the impetus for a time-lapse construction of “Security Net.” In both sequences – incremental and accelerated – the strands of regional identity and economic interdependence join up with shared nuclear norms, limited arms control agreements, and shared safety measures to form a net of regional nuclear security for Southern Asia.

This project purposely speaks in generalities about particular Southern Asian nations, their individual nuclear goals and capabilities, and their often charged interrelations. It does this in order to sidestep seemingly intractable political problems and look towards a future where nuclear security is considered a regional concern – not for altruistic reasons, but because long-term driving forces, perhaps catalyzed by a wildcard, *make* nuclear security a matter of regional alarm.

What does the future as articulated by “Security Net” have to say about today? Short of global disarmament, nuclear weapons are here to stay in Southern Asia. In fact, with an upsurge in nuclear energy production and the prospect of a horizontal (Myanmar?) and vertical (Pakistan) proliferation, the nuclear politics of the region may well grow in complexity and insecurity. This environment, overlain by increased economic interdependence makes Nuclear Risk Reduction a regional priority, not just a subject of bilateral negotiation between India and Pakistan. Considering nuclear security in Southern Asia as a future Southern Asian concern, may broaden the horizon of foreseeable policy options today.

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