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Working Paper

**Chinese Perspectives on
the South Asian Nuclear Tests**

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Foreword

India's nuclear tests in May 1998 shocked the world. On May 11 and 13, India conducted a total of five tests. According to official Indian statements, the tests comprised three low-yield explosions, a 12 kiloton (kt) fission bomb, and a 43 kt thermonuclear device. The Indian tests triggered a quick response from Pakistan. On May 28 Pakistan conducted five nuclear tests, followed by a further test on May 30. Although some Western analysts have cast doubt on whether the two countries actually carried out the number and size of tests they claimed, India and Pakistan did conduct nuclear testing. These tests run counter to the global trend of nuclear arms reduction and have undermined not only the peace and stability of South Asia but of the world as well.¹

India and Pakistan have long been regarded by the international arms-control community as "nuclear threshold" or "de facto" nuclear-weapon states. They have now become declared nuclear-weapon states. The nuclear testing in South Asia will inevitably have a serious impact on regional and world politics, security, and diplomacy. This paper, which draws upon Chinese sources, analyzes the motivations of India and Pakistan and the consequences of the nuclear tests.

The end of the Cold War has led to a significant international strategic transformation. The danger of a global nuclear conflict between the two superpowers, the United States and the former Soviet Union, has faded away. The international community, especially the West, has increasingly focused on the dangers of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and of regional conflicts between Third World countries. South Asia has long been one of the regions in which both are most likely to occur. Now that India and Pakistan have demonstrated their nuclear capabilities, the situation has gone from bad to worse.

Since the ending of the Cold War, the prevention of nuclear proliferation in South Asia has acquired a new urgency. This is partly because of changes that have lessened the danger of nuclear proliferation in other regions of the world. For example, Argentina and Brazil both announced that they had given up their nuclear option by signing relevant agreements and concluding full-scope safeguard agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The South African Government has disclosed confidential information on its nuclear program and destroyed the six nuclear bombs that it had built in secret. Both the South and

North Korean governments have signed an accord pledging to make the Korean peninsula a nuclear-free zone. The potential for nuclear proliferation in the Middle East remains a source of concern, but can probably be controlled on a reasonably satisfactory basis.

South Asia has in reality become the sole region where nuclear proliferation is most likely to happen. The resolve of India and Pakistan to push forward their nuclear programs represents the greatest threat of nuclear proliferation. Mutually hostile, India and Pakistan have not signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) or the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). The nuclear testing in May turned the very real possibility of nuclear proliferation in these two countries into reality.

Situated on the northern shore of the Indian Ocean, the South Asian subcontinent lies between Southeast Asia and West Asia and is connected geographically to the Islamic states of West Asia. As the communications hub of the Indian Ocean, South Asia has a relatively important strategic position by linking the Strait of Malacca in the east and the Strait of Hormuz to the west.

With an area of 4.16 million square kilometers, South Asia occupies 3 percent of the globe's landmass. With a total population of more than one billion, it contains one-fifth of the world's population.² With its vast area and population, the stability and security of South Asia is of great significance to world peace. Unfortunately, relations between India and Pakistan have long been plagued by the harmful aftermath of the post-colonial partition of the subcontinent in 1947. The decades-long political confrontation and diplomatic competition between the two countries has resulted in a series of military showdowns. The introduction of nuclear weapons into the rivalry increases the threat to the peace and stability of South Asia.

When the old strategic structure in South Asia (characterized by the confrontation between India, backed by the former Soviet Union, and Pakistan, supported by the United States) ceased to exist, South Asia became one of the most unstable regions in the world. The Indian-Pakistani confrontation has not experienced a fundamental turn for the better, nor has there been a significant improvement in its basic structure. Neither has suspended or reduced its arms programs, especially those directed toward building nuclear weapons and their delivery systems. The nuclear testing conducted by India and Pakistan suggests that armed conflicts involving nuclear weapons are a genuine possibility.

History has demonstrated that national leadership, time, and diplomatic genius will be needed to solve the thorny issue of the nuclear arms race in South Asia, so closely connected is it to the underlying and enduring Indian-Pakistani hostility. A Chinese source has quoted a senior Indian official as saying: "[t]he Cold War does not end in South Asia."³ The Chinese estimate that this confrontation will last well into the twenty-first century.

Moreover, the tests by India and Pakistan have dealt a major blow to global efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation and advance the cause of nuclear disarmament. The nuclear testing in South Asia has posed a severe challenge to the global nonproliferation regime. How the international community responds to the tests will be crucial in determining whether the nonproliferation norm survives with credibility or is further eroded.

The nuclear crisis in South Asia is serious. However, "crisis" in the Chinese language is composed of two characters: *wei*—danger—and *ji*—opportunity. The new international situation, characterized by the coexistence of "opportunity" and "challenge," does hold out some hope that the nuclear arms race in South Asia can be capped. The challenge that confronts the international community is to turn this threat into an opportunity. The international community must move urgently in the matter. China recognizes this challenge and will play its role in this regard.

¹ “China Concerns Itself over the Development of the Situation after Indian-Pakistani Nuclear Tests,” *Renmin Ribao* [People’s Daily], overseas ed., June 3, 1998, p. 1.

² Zheng Ruixiang, “The Current Problem of Peace and Security in South Asia,” *Guoji Wenti Yanjiu* [International Studies], No. 4, 1987, p. 9.

³ Ye Zhengjia, “India Entering the 21st Century,” *Guoji Wenti Yanjiu*, No. 3, 1996, p. 24.

Section One: Motives for Testing

I. The Motivations behind India's Nuclear Program and Its Strategic Intentions

A. The Quest for Great-Power Status

India regards the possession of nuclear weapons as an indispensable means of attaining great-power status and pursuing regional hegemony. This is why India, in an attempt to preserve its right to develop nuclear weapons, was unwilling to forgo the nuclear option and instead conducted nuclear-weapon tests. Its leaders have held that India must develop nuclear weapons to enhance its overall national power and bolster its international strategic posture.¹

Indian leaders revealed their interest in acquiring nuclear weapons even before winning the independence of India. On June 26, 1946, Nehru announced at a press conference, "India will develop its own nuclear research. I hope Indian scientists will make use of atomic energy to serve construction. In case India is under threat, it will employ whatever means it has to defend itself." This statement demonstrates Nehru's early strategic goal of leading India to become a nuclear power.²

India regards nuclear capability as the prerequisite for attainment of world-power status as well as the needed VIP ticket for admission to the UN Security Council.³ After the success of India's first nuclear test in 1974, Indira Gandhi said, "The sole cause for India to conduct this nuclear test is to enhance the prestige of the state." One Indian stated that the nation "needs to consider issues judging from the angle of the sixth nuclear power in order to play a greater role in international affairs." This and similar statements demonstrate that India has long been aware that once it developed its nuclear arsenal the world could not ignore its power and influence. Nuclear weapons would give its population of 900 million a powerful voice in global affairs.⁴

There is consensus in the Indian political community that China's possession of nuclear weapons is a major reason that Western countries attach great importance to cooperating with China on important international questions. India maintains that China enjoys a higher

international standing than it because China—as well as the other permanent members of the UN Security Council—possesses nuclear weapons and their delivery vehicles.⁵

The international Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) negotiation is a case in point. In July 1996, after the parties had basically reached unanimity on the draft CTBT and just before the treaty was concluded, China demanded revisions in the Executive Council's decision-making procedures for on-site inspection as listed in Article IV. The Western countries had to accept China's proposal because China had nuclear weapons. In contrast, these same Western countries rejected India's demand for revisions in the conditions for entry into force listed in Article XIV. Indian ambassador Arundhati Uthappa expressed her dissatisfaction with the Western countries' attitude and attributed the discrepancy to China's nuclear-power status.

B. Nuclear Weapons As a Means to Strengthen Indian Deterrence

Indian officials and specialists have maintained that nuclear weapons are arms designed for mass destruction and that nuclear exchanges are most unlikely. However, they hold that nuclear threats do exist. Between Third World countries many thorny issues, legacies of colonial rule, remain unresolved and could easily touch off armed conflicts. Nuclear weapons could be used in an escalating conflict if only one of the belligerent countries possessed them. Conversely, the possession of nuclear weapons would constitute a major deterrent to bellicose actions if both adversaries had nuclear weapons. In either case, New Delhi wants India to have the bomb.

Indian leaders are fully aware that the possession of merely a few nuclear weapons can pose a meaningful deterrent to other Third World countries. India already commands the most powerful military might in South Asia, and its leaders believe they will have an even more effective means of enforcing a strategic deterrent against neighboring states if its military might includes nuclear weaponry.⁶ A basic strategy of India is to maintain the nuclear option and seek a minimum nuclear deterrent.⁷

Because adherence to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty would conflict with India's strategy of maintaining its right to exercise the nuclear option, India has refused to sign the treaty. In 1968, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi approved the implementation of a nuclear testing program for India.

In the nuclear age, military power requires not only conventional forces and nuclear weapons but also a second-strike capability for those weapons; that is, a state's ability to survive a nuclear attack must be sufficient for it to launch a retaliatory attack that would inflict intolerable damage on the aggressor.⁸ The only way to deter a nuclear attack is to possess the means to launch a retaliatory second strike.

C. As a Guard against Pakistan and China and to Deter a U.S. Threat from the Indian Ocean

Indian officials hold that nuclear weapons would greatly enhance India's position as a regional power. India believes it is the principal power in South Asia.⁹ The possession of nuclear weapons would "qualify" it to speak on all important South Asian affairs and to have a greater say in matters of central significance to its neighbors.

The belief that both Pakistan and China have strategic interests and plans inimical to India is one of the primary reasons New Delhi has pursued the nuclear option. India maintains that it cannot exclude the possibility of using nuclear weapons against Pakistan as a last resort. Moreover, it claims it is necessary for India to "guard against and cope with the nuclear threat from China or Chinese intervention by conventional forces backed up by nuclear

threat.” Therefore, India has signalled a warning to any foreign country to think twice before it intervenes in India’s sphere of influence “because such an intervention will be very expensive.” Although India has developed nuclear weapons principally to deter Pakistan and China,¹⁰ to some extent the Indian nuclear program also has been designed to deter potential U.S. military threats from the Indian Ocean.

The main motivations of the Indian nuclear program thus are:

1. To deter Pakistan. The British colonialists planted the seeds of bitter animosity and rivalry when they separated Pakistan from India on the basis of religious lines. Religion allows almost no room for compromise on other deep-rooted Indian-Pakistani bilateral and regional issues.

India holds that the security of the South Asian subcontinent must be in accord with Indian national security. This has been interpreted to mean gaining absolute superiority over Pakistan on the subcontinent, but that goal has proved impossible to achieve in the nuclear arena. In October 1987, Rajiv Gandhi made this point: “If Pakistan possesses nuclear weapons, Pakistan will perhaps resort to the use of nuclear weapons provided India is going to achieve victory in a way in which the Pakistanis suffer heavy casualties.” He added, “we do not hope that our neighbors would possess nuclear weapons,” and concluded by saying that India must take the lead over Pakistan in every aspect including nuclear weapons.¹¹ Because Pakistan is developing nuclear weapons, India thus must continue to develop nuclear weapons, and there is no clear way to end this vicious circle.

2. To balance China’s nuclear capabilities.¹² Pakistan is the immediate target of Indian defense and security strategy, but China remains its long-term target.¹³ The defeat China inflicted on India in the Sino-Indian border conflict in 1962 cast a permanent shadow over Sino-Indian relations. Yet following its defeat India did not review its flawed foreign policy. On the contrary, India long sought revenge and a chance to avenge the insult of its defeat. With this aim, in addition to its efforts to strengthen its conventional forces India has been working hard to possess nuclear weapons in order to create a nuclear balance between it and China.

The detonation of China’s first atomic bomb in 1964 seemingly inflicted yet another heavy blow on India. On November 27, 1964, Indian prime minister Lal Bahadur Shastri told the Indian Parliament that his government would consider conducting a “nuclear test for peaceful purposes.” India holds that even a few Chinese nuclear weapons pose a serious threat to Indian security.¹⁴

In its 1996 annual defense report, the Indian military took an extreme position on the impact on India’s security of close Sino-Pakistani relations. Military leaders stated that of all India’s military arms nuclear weapons constitute the most effective deterrent and that India is attempting to deter China and Pakistan with those weapons. India now has ten nuclear-power reactors for commercial use, five reactors for research, and two chemical plants for reprocessing plutonium. The 1996 report cited this statement of Indian brigadier general Nell, who had visited India’s nuclear test base at Pokaran many times: “India needs 132 atomic bombs to deter Pakistan and China.”¹⁵

India is aware that it must acquire both atomic bombs and their delivery vehicles to have a credible nuclear deterrent. As early as 1983, India initiated a comprehensive missile program for the development of its own missile technologies. Under this program, India planned to build five types of guided missiles within ten years. Agni, a medium-range missile, was to become the most important of these missiles. This 19-meter-long missile has a maximum

range of 2,500 kilometers and a takeoff weight of 14 tons. It was first flight-tested on May 22, 1989, from a coastal range near Orissa. This successful test flight strengthened domestic support for building strategic weapons and lessened reliance on conventional weapons. In 1990, some members of a consultative committee of the Indian Defense Ministry demanded that the government pursue the nuclear option and “figure out a defense strategy with a focus on strategic nuclear weapons.” They held that India’s possession of nuclear weapons would balance China’s military power and maintain a nuclear deterrent against the littoral states of the Indian Ocean. On February 18, 1994, India flight-tested an Agni missile capable of delivering a nuclear warhead that hit its target with precision. India had tested a nuclear-capable missile that could enforce long-range deterrence.¹⁶

It has been universally acknowledged that India can quickly fabricate tens of nuclear bombs if it decides to do so, and its tests in May well proved this. It has completed R&D on a medium-range missile, and the Indian Army is in a position to deploy this missile at any time. India also has achieved great success in R&D on an intermediate-range missile.¹⁷

3. To neutralize pressures created by U.S. military presence in the Indian Ocean. The Indians were strongly influenced when the U.S. Government dispatched a carrier battle group to the Bay of Bengal in the Indian-Pakistani War in 1971 in order to pressure India. Officials in New Delhi contend that only the United States is capable of challenging India from the Indian Ocean and that the U.S. military presence in the Indian Ocean is a potential threat to India’s military goal of establishing its dominance in the Indian Ocean. In a future confrontation with the United States, India believes that it could deal effectively with a U.S. military threat if it had nuclear weapons. India could then target U.S. forces in the Indian Ocean with its nuclear arms in order to deter the United States from bringing pressure to bear on the Indian Government in a crisis.¹⁸

D. Domestic Factors in Favor of Pursuing the Nuclear Option

Significant changes occurred in Indian domestic politics in the 1980s and 1990s, and these new politics have wrought considerable changes in India’s nuclear policies.¹⁹ Here we review some of these changes.

1. All previous Indian governments have maintained the nuclear option. For instance, the government in power just before the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) took office in March 1998 was a minority government supported by the Congress Party. This loose coalition government, consisting of thirteen medium- and small-sized parties, lacked a solid political foundation. A policy decision against pursuing the nuclear option would have shaken the coalition government because Indian domestic opinion favored the development of strategic weapons. Important parties and organizations had repeatedly urged the government not to yield to foreign pressures to sign the CTBT and had even advocated “conducting nuclear tests openly and announcing [India’s] possession of nuclear weapons.” Prime Minister Rao strengthened his position after redirecting his policy to favor the nuclear option, and the existing coalition government had neither the will nor the power to reverse that direction.²⁰

2. India’s various parties have reached a consensus to retain the nuclear option. Before coming into power, in fact, the BJP supported the acquisition of nuclear weapons on the basis of patriotism and had seen its popularity rise sharply in recent years. A core element of the appeal of the BJP has been its tough stance in favor of the nuclear-weapon and missile programs. The BJP’s position on the nuclear issue has in turn influenced other parties and limited the ruling party’s flexibility on the issue.²¹ Since the BJP’s assumption of power India has

accelerated its nuclear program. In an attempt to win public approval, the BJP minority coalition government set out to consolidate its position by appearing tough and conducting nuclear tests.²² It should be noted that the narrow-minded nationalism fanned by some Indian politicians has made the heavily armed country more restive and more of a threat to regional peace.²³

3. The Indian military has seldom intervened in politics, and constitutionally nuclear policy, like all official national policies, is a civilian prerogative. Three wars have broken out between India and Pakistan since Indian independence, however, and China defeated India in the Sino-Indian border conflict in 1962. Accordingly, the Indian military strongly supports the nuclear-weapons program and has made its position clear.

4. Public opinion now favors retaining the nuclear option. In early December 1995, a poll conducted by *India Today* indicated that 62 percent of Indians polled felt that India should conduct nuclear tests, and 68 percent believed that only if all nuclear powers gave up nuclear weapons should India relinquish the option. Based on their own electoral interests and their interpretation of the national interest, none of the political parties can or will easily yield to Western pressures and compromise on nuclear policy.

In short, it is the common aspiration of the Indian people and the Indian Government to pursue the nuclear option, and both define the option in terms of national defense needs and security strategy.²⁴ India also attaches high priority to the development of nuclear technologies as a matter of economic importance. Maintaining the right to develop nuclear weapons and related technologies, India rejected the CTBT. By this decision, India proclaimed nuclear deterrence as its established defense policy and the building of a nuclear capability as the national means to achieve great-power status.²⁵

*E. Nuclear Testing As a Result of the Indian Military Strategy of "Regional Deterrence"*²⁶

After the conclusion of the Cold War, India made a major adjustment of its military strategy based on analysis of the international security situation. The military strategy of "regional deterrence" replaced the "regional offensive strategy" designed and carried out in past decades for attaining and consolidating India's dominant strategic position in South Asia.

Indian strategists hold that India faces serious challenges to its military strategy. During the Cold War, India had two sources of support in the management of international relations: the special Indian-Soviet relationship and India's position as of one of the founders of the Non Aligned Movement. The situation has now changed. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the need for both the Soviet Union and India to make use of their special relationship to confront the United States and China has disappeared. There is no special relation between Russia and India. In the wake of the Cold War, many nonaligned countries have been inclined to adopt pro-West policies. As a result of the demise of the bipolar international structure, the loss of the "balancing power" of the Non Aligned Movement as a third force has sharply narrowed India's room for maneuver. In the face of the new international situation, India has had to adjust its domestic and foreign policies.

Indian strategists have altered their concept of war and stressed the development of deterrence capabilities. They hold that conventional forces, the main means of handling international affairs since the 1960s, should be replaced by political, economic, and diplomatic means, and the nation's strategic military goals be achieved by maritime deterrence and nuclear deterrence. They stress that, as an important part of a nation's comprehensive strength, military capabilities can provide India with a realistic basis on which to become a regional power.

Indian defense planners advocate switching India's war strategy from its emphasis on destruction of the military forces of an enemy state to an emphasis on deterrence. They no longer stress the occupation of the territory and conquest of the will to resist of an enemy state. Rather, India is prepared to use its military might to force the enemy to yield without waging a war.

The Indian military strategy of "regional deterrence" has the following goals: to continue to occupy those areas in the Indian-Pakistani and Indian-Chinese borders now under Indian control, to control weak neighboring states in South Asia and consolidate India's dominant position in the region, to tighten control over the Indian Ocean, and to gradually become a world power through the buildup of maritime deterrence and nuclear deterrence. This strategy consists of six elements:

1. To control the subcontinent and maintain superiority over the four neighboring states. India perceives a security threat from Pakistan's "hostile policy" and the turmoil in Nepal, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka supported by forces outside the region. India feels that it is in its interest to maintain the stability and security of the subcontinent.

As a result of the buildup of Indian strategic air-transport capabilities, India has set out to establish a quick-reaction force with "enough deterrence" to ensure that none of the four neighboring states dares to violate Indian interests.

In view of the existence of a serious conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir and the confrontations along the Indian-Pakistani border, India stated in its yearly defense report of 1993-94 that Pakistan "is still a main threat to Indian security." India has therefore deployed massive numbers of forces of its three armed services along the Indian-Pakistani border and the sea area close to Pakistan in order to dissuade Pakistan from launching any offensive operation. Moreover, India has highlighted since the late 1980s in response to Pakistani nuclear capabilities its capabilities for enforcing both conventional and nuclear deterrence against Pakistan.

2. To stress "containment" deterrence against China. India has long regarded China as "a main potential rival" and has not yet changed this position. Unresolved border issues between the two have long existed. India regards China as a main "potential threat" in political, economic, and military affairs. As China's comprehensive strength has grown, India believes that China has isolated and encircled India and that therefore India must resort to playing up the "China threat."

On the one hand, India has accelerated its military buildup, including its nuclear capabilities, in order to maintain military balance with China; on the other, India has deployed 19 percent of its ground forces and 20 percent of its air force along the Indian-Chinese border to maintain local military superiority over China. Furthermore, India's efforts to develop the Prithvi short-range missile and the Agni intermediate-range missile deserve special attention. India has thus attempted to build "containment" deterrence against China by maintaining local military superiority over China in the border area, developing medium and intermediate-range missiles, and adhering to the nuclear option.

3. To expand its dominance in the Indian Ocean and to accelerate its maritime deterrence capabilities. Since the 1980s, India has moved its strategic center of gravity to the Indian Ocean. About 97 percent of Indian foreign trade relies on maritime transportation, and 44 percent of its oil supply comes from the Persian Gulf; India has a coastline as long as 7,500 kilometers; India believes that in the long-term any threat to it will come from the sea; and historically European powers conquered India from the Indian Ocean.

India has aimed its maritime deterrence at the following targets: first, U.S. military presence in the Indian Ocean; second, other powers outside the region including Japan, Germany, France, and China that would later enter the Indian Ocean; and third, the littoral countries of the Indian Ocean that might resort to military adventures against India. Indian strategists have pointed out that the Indian Navy forces the navies of other powers to pay a much higher cost for any regional intervention. The significance of Indian maritime deterrence lies in this estimate.

India has strengthened its blue-water navy, including increases in the number of long-distance offensive weapons systems such as aircraft carriers, nuclear-powered submarines, new-type conventional submarines, missile destroyers, missile frigates, long-distance anti-submarine reconnaissance planes, and so on. India is gradually building a large-scale blue-water navy with powerful deterrence capable of waging surface, underwater, and aerial warfare.

4. To adhere to the nuclear option and attach importance to nuclear deterrence. Since the 1990s, India has stressed that nuclear weapons “have a deterrence greater than their employment value.” India intends to make use of nuclear weapons to back up its pursuit of regional hegemony and big-power status.

Apparently, India is developing nuclear weapons in an attempt to cope with the threats from Pakistan, China, and the United States. Of the three, China is the focus. India maintains that only when it possesses nuclear deterrence equivalent to that of China can it back up the deterrent force of Indian conventional superiority in the Indian-Chinese border; and only when it possesses nuclear capabilities can it dissuade the United States from intervention in affairs occurring in its sphere of influence.

5. To cooperate with foreign countries to build its image as a military power. First, India has reestablished military relations with the Commonwealth of Independent States. In 1993, India and Russia signed a treaty of friendship and cooperation and nine cooperative agreements on economic relations, trade, science and technology, and defense. India has gradually restored military connections with Ukraine and Kazakhstan. It has thus secured a supply of Soviet-type weapons, equipment, and technologies.

Second, India has also made efforts to acquire advanced weapons and equipment as well as technologies from Western countries. In 1991, India and the United States jointly set up a naval directing committee. The two countries conducted for the first time in May 1992 a joint maritime military exercise and in 1995 an exercise in a mountain area in North India. India has also strengthened its military connections with Britain, France, and Germany.

Third, in order to build its image as a military power, India has strengthened military exchanges with Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, and Korea by selling munitions and helping to train military personnel.

6. To enhance the quality of its army and implement an “active defense” strategy. India has accelerated domestic manufacture of weapons and equipment and introduction of high technologies in an effort to enhance the quality of its army. It is consolidating ground forces with an emphasis on modernizing weapons and equipment and enhancing quick-reaction capabilities; upgrading the air force by introducing hi-tech weapons and equipment and building its strategic-strike, early-warning, and air-transportation capabilities; and reinforcing the navy by building large-sized surface warships and nuclear-powered submarines for strengthening its maritime deterrence capabilities.

India stresses the implementation of a strategy of “active defense” characterized by the enhancement of the integrated fighting capacity of its armed forces. This strategy consists of, first, building an in-depth defensive system; second, resorting to a preemptive strike; third, attaching importance to coordinated fighting by the armed services; and fourth, waging a war of quick decision.

India does not yet possess a strategic deterrence capability. In order to achieve this strategic goal, India has focused on the importance of deterrent forces and is taking solid measures to accelerate its army building. Its adherence to a nuclear testing program is one example of its efforts in this regard.

7. Why tests now? The tests were a strategic decision of the Bharatiya Janata Party as part of its power strategy. The end of the Cold War deprived India of its ability to gain advantage in the international political arena from both Moscow and Washington. India’s position in the international strategic structure has declined. As a result of the ending of the Cold War, the nonalignment movement has steadily eroded, and India has lost the structure through which it exerted its international influence. Indian efforts to become a permanent member state of the UN Security Council have been continuously frustrated. In contrast, the existing five permanent member states of the UN Security Council are all nuclear-weapon states. India has concluded that it must possess nuclear weapons in order to become a world power and a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

Second, the existing Indian Government is a loosely formed coalition government. It is struggling to establish the BJP and to strengthen the cohesion of the Indian people. It resorted to nuclear tests in order to incite Indian nationalism and to consolidate its position as the ruling party.

Third, the international disarmament negotiations forced BJP to cash in its nuclear option. India had become a main target of international efforts to check nuclear proliferation because of its refusal to sign the NPT and CTBT. India faced greater and greater international pressures. Were it to maintain its ambiguous policy toward the nuclear option, it would never become a genuine nuclear power. At the same time, it would continue to face constant international pressure. India maintained that the international community would recognize it as the sixth nuclear power of the world after the initial pressures caused by the tests subsided.

Fourth, India believed that after the conclusion of the Cold War the United States had abandoned its policy of making use of Pakistan to contain India and would have to recognize India’s dominant role in South Asia. India believed that the United States would be forced to tolerate its nuclear tests for the purpose of making use of India to neutralize the effects of the increasing Chinese influence in Asia.

II. The Motivations behind Pakistan’s Nuclear Program and Its Strategic Intentions

Pakistan initiated its nuclear program later than India. To a large extent, it built its nuclear force under Indian stimulation. India’s 1974 nuclear test was a terrible shock to Pakistan. Since then Pakistan has taken a secret path to develop its nuclear force. Because of the strict nuclear nonproliferation policies of the Western countries, Pakistan assembled domestic scientific and technical forces to develop nuclear weapons. It became capable of facing a nuclear challenge from India by completing in 1984 the construction of its first gaseous diffusion plant for producing weapons-grade uranium-235.

Western countries pressured Pakistan to end its nuclear program. On October 1, 1990, the United States announced the cutoff of all military and economic aid to Pakistan because it had verified that Pakistan was developing nuclear weapons. Faced with such pressure, Pakistan further concealed its nuclear program. In 1993, the Pakistani Government formally informed the U.S. Government that Pakistan could not cancel its nuclear program while India continued to reject signing a regional nuclear nonproliferation treaty with it. Pakistan now possesses the basic materials needed to carry out nuclear deterrence against India.

In 1972, Pakistan made the decision to develop nuclear weapons, prompted by the following considerations:

A. To Deter India from Waging a War

Pakistan decided to develop nuclear weapons in order to deal with a real and long-term threat from India. Pakistan maintains that possessing nuclear weapons will strengthen its otherwise weak position in the ongoing Pakistani-Indian political and military confrontation.²⁷

Nuclear weapons, the Pakistanis hold, provide the security shield necessary for Pakistan to cope with threats from India. In view of the deep-rooted Indian-Pakistani animosity and the continual conflicts between the two countries, the Pakistanis hold that Pakistan's very existence is and will continue to be seriously threatened by its arch rival. By developing nuclear weapons and possessing a minimal number of them, it believes it can deter India from attacking and further dismembering Pakistan as it did in 1971. The Pakistanis hold that they can use nuclear weapons as a tool to make the Indians yield in any future Pakistani-Indian showdown.²⁸

According to this widely held Pakistani view, a relatively weak state can use a few nuclear weapons to deter a much more powerful state from military intervention or aggression. Pakistan has singled out nuclear weapons as the means of safeguarding its national security and political integrity.²⁹

B. To Raise Pakistan's International Status

Pakistani national strength cannot compare to that of India. The Pakistanis believe that their country can raise its international standing and extend its influence over the Muslim world by possessing nuclear weapons.

C. To Balance the Indian Superiority in Conventional Weapons

India has a great advantage in conventional weapons over Pakistan. With limited national resources, it would be difficult if not impossible for Pakistan to compete successfully with India in a large-scale arms race, let alone gain a dominant position in the South Asian military balance. The Pakistanis hold that it is more effective and less expensive for Pakistan to build a limited number of nuclear weapons for neutralizing superior Indian conventional weapons.³⁰

In the event of a full-scale offensive by India, Pakistan would probably be forced to use nuclear weapons to offset India's superiority in conventional weapons. One cannot entirely exclude the possibility that Pakistan's possession of nuclear weapons would force India to settle for only limited military gains or even forgo military action in a mounting conflict.

D. To Safeguard Independence and Security

The United States has maintained close relations with Pakistan and given it substantial military assistance. Pakistan's experience has demonstrated that the United States may be unreliable in a Pakistani-Indian conflict, however. In the India-Pakistan War of 1971, for example, the United States made only an empty show of strength and failed to provide Pakistan with meaningful aid. The Pakistanis hold that Pakistan must develop its own nuclear weapons in order to safeguard its independence and security.³¹

E. Why Did Pakistan Resort to Nuclear Tests?

First of all, it was India that initiated the nuclear-arms race in South Asia by conducting nuclear tests. Right after conducting the tests, Indian leaders announced that India "would resolutely and forcefully deal with Pakistan," and for this purpose India "would use nuclear weapons without least hesitation." On May 18, an Indian leader urged Pakistan to accept the change that had already taken place in the region and the world. He also demanded that Pakistan give up its anti-Indian policy on the issue of Kashmir. India's nuclear tests and nuclear blackmail brought great pressure to bear on Pakistan.

Second, domestic pressures had forced the Pakistani Government to confront Indian military expansionism by conducting nuclear tests. To some extent, a decision to not carry out nuclear tests would have damaged the prestige of the Pakistani Government and weakened its rule over the country.

Third, the international community did not impose powerful sanctions against India after its nuclear tests. The international community's failure to oppose the Indian nuclear tests encouraged Pakistan to play the nuclear option.

F. Pakistani Nuclear Policy

There are similarities in Pakistani and Indian nuclear policies. Obvious differences do exist, however:

- Whether Pakistan chose the nuclear option was up to India. In September 1993, the Pakistani Government officially announced that "Pakistan will not give up its nuclear option so long as India maintains nuclear capabilities. . . . In any case, Pakistan will not unilaterally give up nuclear capabilities."
- Pakistan has taken the initiative to dismiss the nuclear arms race with India. Pakistan has made several proposals for averting a regional nuclear arms race. In this regard, Pakistan has always taken the initiative in diplomacy.
- With regard to Pakistan's attitude toward U.S. pressure on it to sign the NPT, Pakistan has asserted that it is willing to accept any system of preventing nuclear proliferation either on an Indian-Pakistani bilateral basis or on a regional basis. It stresses, however, that it cannot sign the NPT if India refuses to sign because the balance of the region would be destroyed.

Section Two: China's Role in the Nuclear Issue in South Asia

I. China's Influence over India and Pakistan

China is the largest state neighboring South Asia. China has more than 6,000 kilometers of common boundary with the nations of South Asia. It has exerted great influence on these nations, third only to that of the United States and Russia.³² Sino-Indian and Sino-Pakistani relations, especially Sino-Indian relations, have played an important role in South Asian security.

A. The Impact of the Sino-Indian Border Conflict on the Indian Military

The Sino-Indian border conflict in 1962 ended in a disastrous defeat for India. This war had a great impact on the Indian military and prompted India to regard China as a major enemy, second only to Pakistan. This conflict also stoked the buildup of Indian military forces for many years thereafter.³³

India's defeat stimulated the arming of the nation and resulted in a series of significant changes in its non-alliance policy, security policy, military strategy, and the guiding principles for its defense buildup. The military undertook a program of "urgent war preparedness" from 1962 to 1971 which took precedence over all other policies.³⁴ From 1963 to 1964 India's defense budget and the annual output of its ordnance industry increased by 3.15 and 1.4 times, respectively.³⁵

As a result of India's defeat in the Sino-Indian border conflict in 1962, India came to regard both China and Pakistan as its main enemies. "In the past, India always regarded Pakistan as its enemy and, therefore, we only directed our national defense against Pakistan," Nehru said when he reviewed Indian strategy prior to 1962. When reexamining its military strategy in light of the potential for a two-front war, India issued a new strategic guideline of taking "the offensive in the west and the defensive in the north."³⁶

B. The Impact of China's First Nuclear Test on the Indian Nuclear Decision

China's first nuclear test in 1964 was a powerful stimulus for India. India held that China's possession of atomic bombs created a shift in the balance of power in favor of China. China's nuclear testing was one of the main reasons for India's decision to build its own nuclear weapons. The next year, the second Indian-Pakistani war broke out. During Indira Gandhi's years in power, she carried out a dual policy of adhering to the peaceful use of nuclear energy while retaining the nuclear option.³⁷

C. To India, a Threat to South Asian Security from Good Sino-Pakistani Relations

India has indicated its dissatisfaction with the improved relations between China and Pakistan. India believes that such relations harm Sino-Indian relations and make South Asian security unstable.³⁸

1. Indian doubts about Sino-Pakistani relations. The development of Sino-Pakistani relations rests on the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, which are the basic guidelines for all countries to improve their relations. These principles are mutual respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. Since 1962, China and Pakistan have steadily bettered their relations because they have had common aspirations to carry out long-

term cooperation on a series of political and economic questions and international issues.³⁹ Although Pakistan has voiced concern over the evolution in recent years of Sino-Indian relations, Pakistan still counts on the strategic support of China for its national security and regards China as the mainstay of its economic development.⁴⁰

2. The impact of Sino-Pakistani relations on Sino-Indian relations. China regards Pakistan as a dependable friend and attaches great importance to maintaining good relations with it. China simultaneously highly values the improvement of Sino-Indian relations. At the same time, however, India worries about the impact of improved Sino-Pakistani relations on Sino-Indian relations. India has criticized Sino-Pakistani cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy and China's provision of tactical missile technology to Pakistan. In addition to India's deep-rooted suspicion of China's intentions in the region, the mass media outside India and other external influences have aggravated the existing differences between the two countries and have slowed the normal development of Sino-Indian ties.⁴¹

Some have accused China of helping Pakistan develop "anti-Indian" nuclear weapons. This charge is groundless. With regard to Indian concerns over Sino-Pakistani military cooperation, some are misunderstandings and others are baseless suspicions.⁴² China is a responsible state. In terms of the nuclear cooperation between China and Pakistan, the program "aims only at peaceful use of nuclear energy, and it is under the safeguards of the IAEA. Such cooperation is not directed against India."⁴³ China did sign an agreement with Pakistan to export a 300,000 kW nuclear-power plant to be installed in Chashma. This agreement went into effect on February 25, 1992, and clearly stipulates that all relevant equipment is subject to IAEA safeguards.

In addition, China has exported tiny neutron source reactors to five countries, including Pakistan.⁴⁴ All these nuclear facilities are for peaceful purposes and are also subject to IAEA safeguards.

With regard to defense cooperation between China and Pakistan, China once sold small quantities of conventional weapons to Pakistan in response to Pakistan's request for assistance in strengthening its defensive capabilities and promoting stability and peace in South Asia. In contrast, India has purchased much larger quantities of conventional weapons from other countries. In this regard, Pakistan is no match for India.

II. China's Security Policy toward South Asia

As a close neighbor of South Asia, China wants neither tension nor an arms race in the region. Moreover, China has always advocated the complete prohibition and total destruction of nuclear weapons and is opposed to any form of nuclear-weapon proliferation. China "strongly condemned" the Indian tests and expressed its "deep regret" over Pakistan's. Gravely concerned over the present nuclear race in South Asia, China has urged both India and Pakistan to exercise the utmost restraint and to abandon immediately all nuclear weapons programs in order to avoid a worsening situation and to ensure peace and stability in the region.⁴⁵ China is willing to take into consideration all propositions and proposals that can improve peace and security in the Asian-Pacific region.⁴⁶ With regard to China's security policy toward South Asia, China opposes the acceleration of an arms race in South Asia. It supports proposals that it deems beneficial for promoting peace, security, and stability in the region. Beijing supports all efforts by the South Asian states to establish nuclear-free zones or zones of peace on the basis of voluntary agreements reached through consultations among

themselves. China is willing to involve itself in the discussion of any rational measures with relevant countries including the P5 to cap the nuclear arms race in South Asia.

A. Advocacy of Nuclear and Missile Nonproliferation

China advocates nuclear nonproliferation for achieving the elimination of nuclear weapons.⁴⁷ In order to preserve world peace and promote the security of various states, China neither advocates nor engages in nuclear proliferation. Out of a sense of responsibility, China carries out cooperation with other countries for the peaceful use of nuclear energy. When China exports nuclear technology, it demands that the other country accept IAEA safeguards; when China imports nuclear technology, it guarantees that the project will be used for peaceful purposes.⁴⁸ China prefers that various countries in the Indian Ocean region do not procure military equipment that exceeds their rational defense needs. China favors the countries of the region adopting practical measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.⁴⁹

On April 23, 1996, Chinese ambassador Zhang Chengli spoke about Pakistan-China relations and the South Asian situation at the Pakistan Institute of International Affairs. “We are much concerned about the development of strategic ballistic missiles in the region,” he said, “and, as a close neighbor of South Asia, we don’t want tensions and any upgrading of this capability and an arms race in the region.” He mentioned in particular the Indian Agni and Prithvi missile programs.⁵⁰

After the May tests by India and Pakistan, China urged both countries to stop their nuclear testing immediately, abandon their plans for arming themselves with nuclear weapons, and sign the CTBT and NPT unconditionally.⁵¹

B. Support for Pakistan’s Proposals on Nuclear Nonproliferation

China supports Pakistan’s proposals on nuclear nonproliferation in South Asia, such as its proposal that India and Pakistan simultaneously join the NPT and accept IAEA full-scope safeguards. Some Chinese suggest that India and Pakistan should make decisions on the basis of bilateral consultation first to freeze their nuclear programs and increase transparency of their nuclear facilities and then jointly sign the NPT and accept IAEA safeguards in a series of steps.⁵²

C. Support for Establishing a Nuclear-Free Zone and Zone of Peace in the Indian Ocean

China has long backed the efforts of the countries in the Indian Ocean region to safeguard the independence and sovereignty and the peace, security, and stability of the region. China holds that common efforts inside and outside the Indian Ocean region are required for establishing a regional zone of peace. The great powers outside the region should withdraw their military forces from the Indian Ocean area and should not use any means to threaten and intervene in countries in the region. In addition, the relevant resolutions of the United Nations have pointed out that the participation in the work of the UN Indian Ocean Ad Hoc Committee by the permanent members of the UN Security Council and those states that make principal use of the ocean will be beneficial to the regional dialogues promoting peace, security, and stability.⁵³

China has long respected and supported the efforts of countries and regions to establish nuclear-free zones or zones of peace on the basis of voluntary agreements reached through consultations among themselves.⁵⁴ In 1987, for example, Chinese premier Zhao Ziyang announced during a visit to Pakistan: “In support of the proposal on establishing a nuclear-free

zone in South Asia and a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean, the Chinese Government is willing to contribute its strength in cooperation with various countries in South Asia to preserve peace in this region and in the whole of Asia.”⁵⁵ Chinese premier Li Peng again supported the proposal of the Pakistani Government to establish a nuclear-free zone in South Asia during the visit to China of Pakistan’s prime minister in October 1998.⁵⁶

D. Support for a Peaceful Settlement of the Indian-Pakistani Disputes

China, as a neighbor and friend of the countries of South Asia, sincerely wishes the peace, stability, and development of South Asia, for these countries to treat each other equally and to live in harmony, and for them to be motivated by a spirit of mutual understanding and compromise and to solve their disputes through consultations as equals.⁵⁷

On February 15, 1990, Premier Li Peng met in Beijing a special envoy sent by the Pakistani prime minister. Li Peng told his guest that China hoped that Pakistan and India would peacefully resolve their disputes on the basis of friendly negotiations in accordance with the relevant UN resolutions and existing agreements between the two countries. “This will be advantageous to the stability of the subcontinent and the preservation of world peace,” he said.⁵⁸

On March 28, 1992, Premier Li Peng met a similar special envoy and told his guest that the issue of Kashmir was a legacy of history and that China hoped that Pakistan and India would not resort to force to solve the dispute. Li said that China wished the two countries would solve the dispute through peaceful negotiations on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence.⁵⁹

A stable and peaceful international environment is in the fundamental interests of the Chinese people as China concentrates its efforts on modernization. As the largest close neighbor of South Asia, China attaches great importance to maintaining harmonious, friendly, and cooperative relations in order to ensure a stable international environment for its own domestic development.⁶⁰

III. Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia

A. An Escalating Nuclear and Missile Arms Race in South Asia

1. Inevitable Indian weaponization. According to a news report in late May 1998, Indian defense minister George Fernandes said that India must arm itself with nuclear weapons. “Weaponization is necessary and I believe, in the ultimate analysis, it is inevitable,” Fernandes stated. He said a time frame for arming the country with nuclear weapons “would depend on the kind of perceptions” that followed the five nuclear tests carried out on May 11 and May 13.⁶¹

The Indians are aiming at building a nuclear triad. Early the next century, India will have realized full-scale modernization of its weapons and military equipment. The Indian weapons procurement policy has the following characteristics:⁶²

Although the international community has strongly condemned the Indian nuclear testing, the Indian Government adheres to its established policy that India “will reexamine Indian nuclear policy and exercise its nuclear option.” According to a statement of the science and technology advisor to the Indian defense minister, the Indians have conducted experiments over a long period on the physical size, weight, performance, and vibration of warheads and

can therefore now equip their missiles with any type of nuclear warhead. India is now capable of developing intermediate and long-range surface-to-surface missiles.

The Indians achieved success in R&D on the Prithvi surface-to-surface missile in 1994, and equipped its special missile force, deployed in South India, with the Prithvi tactical missiles in 1997. The Prithvi missile has three versions (SS-150, SS-250, and SS-350) with ranges of 150, 250, and 350 kilometers, respectively. Equipped with an inertial guidance system and mounted on an eight-wheel vehicle, the missile, which can be nuclear armed, is highly mobile.

India has also equipped its missile force with Agni missiles with a maximum range of 2,500 kilometers and a one-ton payload. The Agni intermediate-range missile can be nuclear armed. In addition, India has introduced from foreign countries rocket technologies and a propellant required for developing a long-range missile with a maximum range of 5,000 kilometers.

As India develops its land-based nuclear strike force, it is transforming the Indian air force into the main force behind its nuclear deterrence strategy. India is introducing more and better weapons and equipment into its air force by upgrading its avionics and purchasing more intermediate and long-range air freighters, early-warning aircraft, and air-refueling aircraft. In addition, India is developing submarine-launched ballistic missiles and nuclear-powered ballistic-missile submarines. By the early twenty-first century, Indian will have formed a nuclear triad composed of bombers, land-based ballistic missiles, and submarine-launched missiles.

India maintains a one-million strong military force and strong conventional weapons, which are unmatched on the South Asian subcontinent. Moreover, the Indian Government increased its 1998–1999 defense budget by 14.3 percent over the previous year to 412 billion rupees (US\$10 billion in June 1998).⁶³

2. Pakistan's growing nuclear capability.⁶⁴ Pakistan conducted six nuclear tests a few weeks after the Indian nuclear testing on May 11 and 13, 1998. Pakistani nuclear capabilities deserve attention.

Pakistan possesses enough weapons-grade uranium to build up a small nuclear arsenal. It made use of its weapons-grade uranium to build the six nuclear devices exploded in May 1998. It is also attaching importance to chemical processing capabilities. It is estimated that Pakistan will be capable of producing 10–14 kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium per year when its chemical processing plant and plutonium production reactor enter into operation in the next two years.

Tritium is an indispensable raw material for building the hydrogen bomb and the boosted atomic bomb. In 1987 Pakistan purchased from West Germany an industrial facility for purifying and producing tritium. Pakistan possesses the ability to produce tritium to provide the needed material for the hydrogen bomb and the boosted atomic bomb.

In early 1998, Pakistan began R&D on the Ghauri missile, an intermediate-range missile with a range of 1,500 kilometers and a payload of 0.7 ton. The missile was flight-tested in mid-April. After the Pakistani nuclear testing in May 1998, the Pakistani Government announced that the Ghauri missile could be armed with a nuclear warhead.

In addition, Pakistan has several types of fighter bombers capable of dropping nuclear bombs. For example, the Pakistanis can refit their F-16 fighters, supplied by the United States, for delivery of nuclear bombs.

Pakistan quickly achieved success in detonating its six nuclear devices in May 1998. This fact has proved that Pakistan is capable of building nuclear weapons. Although there is no evidence that Pakistan has deployed nuclear weapons, it can quickly manufacture the components for assembling them. It possesses weapons-grade uranium for building 8–13 nuclear

bombs and can build 15–25 more within a year by transferring the low-enriched uranium in stockpile to weapons-grade uranium. In short, Pakistan’s nuclear capabilities should not be underestimated.

It is of concern to all that both India and Pakistan have refused to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and are competing to build their nuclear forces. No fundamental improvement has been made in the relations between India and Pakistan. Today the subcontinent remains one of the few regions in the world where further nuclear proliferation, a major military confrontation, and even armed conflict might occur.⁶⁵

B. Consequences of the Indian-Pakistani Nuclear Tests

As nuclear-threshold states, India and Pakistan have long carried out policies of nuclear ambiguity. The 1998 nuclear tests demonstrate that they wanted to walk out from under the shadow of the label “de facto” nuclear-weapon states. The consequences of this situation are serious.

1. Nuclear tests threaten peace and stability in South Asia. Tensions promptly escalated between India and Pakistan after the tests. The tests undermined regional stability and pose a danger to world peace. The possibility of a nuclear war cannot be completely ruled out. After the tests, Chinese scholars began to worry about the lack of a dependable control system in India and Pakistan. In other words, the possibility of accidental and unauthorized nuclear explosions exists. Moreover, the long-running territorial dispute over Kashmir—the cause of two of the three large-scale wars between the two countries—is like an active volcano beneath the nuclear threat. The two have once again entered into military engagement in Kashmir. Small-scale armed conflicts in the border regions of India and Pakistan, if they spiral out of control, will fray the nerves of the two countries. There is no doubt that escalation of the Kashmir dispute will cause the situation to further deteriorate. Not only will this bring untold suffering to the two countries and their peoples, but it will inevitably endanger the peace and stability of the region.⁶⁶

India and Pakistan have not adopted a “no-first-use” policy against each other. Faulty intelligence or misjudgment of one another’s motives therefore could precipitate a nuclear war between the two countries. With nuclear weapons at hand, both governments are reluctant to engage in a war which neither side would win.⁶⁷ It deserves attention that the arms race between them will be further intensified. Neither India nor Pakistan is willing to abandon its nuclear and missile programs. Further tests, nuclear weaponization, and deployment by the two countries would pose a major threat to South Asian security.

India’s nuclear tests, moreover, will not only cause nuclear arms competition between the two countries, but will prompt other countries in the region to increase their military budgets, thus fueling regional arms competition.

2. A setback to the process of global nuclear arms reduction. The end of the confrontation between the military blocs of the East and West greatly diminished the risk of global nuclear war. Since then, work toward the prevention of nuclear proliferation and nuclear disarmament has achieved substantial progress. In 1995, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was prolonged unconditionally and indefinitely. The Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty was passed in 1996 and has been signed by more than 150 nations. Mankind seemed close to the realization of the hope of ridding the world of the horror of nuclear war. India’s tests, followed by Pakistan’s, have dealt a blow to international attempts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

3. An impediment to cooperative security in the Asian-Pacific region. Asia, North America, and Oceania are making efforts to develop a new formula for security cooperation in order to improve the security environment of the Asian-Pacific region. Labeled “cooperative security,” the new mechanism has progressed markedly in post-Cold War Asia, manifested in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum (ARF). Moreover, a bilateral security cooperation system based on dialogue has been set up by China, Russia, and Kazakhstan as well as between China and India. The major aim of cooperative security is to diminish the risk of military conflict by enhancing mutual trust. The practice is still in its infancy, however, and its effectiveness has yet to be proven. India’s tests have raised doubts about the effectiveness of cooperative security; in particular, the tests have sabotaged the mutual trust between China and India established over the past ten years. This will negatively influence the prospects for cooperative security in the Asian-Pacific region as a whole.⁶⁸

C. Ways of Managing the Crisis

India’s nuclear tests have not strengthened its security. On the contrary, they have weakened it. Some Indians believe that the conventional superiority India maintained over Pakistan was quite enough. The tests have not significantly changed the regional strategic balance; rather, they may prompt other world powers to aim some of their nuclear weapons at India.

In view of the fact that the nuclear crisis in South Asia has a direct bearing on regional and world peace and that some countries have not given up their nuclear option, it is critical for the international community to make efforts to ease the tension in the region. Here are some possible approaches to the solution of the nuclear crisis in South Asia.

1. The international community should issue a strong and clear message that it is not in any country’s interest to attempt to achieve political and military gains through its nuclear weapons program. It is pressing that India and Pakistan both keep calm and exercise great restraint and reopen a dialogue to seek approaches for the improvement of bilateral relations. In the post-Cold War era, a peaceful solution is the only effective option for states to handle their differences, including territorial conflicts.⁶⁹

The international community should continue to push India and Pakistan to stop nuclear tests, observe the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and make a firm commitment not to deploy nuclear weapons or the missiles capable of delivering nuclear warheads.⁷⁰ India and Pakistan must adapt themselves to the world trend of peace and development.

India should first abandon unconditionally its nuclear-weapons program so as to convince Pakistan of the necessity to follow its steps. Only by the two countries unconditionally joining the CTBT and the NPT can South Asia avert a nuclear war. An increasing number of Chinese and international security experts are proposing that the international community press India and Pakistan to completely abandon their nuclear weapons programs and transform South Asia into a non-nuclear area. South Africa, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine are good examples in this regard. They abandoned their nuclear capabilities in the 1990s under international pressure and for the good of their own peoples.

It may be extremely difficult to get India and Pakistan back on track toward signing the CTBT. Reason for optimism does exist, however. According to a May 13, 1998, news report in *China Daily*, a senior Indian official hinted that New Delhi might put the brakes on its nuclear program and end its opposition to the CTBT following its nuclear tests; the Indian Government stated in a press release issued on May 11 that it “would like to reiterate its support of efforts to realize the goal of a truly comprehensive international arrangement which would prohibit underground nuclear testing of all weapons.” If so, India’s conduct of

nuclear tests was aimed at demonstrating to the world that it was capable of building an atomic bomb and an H-bomb. In its capacity as a nuclear-weapon state, India might decide to join the CTBT and negotiate the terms and conditions of its adherence to it. Pakistan would follow if India signed the CTBT.

2. A multilateral meeting to solve the Kashmir dispute should be held between India, Pakistan, the United States, China, and Russia.⁷¹ The Chinese hold that India and Pakistan should seek a solution to their dispute through peaceful negotiations in accord with the principles enshrined in relevant UN resolutions and the Simla Agreement. The two countries should respect the line of control in Kashmir and under no circumstances attempt to breach it, nor should they seek unilaterally to change the status quo in the region.⁷²

3. There should be renewed dialogue between India and Pakistan and the establishment of a mechanism to minimize the danger of a nuclear conflict.⁷³

D. India: The Key to the Settlement of the Nuclear Issue in South Asia

1. India's tests triggered Pakistan's response. Pakistan and India are caught in a long-standing military confrontation mainly because of the Kashmir issue. India's nuclear tests made the Pakistanis feel seriously threatened. Since the Indian Government had made it clear that its nuclear tests were directed at China and Pakistan, all of Pakistan's political forces joined in requesting that the Pakistani Government conduct nuclear tests in response to India's challenge.⁷⁴ As Pakistan's prime minister stated, Pakistan was forced to conduct tests because India's tests had significantly altered the strategic and security equation in the region.⁷⁵

For years, Pakistan was willing to forgo its nuclear option if India would do the same. Its policy toward nuclear nonproliferation depended on whether India would pursue the same policy. Pakistan has not signed the NPT and the CTBT because India has not.⁷⁶

India initiated its nuclear program much earlier than Pakistan. It conducted its first nuclear test in 1974. Although India declared the test a "peaceful nuclear experiment," it was widely viewed as a demonstration of India's capability to make nuclear weapons.⁷⁷ India's capability to develop nuclear weapons is much greater than that of Pakistan.⁷⁸

Islamabad long ago proposed the creation of a "South Asian nuclear-free zone," and Pakistan has been willing to participate in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty together with India and to accept international safeguards. However, India has always rejected these Pakistani proposals.⁷⁹

2. Indian cooperation with great powers unlikely. India has always opposed great-power intervention in South Asian affairs.⁸⁰ For example, India has consistently advocated resolving the Kashmir issue in accord with the 1972 Simla Agreement; i.e., solving all disputes between India and Pakistan through bilateral negotiations and excluding the participation of any third party.⁸¹

3. India's influence in regional affairs is greater than Pakistan's. India has exerted much greater influence than Pakistan in both global and regional affairs. New Delhi is in a position to take the initiative to relax tensions between various South Asian countries. It is able to play a decisive role in consolidating peace and stability in South Asia.⁸²

4. India's tough position on the issue of a South Asian nuclear-free zone. In an attempt to delay efforts to establish a nuclear-free zone in South Asia, India has demanded more and more concessions. It has put forward two conditions for creating a nuclear-free zone in South Asia: first, the nuclear threat from China must be removed; and second, nuclear nonproliferation in South Asia must be connected with global nuclear disarmament.⁸³

India's call for linking nuclear nonproliferation in South Asia to global nuclear disarmament indicates that the Indian Government is most unlikely to change the main elements of its nuclear policy before the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear weapons ban treaty.⁸⁴

5. India's plan to drag China into the South Asian nuclear-free zone. It is stated in the "Zero Nuclear Plan" put forward by the Indian Research Institute for Defense Analysis that all nuclear-armed missiles with ranges of less than 5,500 kilometers in the Asian-Pacific region should be destroyed and that the relevant countries should conclude an agreement to ban the use of strategic nuclear weapons. The proposed plan states that only when such arrangements are made can India abandon its nuclear option. Here, India cites the possession of nuclear weapons by China as its reason for not abandoning the nuclear option.⁸⁵

The efforts to connect China's possession of nuclear weapons to further nuclear proliferation in South Asia by some individuals in India and some Western countries can only complicate the issue and make it harder to solve. India's fears about China's nuclear weapons are groundless and unwarranted. First of all, China's nuclear weapons are for defensive purposes only and pose no threat to any country. Of all the Asian countries, only India considers it necessary to develop nuclear weapons in order to cope with a perceived nuclear threat from China. Second, China will not again resort to military means in dealing with Sino-Indian border disputes, let alone adopt the extreme measure of using nuclear weapons to deal with India.

The late Deng Xiaoping pointed out that "[t]here is neither a Chinese threat to India nor an Indian threat to China. We hope ourselves to be developed, and we also hope you [India] will be developed." Once China and India both become powerful, they will make greater contributions to the peace and stability of Asia and the world.⁸⁶ Indeed, Indian demands for replacing a "South Asian nuclear-free zone" with an "Asian nuclear-free zone" suggest India's lack of sincerity toward establishing a nuclear-free zone. If we review all existing nuclear-free zones in the world, none of the relevant countries has demanded the inclusion of any nuclear power's nuclear weapons in efforts to establish those zones.

It is the choice of the countries and peoples of a specific region to establish a nuclear-free zone in the region. All current nuclear-free zones were thus established. It would have been impossible for a nuclear-free zone to be established on the Korean peninsula if either South or North Koreans had demanded that all Northeast Asian countries participate in such a zone and that the United States and Russia withdraw all their nuclear weapons from Northeast Asia.⁸⁷

6. The "China threat" as India's ridiculous excuse for nuclear tests. India's tests indicate that India is pursuing a policy that runs counter to the world trend of peace and development and nuclear nonproliferation. Farsighted and peace-loving Indians have condemned this policy.⁸⁸

Unfortunately, India concealed its real intention but made use of the "China threat" as the rationale for its tests. In an attempt to create an excuse for the Indian nuclear option, Indian leaders attacked China verbally before and after the tests. India defense minister George Fernandes declared that China was India's number-one potential threat. Indian prime minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee pointed out that India borders a nuclear power which launched a military invasion of India in 1962. He said that "although India has improved its relations with China in the past decade, distrust persists chiefly because the border issue is not settled." In a letter to U.S. president Bill Clinton, he even said that India carried out nuclear tests because it feared China. Moreover, a newly released Indian defense report (1997-1998) also made use of the "China threat" theory. In this report, the Indian Government did not exam-

ine its error of provoking a dangerous nuclear arms race; instead, it vilified China as “the main reason for the deterioration of South Asia’s security environment.”⁸⁹

China has always adhered to a peaceful foreign policy. The facts of the Sino-Indian border war in 1962 are inarguable. After its independence, India kept pushing its territorial boundary northward, occupying about 90,000 square kilometers of Chinese territory. In October 1962, India launched a large-scale attack along the Sino-Indian border. The Chinese army was forced in response to stage a counterattack for self-defense.

International opinion was that India’s nuclear tests were aimed at seeking regional hegemony.⁹⁰ In a telephone conversation with Chinese foreign minister Tang Jiaxuan, U.S. secretary of state Madeline Albright said that “the United States disagrees with the suggestion China imposes a nuclear threat to India.”⁹¹ India knows very well that China does not pose a nuclear threat to it. First, from the first China possessed nuclear weapons it has ruled out any first use of them. Second, Sino-Indian relations have improved greatly in recent years, despite the shadow cast by India’s defeat in 1962 and its ensuing attempts to balance China’s nuclear capabilities. China considers the 1962 Sino-Indian border conflict an unfortunate event in history and will never allow such an event to occur again. China has never considered India its rival.

It is India’s unspoken intention to paint China as its main threat and to use the “China threat” as an excuse for its nuclear testing. In recent years, the “China threat” theory has gained some currency in Western countries, especially in the United States. India made conscious use of the “China threat” in order to garner some sympathy from the West and reduce the pressure imposed on it after it conducted the nuclear tests.

E. The Interaction of China and the Other Big Powers

In view of the severe challenge posed by the tests to world peace and international security, the five permanent members (P5) of the UN Security Council have joined together in urging India and Pakistan to immediately stop nuclear testing, abandon their nuclear weapons programs, and sign the CTBT and the NPT unconditionally.

1. The prime importance of the P5’s effort. Great powers, especially the five nuclear-weapon states, should take joint action to prevent a further nuclear and missile arms race in South Asia through adequate mutual consultation and cooperation. In this regard, the P5 held an emergency meeting in Geneva on June 4, 1998, aimed at “seeking ways to defuse tension in South Asia resulting from the nuclear tests conducted by India and Pakistan.”⁹² After exchanging views on the current situation in South Asia they adopted a toughly worded joint communiqué condemning the tests and calling on India and Pakistan to conduct no further tests. They demanded that India and Pakistan not “weaponize” their nuclear devices, deploy nuclear weapons, or test or deploy missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

As permanent members of the Security Council, the five powers realize that they bear important responsibilities in maintaining world peace and security. The achievements of the meeting attest that the P5 are determined through a concerted effort to reduce tension in South Asia and to defend the international nonproliferation regime. It marked a good beginning to a new process of defusing the tension in the region triggered by India.⁹³

2. The influence of four powers in regional affairs. The United States continues to be the state that exerts the greatest influence in the Asian-Pacific region.⁹⁴ Together, the United States, China, Japan, and Russia have exerted major influence in South Asia. Their relations are decisive in maintaining regional security and stability.⁹⁵ U.S.-China relations will continue to produce a special impact on U.S. policy toward South Asia.

Since the end of the Cold War, the United States has pursued a new policy to attract India and restrain Pakistan by taking advantage of the collapse of the Soviet Union. In order to make India act in conformance with U.S. strategic interests, the United States has changed its attitude toward India by recognizing India's status as a regional power. In the military area, the two countries have signed an agreement on military cooperation and have established the Indian-American Joint Army Steering Committee.⁹⁶

Since the May tests Washington has become the primary mediator in efforts to prod the countries into forsaking further tests and deployment of nuclear arms. U.S. deputy secretary of state Strobe Talbott has talked again and again with India and Pakistan to draw the two rivals into a global regime for nuclear arms control. Talbott's hand was strengthened when the U.S. Senate backed a measure in mid-July giving President Clinton power to waive for up to one year most sanctions imposed on the two countries for their defiant nuclear steps.⁹⁷

Since the beginning of 1993, Russia has actively sought to establish a new type of cooperation with India. Russia and India have concluded nine agreements, including the Indo-Russian Friendship and Cooperation Convention, the Indo-Russian Defense Cooperation Agreement, and the Indo-Russian Trade Cooperation Protocol, that establish the guiding principles and lay the foundation for the development of their relations. Russia will continue to provide India with relatively advanced military equipment and necessary spare parts and components and help India improve its weapons and equipment.⁹⁸

In terms of regional security and cooperation, China has stressed that various types of measures should be taken to ensure bilateral security and cooperation and that no bilateral measures should be directed against any third country. The United States, China, and Russia are the three main military powers in the Asian-Pacific region. So long as these three can actively cooperate in military affairs, the security of the region is basically guaranteed.⁹⁹

The Sino-American cooperation is of great importance. China and the United States have major common interests in the new international situation. In consideration of their respective national interests, both China and the United States hope to preserve security and stability in the Asian-Pacific region and do not wish to see turmoil or conflicts there. China's role in international security cannot be neglected. It is impossible to settle many of the current security issues and disputes without the participation, coordination, and cooperation of the two countries. Since the end of the Cold War, stable and healthy Sino-American relations have proved to be constructive to the maintenance of regional security and stability.¹⁰⁰

The shared interests of the United States and China in a peaceful and stable South Asia and in a strong global nonproliferation regime have been put at risk by these tests, which they joined in condemning. During the meeting of the P5 in Geneva following the tests, which was initiated by the two countries, Chinese foreign minister Tang Jiaxuan held bilateral consultations with Secretary of State Albright. Both sides reiterated the need for continuous Sino-American cooperation in maintaining the security and stability of South Asia and in preventing nuclear proliferation.¹⁰¹

During Clinton's visit to China in June 1998, China and the United States issued the Sino-American Joint Statement on South Asia. They agreed to continue to work closely together, within the P5 and the Security Council and with others, to prevent an accelerating nuclear and missile arms race in South Asia, to strengthen international nonproliferation efforts, and to promote reconciliation and the peaceful resolution of differences between India and Pakistan.¹⁰²

Sino-American relations influence Washington's South Asian policy. As a signatory of the NPT, China abides by the treaty and opposes nuclear proliferation. The allegations of the

United States concerning Sino-Pakistani nuclear cooperation provide India with an excuse to develop its nuclear weapons and thereby weaken the strength and effectiveness of U.S. policy toward South Asian nuclear nonproliferation, weaken U.S.-Chinese cooperation toward halting South Asian nuclear nonproliferation, and place obstacles in the way of a complete settlement of the South Asian nuclear issue.¹⁰³

IV. China's Security Strategy and Its Implications for Regional Security

In accordance with its military strategy of "active defense," China has adopted a three-in-one defensive security policy that combines the pursuit of modernization of its national defenses, exploration of a workable mechanism for regional security and cooperation, and the establishment of a "good neighborhood."¹⁰⁴ China's efforts to pursue its external security policy have stabilized regional security.

A. China Does Not Pose a Military Threat to Its Neighbors

China's pursuit of defense modernization is directed toward self defense. Neighboring countries need not worry about a surprise attack from China. The main threats to China can only come from hegemonism and power politics. All South Asian countries are China's friends or allies. None is China's enemy.¹⁰⁵

1. China's military might is defensive. China has long adopted a defensive military strategy. It has made it clear that its military modernization is not targeted at any nation. China's air force is basically a defensive force; its navy does not possess large destroyers or missile destroyers, it does not have aircraft carriers, and it has limited air-transport and ocean-shipping abilities. In short, China has and will continue to have in the foreseeable future only a minimal power-projection capability. It is understandable that the Chinese military as part of its defensive strategy needs to upgrade its military technologies and replace its obsolete military equipment.¹⁰⁶

As dictated by its nuclear strategy, China will conduct a nuclear counterattack only after the enemy has inflicted a preemptive nuclear attack on China.¹⁰⁷ It has long ruled out any first use of nuclear weapons.

2. Economic development has become China's top priority. During the Cold War, survival was at the center of China's security interests. After the Cold War, economic development became that center of gravity, and avoiding the outbreak of a war is indispensable for China's economic development.

3. Traditional Chinese culture rejects a bellicose policy. Chinese traditional culture has exerted great influence over the formulation of China's security strategy. First, the strengthening of the Chinese army is directed at self defense but not expansion. The Chinese character *wu* (force) is composed of two other characters: *zhi* (stop) and *ge* (weapons); that is, the purpose of force is to *stop* the use of *weapons* by others. Self defense, and not the pursuit of other interests, is the fundamental purpose of China's armed forces. Such traditional thinking has left a deep impression on China's authorities and the Chinese military. Second, the Chinese have their own moral concepts concerning the use of armed force. Generally speaking, Chinese do not favor the use of armed forces, and their use is generally regarded by the Chinese military as a measure of last resort.¹⁰⁸

B. A Mechanism for Regional Security and Cooperation

In order to build mutual understanding and confidence and to reduce misunderstandings and mistrust among countries, China has continuously increased bilateral contacts and dialogue on security issues with related countries. China has started such dialogues with Russia, Japan, and India on security- and confidence-building measures and increased exchange visits with military leaders from Southeast Asian countries and contacts with the militaries of those countries.¹⁰⁹ These measures are designed to

1. Maintain peace and stability in the Asian-Pacific through cooperation. As Chinese foreign minister Qian Qichen has said, China will continue to participate in regional dialogues and cooperation and play a constructive role in the long-term stability and economic development of the Asian-Pacific region.¹¹⁰ This is a key point of China's foreign policy.

China is located in the Asian-Pacific region and understandably is especially concerned about the security, stability, peace, and development of the region. In 1994, China presented three basic objectives for the region's security: maintaining stability and prosperity in China, safeguarding long-term peace and stability in the surrounding environment, and initiating dialogue and cooperation on the basis of mutual respect and equality. In recognition of the particular circumstances of the region, China holds that with respect to regional security and cooperation the following principles and measures should be adopted:

On the basis of the Charter of the United Nations and the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, establish mutual respect and friendly relationships among nations; promote common economic development and establish economic relations on the basis of equality, mutual benefit, and mutual cooperation; settle conflicts and disputes between nations through consultation on the basis of the principle of equality and peaceful resolution, so as step by step to remove the causes of instability; with promotion of the region's peace and security as the goal, adhere to the principle of arms being used only in defense and refrain from any form of arms race; and promote various forms of bilateral or multilateral dialogue and consultation on security issues so as to strengthen trust and understanding.

This Chinese position has won understanding and support from most of the Asian-Pacific countries.¹¹¹

With regard to creating a security mechanism within the Asian-Pacific region, China agrees to have bilateral dialogues and regional multilevel, multichannel dialogues. The establishment of a regionwide security mechanism would foster a peaceful environment favorable for the economic development of each country and the region as a whole. Rather than interfering with or obstructing such economic development, regional security should have broad application and promote stability for the entire region rather than highlight certain specific and concrete issues. Adhering to the principle of equality, mutual benefit, and noninterference, regional security should prevent any state from intervening in the domestic affairs of other countries on the excuse of regional security. The establishment of a regional security mechanism should be directed at generating dialogues on regional security and increasing mutual understanding between Asian-Pacific countries. The mechanism must not permit decisions to be forced on any country or region or allow any country or region to force its views on others or to take actions that would result in increased tensions. In short, China will adhere to the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence in actively conducting bilateral and multilateral dialogues and is vigorously working to establish a security mechanism in the Asian-Pacific region. China hopes to maintain regional peace and stability through "dialogue and cooperation."¹¹²

China has consistently encouraged all the region's countries to negotiate such a security mechanism. It has put forward the following five guidelines for establishing that mechanism. First, none of the relevant countries, acting on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence, should pursue hegemony, station forces abroad, or organize military alliances. Second, all these countries should maintain normal diplomatic relations in order to peacefully solve disputes; they should postpone consideration of disputes that cannot be settled at present. Third, the countries should maintain armed forces at a level required only for normal defense. The United States and Russia, as the two great military powers, should take the lead in reducing their arms, especially their air forces and navies. Fourth, all nuclear powers should make a commitment to the non-first-use of nuclear weapons and to not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon states. And, fifth, developed countries should help developing countries in order to strengthen economic and commercial cooperation and scientific and technological intercourse. Most of the Asian-Pacific countries favor these guidelines.¹¹³

China's advocacy of an Asian-Pacific security mechanism stresses the following points: First, Asian-Pacific countries should treat each other equally and live in harmony on the basis of the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence. No country should pursue hegemony or seek zones of influence, build military bases or station forces in foreign countries, or organize a military alliance against another country. Second, countries should strengthen cooperation that is mutually beneficial and expand bilateral, subregional, and regional cooperation in order to realize prosperity and development. Third, all countries should oppose arms races and prevent nuclear proliferation on the basis of principles that are fair and rational. The United States and Russia should destroy all dismantled and deactivated weapons and equipment and not deploy them to the Asian-Pacific region. The United States and Russia should also downsize their naval forces in the Asian-Pacific region. Fourth, Asian countries should peacefully settle their disputes over territories, boundaries, and other issues through negotiation. They should not resort to force or threaten to use force for such settlements. They should for the time being temporarily postpone consideration of territorial and border disputes that cannot be resolved. They should maintain normal diplomatic relations and economic cooperation before the settlement of such disputes.¹¹⁴

2. Confidence-building and security measures as part of the regional security and cooperation mechanism. The Chinese believe that confidence-building and security measures, as part of the mechanism for regional security and cooperation, could include the following:¹¹⁵

- All countries should establish and develop political, economic, and diplomatic relations on the basis of the principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, equality and mutual benefit, and peaceful coexistence. All countries should recognize diversity in the world and should not interfere in the sovereignty of other countries on the pretext of their own ideology or social values.
- Disputes between countries should be settled strictly through negotiation and other peaceful means. Interference in and aggression against other nations should be prevented, and all acts of external expansion and hegemonism should be opposed.
- Efforts should be made to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the fair and reasonable regulation and control of arms transfers should be enforced. The practice of fostering regional tensions and interfering in the internal affairs of other nations

through the transfer of weapons should be stopped. The establishment of regional peace zones and nuclear-free zones should be actively promoted.

- All countries should adopt restraint regarding their own arms buildup and not seek to exceed their legitimate defense requirements. The military strategy and structure of the armed forces of each should be defense-oriented.
- The United States and Russia are the military powers in this region with long-range offensive military forces. Both should undertake appropriate disarmament measures unilaterally or through bilateral consultation.
- The establishment and development of regional mechanisms for dialogue on security should be promoted. Understanding can be enhanced through multiform, multilevel, and multichannel governmental and nongovernmental dialogues, and at the same time the role of ARF should be brought into play. The promotion of security in the Asian-Pacific region should conform to the principle of consultation on the basis of equality among big and small countries, opposing the control by a minority of big powers, and should not serve as an alliance directed against a specific country or as a tool for interfering in the internal affairs of other nations, so as to promote peace, stability, and development through joint efforts.

Moreover, the following issues deserve attention:

- Common security is the basis for establishing confidence-building measures;
- Adequate transparency is the prerequisite for establishing confidence-building measures;
- Bilateral agreement is the main method for the establishment of confidence-building measures; and
- Proceeding gradually in the proper sequence is the way to establish confidence-building measures.

Between those countries where there exist real or potential crises or conflict, the establishment of military confidence-building measures will often begin with the removal of obstacles and a gradual trial beginning. Starting with symbolic measures and then increasing the interaction and cooperation between them, the two sides can move to establish confidence-building measures that are practical and effective.

C. Confidence-Building Measures Taken by China and India for South Asian Security and Stability

In light of the current situation in the Asian-Pacific region, China aims to improve the overall security environment by establishing confidence-building measures. China has pursued an independent foreign policy of peace conducive to enhancing trust among countries.¹¹⁶

Border disputes left over by history have existed between China and India, and military conflicts and friction have long occurred. In the 1980s, the two countries began to hold border talks. Since the visit to China by India's prime minister in 1988, the two countries have established a joint working team on border questions, which has also discussed the establishment of confidence-building measures. The agreed-upon confidence-building measures include border military meetings twice every year, in June and October; the establishment of military communications between the main strong points along the border and establishment of hot lines between regional commands; meetings between border commanders whenever possible; increasing transparency on both flanks of the positions at the actual lines of control along the border; notification in advance of military exercises and troop movements along the border and the prevention of encroachment into the other's territorial airspace; mutual visits of delegations from military academies and strategic research institutes;

and mutual visits between high-level defense officials (these began following the visit to China of India's defense minister in July 1992).¹¹⁷

During the visit of Chinese president Jiang Zemin to India in December 1996, China and India formally signed an accord on establishing military confidence-building measures in the regions along the Sino-Indian lines of actual control.¹¹⁸ The improvement of Sino-Indian relations has helped improve South Asian security and may be a positive factor in the settlement of the South Asian nuclear issue.

D. Improved Sino-Indian Relations Favor Settlement of the Nuclear Issue

Nuclear proliferation issues in South Asia, the Middle East, and other regions have complicated histories. Accordingly, the prevention of nuclear proliferation should start with the further improvement and stabilization of the regional and international environment. Otherwise, the relevant states cannot entirely avoid the temptation to acquire nuclear weapons.¹¹⁹ One of the important measures China has taken to prevent nuclear proliferation in South Asia is the improvement of Sino-Indian relations. Improved relations also are favorable for the settlement of the South Asian nuclear issue.

Because no mechanism for security and cooperation is yet available in the Asian-Pacific region, China attaches importance to promoting good-neighborliness on a bilateral basis to create conditions favorable for solving issues by peaceful means and reducing the possibility of armed conflicts. Since the end of the Cold War, China's efforts to further strengthen good-neighborliness have become an important aspect of its external security policy.¹²⁰

1. Safeguarding regional stability through Sino-Indian friendship. March 30, 1985, marked the thirty-fifth anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and the People's Republic of China. On that day, Chinese premier Zhao Ziyang cabled this message to Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi: "India is one of the countries that was the earliest to establish diplomatic relations with China. China and India are both big powers in Asia and the world. The Sino-Indian friendship is in conformity with the fundamental interests of the two countries and is a key factor in maintaining Asian and world peace."¹²¹ On December 19, 1988, Chinese premier Li Peng told Gandhi, who was then visiting Beijing, "Sino-Indian relations were very good in the 1950s. It is well known that the relations between the two countries later deteriorated. Conflicts even broke out between them. It is unfortunate."¹²²

China has long attached great importance to improving relations with India. Soon after the Sino-Indian border quieted down, Zhou Enlai began moving to resume normal relations between the two countries. Indira Gandhi also made efforts in this regard. However, it was not until 1976 that the two countries mutually exchanged ambassadors.¹²³

The importance China attaches to such an Asian and world power as India was highlighted in December 1988, when Deng Xiaoping said to Gandhi, "Now people are discussing that the next century will be the 'Asian-Pacific century' and it seems that such a century has come. Indeed, the real 'Asian-Pacific century' will not come until China, India, and other developing countries in this region have become developed."¹²⁴ Dramatic changes in the international situation have caused a significant advancement of Sino-Indian relations in the fields of politics, economics, science, and technology.

In 1991, Li Peng went to India, and a year later, Indian president Venkataraman returned the visit. In September 1993, Indian prime minister Rao visited China. In December 1996, Jiang Zemin traveled to India. These exchange visits have marked a breakthrough in Sino-Indian relations. All these events indicate that friendly and cooperative Sino-Indian relations will continue to develop despite the existence of obstacles.¹²⁵

With regard to the contention at the border, the two countries have reached an understanding that the issue should not constitute an obstacle to the normalization of their relations. In regard to the Tibet issue, the Indian Government has reiterated that India recognizes that Tibet is an autonomous region of China, and India does not allow the Tibetans in India to engage in political activities against China. China and India also have similar perspectives on a series of major international questions such as human rights. These common perspectives form the basis for bilateral cooperation.¹²⁶

1. The promotion of bilateral relations through Sino-Indian commercial contacts and scientific and technical exchanges. Economics plays an increasingly important role in the Sino-Indian relationship. China and India suspended bilateral trade in 1962 and restored it in 1977. The annual amount of trade between them increased from \$25 million in 1977 to \$100 million in the early 1980s, and to \$340 million in 1992.¹²⁷ Since then the two have continuously increased mutual trade and investment. Bilateral trade had reached \$1 billion by 1995. The Indian Government approved thirty Indian-Chinese joint ventures during the period from 1991 to 1994.¹²⁸

In 1989, China and India set up a joint minister-level team to promote economic, trade, scientific, and technological cooperation. The two countries have decided to work together on more than one hundred science and technology topics, especially in the field of space technology. In December 1991 China and India signed a formal agreement on space technical cooperation, and since then China has sent several scientific delegations to India. From 1993 to 1995 the two countries extended their scientific and technical cooperation to other fields.¹²⁹

At some point in the future, a rising India could well become China's principal rival in competition for international funds, technologies, and markets. India will compete with China in world trade and China will face strong competition from India. The gains that India makes will not necessarily mean a loss for China, however. Cooperation and competition should be a positive dynamic in Sino-Indian economic relations. The prosperity of the Chinese and Indian economies should contribute to Asian peace and stability and benefit both nations.¹³⁰

In October 1994, Chinese vice president Rong Yiren summed up this optimistic forecast when he met the Indian vice president. Rong told his guest, "The total populations of China and India are two-thirds of that of the whole world. The Chinese and Indian peoples are both facing the task of developing their own countries. The development of the two countries is of great significance for the peace and stability of the world and the region."¹³¹ China believes that overall development can bring about the end of the era of nuclear confrontation and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction throughout the world.

E. A New Challenge to Sino-Indian Relations

Rajiv Gandhi's 1988 visit to China and Jiang Zemin's 1996 trip to India contributed to the development of good-neighborly relations between the two countries. In hopes of putting an end to hostility and setting its sights on the future, China has made continuous efforts to improve relations with India. As a result, the two countries have signed several documents on the maintenance of peace and stability and the development of military trust in the border region. The agreements have created the conditions for both countries to enhance mutual trust and eventually settle the border issue. But just when Sino-Indian relations were experiencing improvement, the government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee began to peddle the existence of distrust between China and India in order to create an excuse for its nuclear tests.¹³² That is, India tried to realize its ambitions at the price of the hard-won friendly relationship between India and China. The unreasonable attacks on China by the Indian Government

deeply hurt the feelings of the Chinese people and undermined the mutual trust the two countries had built over generations.

1. Improved Sino-Indian relations conform not only to the interests of the two peoples but also to the need for peace and stability in the region.¹³³ China once hoped that the improvement of Sino-Indian relations would help remove or reduce India's motivation to acquire nuclear weapons. Yet India's nuclear tests have proved this ineffective.

The Chinese believed that the improved Sino-Indian relations would help India change its perception that China's possession of nuclear weapons constituted a threat to it. They hoped that improved Sino-Indian relations could help urge India and Pakistan to abandon their historical resentments and remove or reduce their motivations to develop nuclear weapons, and could eventually help settle the nuclear issue in South Asia.

Prior to the nuclear tests, Sino-Indian relations had entered a new stage of development.¹³⁴ China and India had made breakthroughs in negotiations on border disputes and economic cooperation. Although India still bears a grudge against China and regards China as a potential rival, Sino-Indian relations have acquired momentum. The two countries might still maintain this momentum if India does not continue to slander China.

2. As in the Chinese proverb, "whoever started the trouble should end it." Responsibility for improving India-China relations now rests with India. In July 1998 Chinese ambassador to India Zhou Gang urged India to immediately stop all groundless accusations against China and to take concrete steps to improve India-China relations. Ambassador Zhou was quoted in an interview with four major English newspapers in New Delhi that "[i]t is known to all that since April and May, certain personages in India have made frequent accusations against China, slandering China by saying that it posed a threat to India's security, when, in fact, it is India that has sabotaged the atmosphere of the Sino-Indian relations, harmed the developing bilateral relations and endangered the future of relations between the two countries." According to Zhou, the Chinese side sincerely hopes that the abnormal situation will be reversed as early as possible and that India will cease its baseless accusations against China. But it is not up to the Chinese side. "It is up to the doer to undo the knot," Ambassador Zhou said.¹³⁵

It should be noted that the Indian people are peace-loving. Good Sino-Indian relations are in the interests of both countries. On May 6, 1998, just days before India's nuclear tests, a spokesman from the Indian External Affairs Ministry asserted in a written statement that India would continue to normalize ties with China and develop friendly, cooperative, and mutually beneficial relations with Beijing. The statement was the first official response to the strong Chinese reaction to Indian defense minister George Fernandes's anti-China remarks. The spokesman said that eliminating differences and promoting understanding would contribute to the development of good-neighborly relations between India and China, the world's two most populous countries. It would also contribute to the promotion of regional and international peace and stability.¹³⁶ Soon after India's tests, an Indian scientist launched an anti-nuclear movement in India, as seventy-five colleagues warned the government that the nuclear testing was stoking a dangerous regional arms race.¹³⁷

As the two most populous powers of the world, China and India are both developing countries facing the tough tasks of quickening economic growth, accelerating modernization, enhancing comprehensive national strength, and raising the standard of living of their people. It is in their fundamental interests to promote and develop their bilateral relations. This is the common aspiration of the peoples of both countries.

Notes

Unless stated otherwise, all Chinese-language journals and newspapers are published in Beijing.

- ¹ Wu Hua et al., *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu* [India: A Lion in South Asia] (Beijing, 1997), p. 273.
- ² Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, p. 256.
- ³ Chen Yali, “Nuke posturing endangers South Asia stability,” *China Daily*, June 3, 1998, p. 4.
- ⁴ Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, pp. 257–58.
- ⁵ Ye Zhengjia, “India Entering the 21st Century,” p. 24.
- ⁶ Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, p. 259.
- ⁷ Jiang Yeli, “The United States and the Nuclear Issue in South Asia,” *Dangdai Yatai* [Contemporary Asian-Pacific], No. 2, 1997, p. 34.
- ⁸ Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, p. 262.
- ⁹ Li Weiguo, “New Issues in the Readjustment of Nuclear Strategies and Nuclear Disarmament,” *Guoji Wenti Yanjiu*, No. 3, 1992, p. 43.
- ¹⁰ Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, p. 273.
- ¹¹ Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, p. 260.
- ¹² Cui Yangsheng and Ma Jiali, “South Asia: Situation in Change,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, No. 3, 1996, p. 22.
- ¹³ Ye Zhengjia, “India Entering the 21st Century,” p. 24.
- ¹⁴ Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, pp. 260–61.
- ¹⁵ Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, p. 273.
- ¹⁶ Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, pp. 263–66.
- ¹⁷ Ye Zhengjia, “India Entering the 21st Century,” p. 23.
- ¹⁸ Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, p. 259.
- ¹⁹ Jiang Yeli, “United States and the Nuclear Issue in South Asia,” p. 35.
- ²⁰ Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, p. 274; Jiang Yeli, “United States and the Issues in South Asia,” p. 35.
- ²¹ Unless otherwise cited, the information in the rest of this section is from Jiang Yeli, “United States and the Issues in South Asia,” pp. 35–36.
- ²² Yan Xuetong, “India tests destabilize peace,” *China Daily*, May 20, 1998, p. 4.
- ²³ Chen Yali, “Nuke posturing endangers South Asia stability,” p. 4.
- ²⁴ Ye Zhengjia, “India Entering the 21st Century,” p. 24.
- ²⁵ Hua Biyun, “India: Science and Technology Development and Its Grand Plan for the 21st Century,” *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, No. 11, 1996, p. 29.
- ²⁶ The information in the section that follows is from Song Dexing, “India’s Military Strategy of ‘Regional Deterrence,’” *Dangdai Yatai* [Contemporary Asia-Pacific Studies], No. 4, 1998, pp. 20–24.
- ²⁷ Jiang Yeli, “United States and the Nuclear Issue in South Asia,” pp. 34, 36.
- ²⁸ Jiang Yeli, “United States and the Nuclear Issue in South Asia,” p. 36.

- ²⁹ Li Weiguo, "New Issues in the Readjustment of Nuclear Strategies and Nuclear Disarmament," p. 43.
- ³⁰ Jiang Yeli, "United States and the Nuclear Issue in South Asia," p. 36.
- ³¹ Jiang Yeli, "United States and the Nuclear Issue in South Asia," p. 36.
- ³² Ye Zhengjia, "The Current South Asian Security Situation and China," *Guoji Wenti Yanjiu*, No. 2, 1996, p. 9.
- ³³ Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, p. 93.
- ³⁴ Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, p. 140.
- ³⁵ Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, p. 145.
- ³⁶ Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, p. 144.
- ³⁷ Jiang Yeli, "United States and the Nuclear Issue in South Asia," p. 34.
- ³⁸ Cui Yangsheng and Ma Jiali, "South Asia: Situation in Change," p. 25.
- ³⁹ Ma Jiali, "India: Post-Cold War Relations with China," *Xiandai Guoji Guanxi*, No. 3, 1994, p. 29; Wu Hua, *Nanya zhi Shi Yindu*, p. 177.
- ⁴⁰ Cui Yangsheng and Ma Jiali, "South Asia: Situation in Change," p. 25.
- ⁴¹ Ma Jiali, "India: Post-Cold War Relations with China," p. 29.
- ⁴² Luo Renshi, "Prevent Nuclear Proliferation in South Asia: Urgency and Probability," an unpublished research paper, Feb. 1994, p. 4.
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