

## Containing Nuclear Rivalries in Asia: What Roles for the Non-Nuclear Weapons State?



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— **Lalit MANSINGH** We are looking at the Asian continent. Of course, there are conventional conflicts all over Asia, stretching from Syria to South China Seas. The striking thing is that here you have six of the nine nuclear armed states of the world in this continent. And what is more alarming is that all these nuclear armed states have serious issues with their neighbors and therefore there is a big potential of conflict. I am going to focus on South Asia. Even though West Asia has a nuclear armed state, Israel, and you have a nuclear capable state in Iran, but Iran is under constraints. So it is unlikely that a nuclear conflict will take place in West Asia. So let us focus on South Asia and see what the situation is like.

The major nuclear armed states there – India, China and Pakistan – have serious bilateral disputes among themselves. Pakistan, for instance, is facing charges of terrorism, cross-border terrorism from all three neighbors, from Iran, from Afghanistan and from India. I think India-Pakistan relations are at the lowest since 2003. Tensions are also high between India and China as China claims over the Indian

Territory. If I focus on South Asia, it is clear that we have witnessed this unstable triangle between India, China and Pakistan. Speaking of the nuclear assets of the three countries, I will not go into details, but overall, the three states together have more than 500 nuclear weapons with a similar number of delivery platforms. In the case of China, it has the longest range of delivery platforms. India is not very far behind. India and China have many similarities in their nuclear doctrine, especially no first use. Pakistan's entire nuclear program is aimed at India. Unlike India and China, Pakistan regards nuclear weapons as usable weapons in war. And they intend to use it against India when certain very big red lines are breached. And a new element has contributed to the nuclear instability in the South Asian region like Pakistan introducing tactical nuclear weapons, weapons with the short range of about 60 km, which Pakistan will safely use against the Indian forces coming towards Pakistan. So there is this additional global anxiety about the terrorist groups based in Pakistan, groups like Al-Qaeda, Taliban and so on.

A whole coalition of the international terrorist group has conducted deadly attacks on Afghanistan and India and against the foreign troops in Afghanistan. Pakistani terrorist groups have tried to attack Pakistani nuclear installations.

So what then should non-nuclear armed states do in this situation? First of all, we must understand in the South Asian context that they are very densely populated states – China, India and Pakistan. Among them are about two and a half million people. And any nuclear conflict between these two countries is going to have a fallout on the neighboring states. It is inevitable. Non-nuclear armed states are collateral victims of nuclear conflict between the major powers. Unfortunately, there is no rule for the non-nuclear armed states. And non-nuclear weapons states have virtually no role except to be passive victims of their nuclear policies. In this situation, I think we are starting from virtually ground zero. The main thing is that the non-nuclear weapons states must get together and mobilize their resources and show solidarity in pursuing their interest and in giving notice to the handful of nuclear powers.

— **Marianne HANSON** Let me first talk about the nuclear rivalries, about the costs and possible consequences of them. Every nuclear weapon state is in the process of modernizing its nuclear program. As Hans Kristensen and others note, this can have a negative effect in the following ways: it spurs rivals to modernize further, and it signals to the rest of the world that the nuclear states envisage retaining their nuclear arsenals into the indefinite future. Costs and opportunity costs of nuclear weapons programs and of modernizing are unreasonably high in all the nuclear weapon states, but we have a real incentive to lower these costs in states like North Korea, India and Pakistan, at the least.

The dangers of accidental or deliberate launch remain too high for us to be complacent. Note that many models of the likely consequences of a limited nuclear war focus on the India-Pakistan conflict, but we need to be aware of the dangers and risks in every one of the nuclear weapon states. So what can

non-nuclear states do in this respect? The first thing to do is to emphasize devaluing, which involves encouraging of doctrinal changes to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in security policies; adopting clear and unambiguous no first-use policies. And we need de-alerting, which means to encourage the nuclear weapon states that have high-alert status to revise these policies; ensuring nuclear safety and security.

Can we risk the massive destruction on a system which carries enormous risks? It is time to de-link the idea of deterrence with nuclear weapons; deterrence has come to be identified with, and defined by, nuclear weapons, 'as a habit, almost unconsciously.' Extended nuclear deterrence carries extremely high risks. There is an under-estimated credibility problem of extended nuclear deterrence – how can we expect that a nuclear umbrella will hold? This is especially the case when we consider the on-going norm of non-use. Reasserting extended nuclear deterrence automatically proliferates the idea that it is the only nuclear weapons which have military utility (when in fact they do not), and can result in uncertainty rather than security reassurance.

Deterrence can be reconceived as being based on a much wider range of capabilities and threats; de-coupling deterrence from nuclear weapons is an urgent necessity. Moreover, even if 'break out' was to occur, it is likely to be conventional weapons which are used against a violator. All states, and especially non-nuclear states, can focus on ancillary activities, including, but not limited to the following. Offer opportunities and venues for dialogue; there is currently no security architecture present in the region. Face-to-face meetings; small groups of APLN members with political leaders?

— **Mely Caballero ANTHONY** I wish to focus on what the member states of ASEAN can do to help reduce tensions and contain nuclear rivalries in Asia. ASEAN as non-nuclear weapons state can use its existing frameworks like Zone of Peace Freedom and Neutrality to promote non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and promote its regional norms on nuclear

safety, security and non-proliferation reflected in its Treaty on the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapons Free Zone.

The ASEAN countries are non-nuclear weapon states and have collectively demonstrated their anti-nuclear weapon stance. The Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone(SEANWFZ) was already contained in the Zone of Peace, Freedom and Neutrality Declaration in November 1971, which reflected the members' opposition to the domination of any great power in Southeast Asia as well as their anxiety over the risk posed by nuclear weapons. There is a need to reiterate that SEANWFZ has been one of the key tangible achievements of ASEAN and part of its regional identity—a region free of nuclear weapons and located adjacent to the South and Northeast Asia that have been beset with nuclear proliferation.

ASEAN first articulated regional norms on nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation in the 1995 Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone. The treaty obliges parties “not to develop, manufacture or otherwise acquire, possess or have control over nuclear weapons; station nuclear weapons; or test or use nuclear weapons anywhere inside or outside the treaty zone.” There is a need to reiterate that SEANWFZ has been one of the key tangible achievements of ASEAN and part of its regional identity—a region free of nuclear weapons and located adjacent to the South and Northeast Asia that have been beset with nuclear proliferation.

ASEAN should capitalize on its peace dividend and expand its political capital to promote and further advance regional efforts in promoting Confidence Building Measures(CMB), preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution in Asia.

ASEAN's record in maintaining peace and security in the region has given it the credibility as a successful regional institution. ASEAN has also been regarded as the fulcrum of regional security architecture. Within the frameworks of its ASEAN-led multilateral institutions like the ASEAN Regional Forum and the East Asia Summit(EAS),

ASEAN member states should enhance efforts at promoting CBM and explore a more proactive role in facilitating dialogue among the actors involved in the worsening tensions in the Korean Peninsula.

ASEAN should facilitate its multilateral frameworks for a dialogue between Nuclear Weapon States and Non-Nuclear Weapon States to eliminate nuclear weapons. To demonstrate its credibility as a Non-Nuclear Weapon States, ASEAN must enhance relations with the International Atomic Energy Agency(IAEA), Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization(CTBTO), and other Nuclear Weapon Free Zones. ASEAN should collectively support the latest initiative on the Ban treaty and the efforts to negotiate a legally-binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination.

Finally, ASEAN Member-States should enhance efforts to promote the culture of nuclear safety, security, and safeguards as well as to actively contribute to the burgeoning nuclear energy cooperation and governance in Southeast Asia and the wider Asian region. These initiatives complement, and even strengthen, the various frameworks of cooperation in the region as well as the global conventions mentioned earlier.

— **HWANG Yongsoo** We have to courage how to share the lessons from the leaders of the non-nuclear weapons states. South Korea, for example, has enjoyed the benefits of nuclear power plants since 1974. Now, we are in the middle of a transition. Probably, the new government would like to encourage the renewable energy more. We learned a lot of lessons, some good ones and some bad ones. And we made some mistakes. And we do not want those kinds of mistakes to happen in other countries. Now there are a lot of new comers especially from the Middle East, Africa and Southeast Asia. And how to share our own experience with the newcomers will be very important. For that, we need teamwork like international consortium to encourage all the status quo to abide by the speed of the global nuclear security.

I was in Tokyo until this morning. We want to cre-

ate a small technical consortium to manage the spent nuclear fuel disposal. We have the full participation from Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, China and the U.S. There, even though we are so familiar with each other from the beginning, we can get one conclusion. It can create the openness for everybody. To have openness for the technical development is very important. It will be important to think about openness among the neighboring countries to avoid any kind of mistakes in the future. We should disseminate this kind of lesson to the new comers. We should also cultivate and disseminate the so-called 3S cultures: Security, Safety, and Stability. We are not just talking about safety. We should combine safety, security and safeguard together and we should try to set up a new norm to assure the transparent global cooperation to ensure the nuclear non-proliferation. And we have a lot of experience to create that kind of thing. Any time we fail. We might fail in the future, but we still need consistent efforts.

I would like to follow one statement made by Nelson Mandela. He states that “it always seems impossible until it is done.” That is most important. All our efforts for the global security and nuclear non-proliferation might be useless until we have final success. We should learn lessons from his statement. We should try to support the global nuclear society. I would like to emphasize the importance of international mechanism. Through that kind of international mechanism, we can discourage some bad guys. We should create better collaboration among international society. Also, we can help each other to introduce quality assurance system. The quality assurance system is very important.

#### Keywords

Asia, nuclear weapon, role, non-nuclear armed state



#### Policy Implications

- Non-nuclear weapons states should have talks to discuss ways to mobilize their resources and show solidarity.
- ASEAN member states should strengthen efforts to promote the culture of nuclear safety, security, and safeguards as well as to actively contribute to the burgeoning nuclear energy cooperation and governance in Southeast Asia and the wider Asian region.
- We should create better collaboration among international society.