

This happy context, as we have seen, is far from the one in place in South Asia. But is it too much to imagine that sound policies on the part of the international community, combined with inventive arms control, building confidence not only between the two main parties but also with China and with emphasis at government and popular levels placed more on the potential for growth and prosperity coming from collaboration instead of confrontation could at least begin to create an environment more propitious for progress? If Argentina and Brazil could find ways to perceive their situation as one which was slowing economic and social progress through wasteful defence costs and lost opportunities to develop themselves jointly, is there not some hope that India and Pakistan can do the same? There are obstacles to be sure but many parts of the world, and not just the Southern Cone of South America, give examples of the benefits of working together in the face of massive economic and social problems, bringing progress much faster than circumstances of confrontation and defiance.

In 1980, such possibilities were considered unimaginable in Latin America. A decade later, the rivalry was over. While the contexts of the two cases explored above are very different, political courage, international interest and concern, public interest, and a desire for change in Argentina and Brazil wrought much. And as was discussed, various strategic and economic factors in play further reinforced those forces pushing for a new, non-geopolitical and non-nationalist examination of the issues at stake between these two countries. However, the India-Pakistan case will remain a much more difficult nut to crack. And without those concomitant elements, particularly a change in the internal Indian and Pakistani political contexts where nuclear weapons and regional peace and cooperation are concerned, this situation will likely remain unchanged.