

The tensions which dominate Indian-Pakistani relations have only been complicated by their neighbor China. The Indian perception of China as its most dangerous potential opponent may be a key factor in Indian acquisition of nuclear weapons and development of longer-range ballistic missiles. China and India have not resolved their relationship since the war of 1962: in addition to several territorial disputes, there are unconfirmed reports that one or both of the countries may have deployed nuclear-armed missiles near their common border.

In contrast to this relationship which is characterized by suspicion and distrust, the Sino-Pakistani relationship is one of military and diplomatic support. Some unclassified reports have concluded that China has supplied technical assistance and components to Pakistan in the development of its ballistic missile and nuclear weapons capabilities.

On 15 December 1995, Tim Weiner of The New York Times reported that U.S. intelligence experts suspected that India was preparing for its first nuclear test since 1974, stating that the experts based their opinion on scientific and technical activity recorded by spy satellites at the Pokaran test site in the Rajasthan desert.⁷ An Indian Foreign Ministry spokesman termed the report "totally speculative," but stopped short of denying it.⁸ Pakistan appealed to the major powers to prevent the test. Islamabad also expressed concern over reports that India intended to test its Prithvi missile at the Pokaran test site; in some versions of the story, the two reports became linked, suggesting that India intended to test both its nuclear device and its delivery system. In January, then Prime Minister P. V. Narasimha Rao publicly stated that India was not preparing to conduct a nuclear test. However, Indian authorities have announced the country's intention to deploy the Prithvi, its medium-range missile.⁹ This situation, however it plays out, clearly demonstrates that aggravated regional tensions have a serious effect upon international security.

This paper is a concise study identifying and evaluating possible regional measures for constraining ballistic missile proliferation and for achieving a stable strategic relationship with regard to ballistic missiles within a region, taking as a case study the region of South Asia. The study will focus on certain factors contributing to current and likely future proliferation of ballistic missiles technologies and missiles, even though many other weapon

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⁷ "U.S. Suspects India Prepares to Conduct Nuclear Test," The New York Times, 15 December 1995.

⁸ According to a Reuters report quoted by R. Jeffrey Smith, "Possible Nuclear Arms Test by India Concerns U.S.," Washington Post, 16 December 1995.

⁹ The Prithvi missile program is discussed below in the section entitled, "Real and Perceived Threats in the View of India and of Pakistan."