

Such efforts would primarily involve making a case along the lines discussed above. Specifically, it would involve demonstrating that further movement toward a nuclear deterrent:

- would do little to effectively address perceived nuclear threats;
- would involve technical and economic costs likely to be wholly incommensurate with the potential gains it offers; and,
- would risk generating a range of negative effects for security, stability and disarmament both within the region and beyond.

Such an approach would also include a number of concrete suggestions aimed at addressing the security concerns which Indian nuclear capabilities are intended to meet. Possible initiatives could include: renewed commitments to the active pursuit of global nuclear disarmament (e.g. ratification of START II and pursuit of START III, moves toward the de-alerting of nuclear arsenals), offers of economic and technical assistance for the effective implementation and extension of regional confidence and security-building measures (especially those aimed at enhancing nuclear transparency e.g. joint seminars on nuclear doctrine and strategy, agreements for sharing research aimed at preventing and containing the consequences of nuclear accidents, development of procedures for and the implementation of reciprocal inspections of nuclear facilities), and a proposal for the creation of a functional risk-reduction centre within the region.³⁷

Convincing India to reconsider its pro-nuclear course may well prove impossible. Notwithstanding the fact that strong arguments can be advanced against a nuclear deterrent on military, economic and technical grounds, considerations of domestic politics and visions of the international status and respect which nuclear arms promise to generate may inevitably hold sway.

Yet even if a nuclear doctrine is adopted, advancing such arguments now would help to raise issues which will ultimately need addressing. Voiced frequently and forcefully enough, such a case could at the very least serve to insure that if a more “nuclearized” sub-continent proves inevitable, it is predicated on the most responsible nuclear policies and practices humanly possible.

³⁷ Such measures would be entirely consistent with the “Memorandum of Understanding” issued by New Delhi and Islamabad as part of the Lahore Declaration.