

Ballistic missiles have also been viewed as sources of prestige in certain regions of the globe. They lend evidence of scientific or technological credibility to countries whose national pride is rankled by labels such as "Third World" or "lesser developed." The technologies used in these delivery systems are becoming increasingly easier and cheaper to develop indigenously or acquire elsewhere: some of the relevant technologies have a dual use as part of legitimate civilian applications as well as for military purposes, and thus can be developed or obtained under false pretenses; and, of course, ballistic missiles and space launch vehicles are marketed internationally by certain companies and countries in need of hard currency.

Regional Threat Reduction is particularly appropriate and needed in regions with complex histories of tension and rivalry, such as the region of South Asia.⁴ The turbulent relationship between India and Pakistan includes three wars, major crises, and numerous incidents, including border incidents related to their conflicting claims to Kashmir. The two countries, deeply suspicious and distrustful of each other, are considered nuclear- or near-nuclear capable, and they have ambitious delivery systems under development which will provide a deep-strike capability. They have been unwilling to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), they are not members of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), and they have accused each other of developing ballistic missiles to carry nuclear weapons.⁵ Parliamentary debates, official interviews, and press commentary show that New Delhi's development of the Agni and Prithvi missiles is viewed as a source of national pride; Pakistani leaders apparently also hope to garner the same kind of popular support for Islamabad's nascent missile program. If India and Pakistan were to develop and deploy nuclear weapons on their ballistic missiles, their relationship could further deteriorate to the point of an international crisis. As U.S. Secretary of Defence William Perry has noted, "the worst-case scenario, of course, would be if India and Pakistan allow their tense relations and their nuclear capability to drive them towards a nuclear arms race or even to a nuclear war."⁶

⁴ While Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Tibet are often included in the region designated as South Asia, commentary regarding South Asian regional security issues is generally confined to relations between India and Pakistan.

⁵ Both countries have claimed that they have no intention of deploying nuclear weapons, and they have stated that their short-range ballistic missiles will be armed only with conventional warheads.

⁶ "Establishing Strong Security Ties with India and Pakistan." Prepared remarks by Secretary of Defence William J. Perry to the Foreign Policy Association, New York, 31 January 1995. Seymour Hersh has argued that India and Pakistan nearly fought a nuclear war in 1990. "On the Nuclear Edge," New Yorker, 29 March 1993, pp. 56-73. Many other analysts, including Devin Hagerty have strongly disputed this claim. See, for example, Devin T. Hagerty, "Nuclear Deterrence in South Asia," International