

# CTBT: HOW TO AVOID THE TRAP-II

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PROF. KHURSHID AHMAD



CTBT: how to avoid the trap-II

# Nuclear sellout not acceptable

**P**akistan is in the initial stage of nuclear development. Thank God, it has acquired the basic capability and has demonstrated it successfully. This has been a blessing from Allah. All individuals and institutions (scientific, military and political) certainly deserve praise and support for performing this valuable service to the nation and the Ummah. It should also be acknowledged that a nuclear race is neither inevitable nor desirable. Similarly equality is not necessary, as was madly pursued by the two superpowers in the Cold War. What is needed is credible nuclear deterrence, for today and tomorrow.

Deterrence is not a static phenomenon; it is dynamic and relative. The adversary's capacity to attack and defend is the point of reference. India has very clearly declared its nuclear ambitions. It is a nuclear weaponised country and is not prepared to abdicate this position.

The Indian leadership has made it clear that:

- India is and would remain a state equipped with nuclear weapons, along with conventional ones. It will maintain and develop this capability to extend its supremacy beyond its borders.

- For the time being, India needs no more testing, but if need be, the options are open and no limitations will be accepted.

- Minimum deterrence does not mean mere nuclear capability. It includes proper weaponisation and an effective delivery systems.

In his article in *Foreign Affairs*, Jasjit Singh states clearly: "Recessed deterrence may be defined as a credible nuclear weapons capability which the country is able to draw upon for political and diplomatic purposes, and is able to deploy... within a defined time-frame and effectively use it physically for military purposes."

Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee, in a statement in parliament, confirmed these ambitions. According to him, minimum deterrence means "the minimum capability to fight a nuclear war".

It also deserves to be noted that India at present possesses 80-100 bombs in ready form, the capacity to prepare around 200 bombs and has developed reliable delivery systems, viz missiles, air delivery and nuclear submarines. It has also prepared weapons based both on uranium and plutonium and claims that it has also conducted a thermonuclear test, which can enable it to produce hydrogen bombs.

To contain such an adversary, it is necessary for Pakistan to possess a competitive

capability. From this viewpoint Pakistan does not have enough in store. The tests that Pakistan carried out are not sufficient in spite of all their success and effectiveness. To maintain sufficient deterrent power, meet future technological requirements and counter In-

dian developments, the option to carry out more nuclear tests must be kept open.

On the basis of firm advice from scientists in Pakistan and abroad, the writer is convinced that while there may not be an immediate need for further testing to confirm the weapon-grade level of uranium (U235) enrichment, but for developing plutonium (Pu239) and tritium, more tests are essential. Computer simulation or cold tests cannot provide results beyond a certain level of certainty. Development of precise thermonuclear devices would need 'hot testing'.

Hot tests are also necessary for weaponisation, miniaturisation and major modifications in designs, particularly to develop weapon-designs further, improve target refinement and seek reduction in radiation and hazards for human life and health. Kahuta may not be needing hot testing soon, but for Khushab on which billions of dollars have been invested, such tests are essential in the coming stages. Similarly, tests have great importance in the preparation of "tactical low yield" devices. Pakistan is yet to develop tritium, which India claims to have developed.

In view of the above realities, we cannot agree with those who suggest that the country can face all future nuclear challenges from an adversary who is not accepting any restraint only on the basis of Pakistan's present nuclear capacity. This option would be too risky and dangerous. No doubt the nation must first rely upon Allah's grace and blessing. But we must also remember that the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), while ordering Muslims to have trust in Allah, also advised them to "keep the camel tied".

The Qur'aanic command is also very clear: "Make ready for an encounter against them all the forces and well-readied horses you can muster that you may overawe the enemies of Allah and your own enemies and others besides them of whom you are unaware, but of whom Allah is aware. Whatever you may spend in the cause of Allah, shall be fully repaid to you, and you shall not

be wronged" (al-Anfa'al 8: 60). This principle of deterrent power must not be undermined, if we want to protect our honour, faith and national security.

For a number of purposes computer simulation is an option. But while India has been provided supercomputers, Pakistan has been denied this technology. Another relevant variable is the amount of data available on the basis of one's own tests or software based on tests by others. We do not have enough of such data as well. Russia and the US have data derived from over a thousand tests each. They can update their capabilities even without further testings. But unless Pakistan obtains necessary technology and

data, how can it develop competitive capacity without practical testing?

With the institution of credible nuclear deterrence after the May 28 tests, the chances of a war in South Asia have minimised. But to maintain this capacity in future and upgrade it to the required level, it is necessary to keep our hands untied and protect the capacity to counter Indian advancements. Let us learn a lesson from debates taking place in American policymaking forums about probable effects of ratification of the CTBT on America's future security and deterrent capabilities.

The US is the the only superpower which now possesses many times more capacity in conventional and nuclear weapons against both Russia and China. It has undertaken 1045 hot-tests, and four more tests last year after signing CTBT within the "sub-critical" limits, along with its capacity for cold and computer simulation tests. Yet some of its top scientists have advised its government not to ratify CTBT. These scientists claim that no matter how supreme the present US position may be, it should not accept any ban on hot-tests if it wishes to keep its upper hand and world position in future.

The US President has certainly signed the

CTBT, but the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House

of Representatives, has not even started considering it yet for ratification. The committee's chairman has already expressed his reservations about the treaty. The Senate Committee is considering the issue in a leisurely manner. Their testimony before the committee of John Holum, Director Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Spurgeon Kenny, head of the Arms Control Association, and Dr Kathleen Baily, head of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory deserves to be carefully analysed.

Despite superior US nuclear capability, Dr Kathleen Baily recommends that US should

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living on debts we cannot pay back. This dismal situation has been worsening over the last 15 years. Putting all blame on 'sanctions', and seeking more and more loans, would be economically disastrous and loaded with great dangers for national security.

Therefore, while formulating national security policy, the defence and economic security requirements should be delinked from the issue of seeking more loans from the World Bank and the IMF, and also to be dissociated from the question of economic and military sanctions. These sanctions are immoral and illegal. We must not succumb to them. They provide an opportunity to learn to live within our means and pursue the path of real self-reliance. That is the honourable way out.

If fundamental reforms are not introduced in the economic system, lifting of sanctions and securing more loans will make no real difference. Rather Pakistan will be further submerged in this quagmire. At present, Pakistan is begging for \$4-5 billion. Next year the gap would call for \$6-7 billion, and third year it may reach \$10 billions. This would be a threat to national freedom, security and honour.

We, therefore, warn the nation to carefully watch the Prime Minister's Washington visit. There must not be any surrender on the issues such as the CTBT and nuclear deterrence. Freedom, honour and national security come first. No one has any mandate to compromise them.

This government initiated a debate on the CTBT in a joint session of parliament. What emerged from the debate was that the nation does not favour the CTBT. In this background, the Prime Minister has only one option. He should clearly tell the US leadership that there will be no compromise on the nuclear issue. The CTBT and other related treaties cannot be considered without first fully meeting Pakistan's security requirements and giving due regard to the interests of the Ummah.

The framework within which talks could be held, is:

- Permanent monopoly of a few countries over the nuclear capability is unjust and unacceptable. Either every one should have it or none should be allowed. Pakistan

should never accept nuclear apartheid.

- The question of nuclear capability should be delinked from economic sanctions. Talks can be held on fair economic co-operation, trade and investment. But without any quid pro quo on Pakistan's nuclear capability or delivery systems.

- Pakistan is a "nuclear weapon state" (NWS), like India, and the world has to accept this fact. Unless the NPT is suitably amended, the dialogue should not move an inch.

- Whether at the international or regional level, Pakistan is ready to talk about nuclear disarmament and establish a new healthy system. But that is possible only if there is no duress and no discrimination, particularly between India and Pakistan. Also, real progress must be ensured in respect of the core dispute between India and Pakistan, ie Kashmir.

- An essential prerequisite is to seek solution to the problems of South Asia, which have mainly been generated by Indian regional ambitions and proclivity for aggression. That is why an acceptable balance of power between Pakistan and India is crucial. No special treatment should be given to India anymore. The privileges extended to her now or in the future should also be made available to Pakistan. This includes a permanent seat at the UN Security Council, transfer of technology and availability of all other concessions. If India ever goes for new test(s), or upsets the balance of power, then Pakistan has the right to correct that balance.

- A decisive component of the framework is the just solution of Kashmir problem, which should be according to the UN resolutions and on the basis of the free will of the people of Jammu and Kashmir. Fifty years of useless talks indicate that holding bilateral talks will not be sufficient. The UN and world powers need to play an active role and the Kashmir freedom movement has to be given a status similar to that of other movements for self-determination. Without this neither regional peace is possible, nor the potential for South Asian economic and human development can be realised.

This is the six-point agenda which promises to solve South Asia's problems. Mr Prime Minister, do meet President Clinton, but take a strong stand with courage and wisdom and do not budge an inch, as this is in the best security interests of Pakistan and the Ummah.

*Concluded*

**The writer is Chairman of Institute of Policy Studies, Islamabad**