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**India and Pakistan:
Appeal for a Monitoring Mechanism Along the LoC**

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The past conflict in this year originated from militants, both Kashmiri insurgents and non-Kashmiri religious armed militias, causing unacceptable harm to India in Kashmir. Pakistan has been accused of nurturing and supporting the militants infiltrating across the LoC. India felt most annoyed with the increasingly potent actions of the militants and felt pushed, also by its domestic dynamics, to retaliate. The only hesitancy towards a war path was due to the dangers of escalation of a limited confrontation to an all out nuclear war.

It has been usually underlined that the situation has reached a state where the dangers of war could be averted only by the picture of a Pakistan not supporting the militancy in Kashmir by effectively stopping cross-border infiltration. However, it must be understood that there are indigenous insurgents in the Indian part of Kashmir and their activities may not end with the end of cross-border terrorism. Any measure from Pakistan to stop infiltration must therefore be accompanied by a monitoring mechanism, necessarily requiring the presence of an external agency, be it the United Nations or EU or NATO or anyone else.

Understandably, the United Nations cannot enter into the picture unless consented to by both the parties. India opposes a UN intervention because that internationalizes a bilateral problem. It would be good if the UN found a way to post an international monitoring force on the Pakistani side of the Line of Control alone, should Pakistan request so. The United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) has existed in both countries since 1949.

Pakistan could be persuaded to ask for an enhanced presence of UNMOGIP monitors placed on its part of the Line of Control.

It appears that Pakistan is not averse to the idea of a reinforcement of UNMOGIP, even if it is only on the Pakistani side of the LoC. On the other hand, India is not likely to agree to it because UNMOGIP is directly connected with the Kashmir issue, and, in the eyes of India, it is in conflict with the Simla Accord. Unless India agrees, no UN-sponsored mechanisms like UNMOGIP can be put in practice. If the solution has to be such that it caters to the sensibilities of both the parties, then it has to be – paraphrasing a declaration of the Pakistani Ambassador in Washington – a <<neutral, impartial [monitoring] mechanism on the LoC>> that is outside the UN. Institutions other than the UN – such as the EU, G8 or NATO or any other international Organization – may not have such problems of principle and could consider

providing a neutral, impartial, multilateral monitoring force.

Such an arrangement should be acceptable to both India and Pakistan for the following reasons: (1) Pakistan will need a monitoring mechanism to show that it does not support the infiltration of insurgents. (2) The presence of a monitoring external force would ensure that India does not wage a war on that frontier: de-escalation should follow. (3) India would also achieve the objective that an external insurgency-based policy not be pursued in Kashmir, stopping infiltration altogether. (4) And above all it would provide the two countries with an exit strategy, always needed in a situation of conflict.

The British Foreign Secretary Mr. Jack Straw, during a visit to Pakistan and India, suggested to form an international helicopter-borne force to monitor infiltration along the LoC. In India it has been suggested that, as long as such a force is specifically for monitoring infiltration of terrorists – meaning that it is not in any way tied to the dispute of Kashmir – India should accept it. It is not clear whether India will readily agree to allow foreign monitors on its side of the LoC. On the other hand, there are reasons to believe that Pakistan can be persuaded to accept an arrangement of this nature on the Pakistani side alone.

In short, the proposal is to build an international helicopter-borne force, on the Pakistani side of the LoC alone, if any other bilateral arrangement is not possible, to monitor any infiltration of terrorists across the LoC, reporting to India and Pakistan and to the relevant international community body involved.

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