

LoC: Where Stability is a Work in Progress

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Introduction

The Line of Control (LoC) has long been a barometer of the state of India-Pakistan relations—prone to dangerous flare-ups, brief spells of calm, and the occasional diplomatic fracas. While ceasefire agreements have provided moments of respite, they have been just that, moments. History tells us that all agreements on this LoC tend to have an expiration date, yet without such regimes, stability is in freefall. With both nuclear neighbours locked in a strategic standoff, the challenge is real: how to navigate and bring down risks in an environment bristling with tensions amid a constant threat of miscalculation, while keeping the door open for meaningful engagement¹. This policy brief examines the evolving security landscape of the LoC, the role of confidence-building measures (CBMs), and the pathways that could lead to a more predictable and less volatile future.

A chronology of mistrust has left strategic stability both weak and imperilled. In February 2021, India and Pakistan reaffirmed their commitment to the 2003 ceasefire agreement, following years of rising tensions and record-breaking ceasefire violations. The move, announced in a joint statement by the Director Generals of Military Operations (DGMOs) of both countries, was seen as a rare moment of de-escalation amid a long cycle of hostilities². Reports suggest that backchannel diplomacy, facilitated in part by the UAE, played a role in securing the agreement³. In the months that followed, ceasefire violations dropped dramatically—between February and September 2021, only a handful were reported, compared to the thousands recorded in previous years⁴. However, despite this temporary respite, broader diplomatic engagement remained stalled, and by 2022, reports of ceasefire violations began resurfacing, albeit at a lower intensity than before. Today the agreement's longevity and stability remain uncertain, especially given the political shifts and hardline posturing on both sides.

Despite the 2021 agreement, the LoC remains a precarious fault line, where periods of relative peace often give way to fresh cycles of escalation. Even in the absence of full-scale conflict, the region remains sharply militarized, with both sides investing in heightened surveillance, fortifications, and troop deployments. As a growing defence spender, India has expanded its border infrastructure in recent years, including the inauguration of the Z-Morh tunnel in Sonamarg, Kashmir, and the rollout of a new “smart fence” system along sections of the LOC, replacing aging border fencing with sensors and surveillance technology to detect movement.⁵ The harnessing of new technology has also added to the perils of miscalculation—unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) have reportedly been intercepted

¹ Ahlwat, D. (2021). *Confidence-building measures and norm diffusion in South Asia*. Observer Research Foundation. <https://www.orfonline.org/research/confidence-building-measures-and-norm-diffusion-in-south-asia>

² Press Information Bureau. (2021, February 25). *India-Pakistan agree to observe all agreements on ceasefire along LoC & other sectors*. Government of India. <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1700682>

³ Al Jazeera. (2021, March 22). *UAE brokered secret India-Pakistan peace roadmap: Report*. https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2021/3/22/bb-uae-brokering-secret-india-pakistan-peace-roadmap?utm_source=chatgpt.com

⁴ Ganguly, S., & Karackattu, J. (2022, February). *Bordering on peace? Evaluating the impact of the India-Pakistan ceasefire*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2022/02/bordering-on-peace-evaluating-the-impact-of-the-india-pakistan-ceasefire?lang=en>

⁵ India Today. (2024, September 16). *Indian Army enhances LoC security with AI fences, drones to counter infiltration, terror attacks*. *India Today*. <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/indian-army-pakistan-border-loc-security-ai-fences-drones-infiltration-terror-attacks-2600826-2024-09-16>

along the border, without any framework to guide their operations or manage misunderstanding. The absence of sustained diplomatic engagement was painfully evident in 2022, when a misfired Indian BrahMos missile landed deep inside Pakistani territory, indicating how acutely the LoC is vulnerable to flare-ups and escalatory spirals.⁶

Among other developments militarising the region, such incidents red flag the inherent instability of the strategic environment where instruments of crisis management are less and less available in a context that is potentially getting worse with time. Deconstructing this pattern requires looking at the historical trajectory of the LoC, and how and when past violations have shaped its dynamics.

Two Decades of Ceasefire Breaches

The LoC has witnessed numerous ceasefire violations over the years. The 2003 ceasefire agreement was designed to reduce hostilities; however, its effectiveness has been undermined by recurrent breaches over the years.

Between 2003 and early 2021, more than 13,500 ceasefire violations were recorded, leading to the deaths of 310 civilians and injuries to 1,600 others⁷. While the intensity of cross-border firing has varied over the years, the pattern is troubling, with violence spiking dangerously during periods of political or military tension. In 2017 alone, Pakistan reported nearly 1,140 ceasefire violations along the LoC, while Indian sources documented 8810 violations attributed to Pakistan⁸. The following year saw another surge in kinetic actions, with Indian reports recording 942 ceasefire violations by Pakistan, while Pakistan's figures captured a series of deadly attacks, amounting to over 40 casualties⁹. By 2019, ceasefire violations had escalated again, with Pakistan's Foreign Office reporting 3,351 violations by Indian forces, while Indian sources placed the number at 3,479 for the same year¹⁰.

Such cross-border tension crossed a new peak in 2020, with ceasefire violations paralysing entire swathes of the surrounding countryside. That year, Pakistan recorded 2,830 ceasefire violations by India, resulting in 260 civilian casualties¹¹. Meanwhile, Indian reports insisted on 5,133 violations by Pakistan. This spike in violence did not just reframe the bilateral strategic space between the two neighbours, it also left a devastating mark on civilians near the LoC, forcing thousands to flee their homes, with lives and livelihoods disrupted under the constant threat of violence. Schools and businesses in border areas had become hostage to an uncertain and volatile environment, forcing most

⁶ Dawn. (2022, August 26). *Indian army chief's LoC statement deserves a positive response: DG ISPR*. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1706864>

⁷ Dawn. (2021, February 25). *Pakistan, India agree to observe 2003 ceasefire agreement along LoC*. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1609331>

⁸ Ladwig, W. C., & Narang, V. (2018, October 12). *Ceasefire violations in Kashmir: A war by other means?* Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. <https://carnegieendowment.org/research/2018/10/ceasefire-violations-in-kashmir-a-war-by-other-means?lang=en>

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Times of India. (2021, February 25). *India, Pakistan agree to stop ceasefire violations*. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-pakistan-agree-to-stop-ceasefire-violations/articleshow/81214410.cms>

¹¹ Pakistan Today. (2021, January 1). *Ceasefire violations resulted in 33 civilian deaths in 2020*. Profit <https://profit.pakistantoday.com.pk/2021/01/01/ceasefire-violations-resulted-in-33-civilian-deaths-in-2020/>

to shut down, with both sides locked into a round of blame-game messaging which accused the other of targeting non-combatants¹².

The 2019 abrogation of Article 370 by India, which revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, closed a new door between India and Pakistan. Ceasefire violations were not the only thing this triggered¹³. Seen as New Delhi's unilateral crossing of a red line on territory that was defined by the UN as disputed, the move was met with strong opposition from Pakistan, which viewed it as an unconscionable violation of all previous agreements on Kashmir. The heightened tensions following India's aggressive march to stamp out dissent in the Kashmir valley, led to much more than a dangerous new cycle of cross-border firing. It led to a further hardening of the LoC and plunged diplomatic relations to an entirely new low. High Commissioners were withdrawn, while space for managing crises shrunk. Since then, the ongoing violations, coupled with a dangerous diplomatic deadlock, have made the implementation of confidence-building measures increasingly difficult. Despite periodic reaffirmations of the 2003 ceasefire understanding, particularly in 2021 when both sides recommitted to upholding it, trendlines suggest that without sustained diplomatic engagement and effective conflict management strategies, the risk of renewed volatility remains high.

Diplomacy on Hold: The Risks of Strategic Silence

The Line of Control (LoC) is a reflection of the prevailing political climate between India and Pakistan. Under the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government, India's diplomatic posture toward Pakistan has been defined less by engagement and more by posturing. Elections, in particular, bring a predictable cycle: a hardline stance on megaphones, rhetorical jabs, and deliberate distancing from formal talks. In the 2024 campaign, this pattern was on full display¹⁴. BJP leaders repeatedly invoked Pakistan in speeches, portraying it as a convenient adversary. In one particularly charged remark, a party leader declared, "*The politicians of the INDI alliance say Pakistan has not worn bangles—oh brother, we will make it wear them.*"¹⁵ While such rhetoric may play well to domestic audiences, it does little to foster meaningful diplomatic progress.

Even when Indian officials do set foot in Pakistan, the choreography remains the same—they attend a multilateral event, issue a disclaimer, and leave. In October 2024, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar's visit to Islamabad for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit was a case in point. While the trip marked the first by an Indian foreign minister to Pakistan since 2015,

¹² Arab News. (2020, July 28). *Pakistan accuses India of violating ceasefire along Kashmir border*. <https://www.arabnews.com/node/1708931/amp>

¹³ Journal of Defence & Security Studies. (n.d.). *Ceasefire violations and conflict dynamics in South Asia*. <https://ojs.idss.org.pk/journal/article/download/1310/1230/2086>

¹⁴ Dawn. (2024, March 19). *How India-Pakistan backchannel talks broke down after Pulwama*. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1836208>

¹⁵ NDTV. (2024, March 23). *If Pakistan does not wear bangles, we will make them: PM Modi slams opposition*. <https://www.ndtv.com/india-news/pm-narendra-modi-pakistan-congress-if-pak-does-not-wear-bangles-we-will-make-them-pm-slams-opposition-5652316>

Jaishankar was quick to assert that his presence was purely for the multilateral forum, pointedly stating he had “no plans to engage in bilateral talks with Pakistani leaders.”¹⁶ The message was clear: India would not be seen as initiating dialogue. New Delhi has employed this tactic several times before with the Modi government treating diplomacy with Pakistan as politically costly.

Yet no amount of political posturing can alter the strategic reality of two nuclear-armed neighbours sharing a volatile border. Deterrence theory dictates that communication is essential to prevent crises from spiralling into conflict¹⁷, but India’s reluctance to engage in structured diplomacy raises serious risks. The LoC remains one of the world’s most militarized frontlines, and with both nations possessing nuclear capabilities, and accumulating frontier technologies, even a localized skirmish carries the potential for dangerous escalation.¹⁸ While India’s leadership may publicly downplay the need for talks, historical precedent shows that periods of sustained engagement—such as the backchannel diplomacy that led to the 2003 ceasefire agreement—have directly contributed to de-escalation along the LoC.¹⁹

Ignoring diplomacy is not a show of strength; it is a calculated gamble that puts regional security at stake. New Delhi’s intransigence blocks all pathways for allaying mutual worries. The view that terrorism precludes negotiations has contributed to this deadlock, yet the Indian approach to regional security has not been consistent or rational. While refusing engagement with Pakistan on counterterrorism grounds, India has pursued high-level discussions with the Taliban—despite the group’s well-documented role in sheltering Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) elements responsible for a rise in cross-border attacks from Afghanistan into Pakistan²⁰. Pakistan has also accused India of sponsoring militant activity on its soil, most recently linking it to the Balochistan train hijacking.²¹ The Global Terrorism Index (GTI) 2025 notes that Pakistan recorded over 1,000 fatalities in terrorist incidents last year, ranking second on the GTI.²² If terrorism were truly India’s red line, consistency would demand a different approach— a structured diplomatic framework that addresses security concerns without reinforcing the current impasse.

¹⁶ Dawn. (2024, June 15). *India’s new approach to Pakistan: Engagement or containment?*
<https://www.dawn.com/news/1863219>

¹⁷ NATO. (2016, August 5). *On deterrence*
https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2016/08/05/on-deterrence/index.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com

¹⁸ Singh, R. (2016, July 12). *Kashmir: In the world’s most militarized zone, violence after years of comparative calm.*
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/ranisingh/2016/07/12/kashmir-in-the-worlds-most-militarized-zone-violence-after-years-of-comparative-calm/>

¹⁹ The Hindu. (2024, March 21). *Analysis: Indications that India and Pakistan have been in backchannel talks*
<https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/analysis-indications-that-india-and-pakistan-have-been-in-back-channel-talks/article61747025.ece>

²⁰ Al Jazeera. (2025, March 23). *Pakistan kills 16 fighters amid rising Afghanistan border tensions.*
<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/3/23/pakistan-kills-16-fighters-amid-rising-afghanistan-border-tensions>

²¹ The Guardian. (2025, March 14). *Pakistan accuses India of sponsoring militant terror group after train hijacking.*
<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/mar/14/pakistan-accuses-india-of-sponsoring-militant-terror-group-after-train-hijacking>

²² Institute for Economics & Peace. (2025, March). *Global Terrorism Index 2025.*
<https://www.economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Global-Terrorism-Index-2025.pdf>

The current deadlock limits the scope for de-escalatory mechanisms, leaving both sides vulnerable to a spectacular scale of risks posed by an unmanaged security environment. No match for such behaviour exists in any other potential theatre of conflict. In contemporary nuclear rivalries, for instance, communication channels often remain operational even during crises to prevent misunderstandings and manage tensions. Despite a history of ongoing disputes, China and India maintain diplomatic channels to manage tensions along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), with Beijing confirming that these remained “unimpeded” even during the 2020 Ladakh clashes.²³ Similarly, Russia maintains emergency hotlines with the United States and NATO, designed to mitigate risks amidst escalating tensions.²⁴ In sharp contrast, India and Pakistan, remain locked in a pattern where communication is either sporadic or absent, deepening the risk of miscalculation.

India’s political and public investment in a seemingly calculated policy of disengagement with Pakistan has created a toxic environment where routine diplomatic mechanisms, including Track II discussions, have become less effective. Without a shift in approach, the likelihood of addressing core security challenges, including the risks associated with unchecked border tensions, remains low while the dangers skyrocket.

Existing CBMs:

Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) have been pivotal in managing tensions along the Line of Control (LoC) between India and Pakistan. These measures aim to foster trust, prevent misunderstandings, and reduce the risk of conflict in this volatile region. A consolidated review of CBMs²⁵ reveals that out of more than 30 formal and informal measures negotiated between India and Pakistan since the late 1980s, only a small fraction remain operational. Key nuclear agreements, such as the 1988 accord prohibiting attacks on nuclear facilities and the 2005 missile test notification agreement, continue to function, albeit in a limited capacity. Several conventional CBMs, including the DGMO hotline and protocols on airspace violations and military exercises, also remain technically in force but are unevenly implemented.

However, most Kashmir-related CBMs, particularly cross-LoC trade, bus services, and local border meetings, are non-operational. Numerous other initiatives—ranging from maritime incident protocols and joint anti-terror mechanisms to agreements on non-deployment of ABMs—have either been partially implemented, suspended, or remain in limbo. The erosion of even well-established practices, such as the annual Rangers–BSF meetings, reflects a broader breakdown of trust and political will. This inventory highlights how, in the absence of structured engagement, the CBM architecture itself has become fragmented, highlighting the need for revitalised mechanisms insulated from political volatility.

Track 2 discussions between India and Pakistan have routinely recommended CBMs that create a modicum of ease on ground, especially those that assist Kashmiri divided families, prisoners who have served their jail

²³ The Economic Times. (2020, June 1). *Situation at border with India stable, both sides have unimpeded communication channels: China*. The Economic Times. <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/situation-at-border-with-india-stable-both-sides-have-unimpeded-communication-channels-china/articleshow/76137174.cms>

²⁴ Reuters. (2024, October 8). *Russia says emergency hotlines with U.S., NATO remain as nuclear risks rise*. https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russia-says-emergency-hotlines-with-us-nato-remain-nuclear-risks-rise-2024-10-08/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

²⁵ Archived (2025), *Amb. Aizaz Chaudhry, Former Foreign Secretary of Pakistan*

terms, and fisherfolk inadvertently sailing into enemy waters. There has been immense human suffering as a result of policy indecision on these issues. However, even humanitarian issues are ignored by hardline foreign policy postures, and hundreds of families are impacted each year.

Below is an analysis of key CBMs, their implementation, and their impact on LoC stability:

1. The DGMOs Hotline:

Established in 1971, the hotline between the Directors-General of Military Operations (DGMOs) of India and Pakistan serves as a direct communication channel to address and de-escalate potential conflicts along the LoC.²⁶ This mechanism has been instrumental in clarifying incidents and preventing misunderstandings. For instance, in 2013, amid escalating tensions and ceasefire violations, the DGMOs utilized the hotline to agree on measures aimed at restoring the ceasefire along the LoC.²⁷ Regular weekly interactions through this channel have been credited with reducing misunderstandings and managing localized incidents effectively.²⁸ However, the efficacy of this CBM is contingent upon the commitment of both parties to engage proactively and transparently. Enhancing the frequency and depth of these communications, coupled with a commitment to transparency, could further mitigate the risk of inadvertent escalations along the LoC. Alongside the DGMO hotline, interlocutors recommend establishing other hotlines at executive and political levels to enable confidence and clarity. On occasion other hotlines have been utilised to prevent flareups, but these remain in disuse. The DGMO hotline may well address operational matters, but it should not be perceived as a mechanism for dialogue or political messaging, as it has not been set up for this purpose.

2. Border Meetings between Border Security Forces:

Regular meetings between India's Border Security Force (BSF) and Pakistan Rangers are conducted to address local issues and maintain peace along the frontier.²⁹ These interactions have contributed to resolving minor disputes and enhancing mutual understanding. For example, in 2013, bi-annual meetings were institutionalized, providing a platform to discuss and resolve border management issues.³⁰ These engagements have facilitated cooperation on matters such as smuggling prevention and the return of inadvertent border crossers. To bolster this CBM, increasing the frequency of meetings and expanding their scope to include joint training exercises could enhance mutual trust and operational coordination along the LoC. Interlocutors from India and Pakistan often consider border protocols similar to those in practice at the Indo-China Line of Actual Control (LAC).

²⁶ South Asian Voices. (2020, July 22). *Hotline between command authorities to manage tensions*. <https://southasianvoices.org/hotline-between-command-authorities-to-manage-tensions/>

²⁷ Dawn. (2013, September 9). *Pakistani parliament discusses security and peace talks*. <https://www.dawn.com/news/1034786>

²⁸ Stimson Center. (2018, March 22). *Breaking the impasse: Direct talks between army chiefs*. <https://www.stimson.org/2018/breaking-impasse-direct-talks-between-army-chiefs/>

²⁹ Force India. (2021, July 10). *Ray of hope: BSF*. <https://forceindia.net/paramilitary/bsf/ray-of-hope/>

³⁰ Business Recorder. (2015, November 30). *Bi-annual meeting of senior officials of Pak Rangers and BSF held*. <https://www.brecorder.com/news/150607/bi-annual-meeting-of-senior-officials-of-pak-rangers-and-bsf-held>

4. Cross-LoC Trade and Travel:

Initiated as part of the 2005 CBMs, cross-LoC trade and bus services aimed to facilitate people-to-people contact and economic exchange between divided regions of Jammu and Kashmir. The Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalakot bus services enabled families separated by the LoC to reconnect, while trade in locally produced goods fostered economic interdependence. However, these initiatives were suspended due to security concerns and political tensions. For instance, cross-LoC trade was suspended in 2019 amid allegations of misuse for illicit activities. Reviving and strengthening these CBMs, with robust monitoring mechanisms to prevent exploitation, could contribute significantly to building trust and normalising relations along the LoC, and assist traders and divided families.

5. Military Exercises and Notification Agreements:

Signed on April 6, 1991, the Agreement on Advance Notice on Military Exercises, Manoeuvres, and Troop Movements mandates that both India and Pakistan provide prior notification of significant military activities to prevent misunderstandings and reduce the risk of conflict.³¹ Key provisions include advance notice of major military exercises, restrictions on their proximity to the border, and notification of significant troop movements. This CBM has played a role in enhancing transparency, though adherence has been inconsistent. Strengthening verification mechanisms and establishing joint observer groups could further bolster trust and stability along the LoC.

Beyond CBMs: A Roadmap for De-escalation

1. Empowered Backchannel

A structured and sustained backchannel remains one of the most effective tools for managing and resolving disputes along the LoC. Historical precedents, such as the Composite Dialogue Process (CDP) initiated in May 1997 and the backchannel talks of the early 2000s, demonstrated that when diplomacy is given space, escalation on the ground can be minimized.³² However, diplomatic engagement has often been held hostage to singular incidents, with dialogue frequently suspended due to political tensions. A revival of structured talks, covering all key issues including trade and water disputes, can provide a mechanism for crisis management and confidence-building. The 2021 reaffirmation of the ceasefire agreement along the LoC was a rare moment of diplomatic success, underscoring the importance of sustained engagement. Moving forward, ensuring that such dialogue is insulated from day-to-day political developments and treated as an ongoing institutional mechanism, rather than a reactive measure, could create a framework for de-escalation and long-term stability.

³¹ United Nations Treaty Collection. (1979). *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)*. <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/unts/volume%201843/volume-1843-i-31420-english.pdf>

³² Padder, S. (2012, February). *The Composite Dialogue between India and Pakistan: Structure, process and agency*. Princeton University. <https://dataspace.princeton.edu/handle/88435/dsp012801pg41n>

2. Military De-escalation Along the LoC

While ceasefire agreements, such as the one reaffirmed in 2021, have provided temporary relief, troop deployments and artillery positioning continue to pose a significant threat to stability. A phased approach to military de-escalation, such as mutually agreed troop reductions and restrictions on heavy weaponry in designated areas, could significantly lower the chances of inadvertent clashes. Lessons from past engagements, such as the 1991 Agreement on Advance Notice of Military Exercises, indicate that predictability in military manoeuvres reduces the potential for miscalculation. Additionally, institutionalising ceasefire mechanisms beyond verbal agreements, through written commitments and third-party verification where necessary, would help sustain stability along the LoC. Strengthening direct communication channels between the BSF and Pakistan Rangers could further enhance crisis management, ensuring that local incidents do not escalate into broader confrontations. Greater transparency through formalized information exchanges on missile tests, and military exercises near the LoC could enhance crisis management. Additionally, re-establishing mechanisms like the Joint Anti-Terrorism Mechanism (JATM)³³ could help address security concerns without resorting to military brinkmanship.

3. Economic and Environmental CBMs

Beyond security-focused CBMs, India and Pakistan could explore structured cooperation on tourism and environmental challenges linked to the LoC. Limited cross-border travel has previously been allowed, such as the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalakot bus services under the 2005 CBMs, but these have been repeatedly suspended due to political tensions.³⁴ A more institutionalized framework for religious and heritage tourism, modelled on the Kartarpur Corridor, could provide a depoliticized avenue for engagement while benefiting local economies. Similarly, worsening air pollution in Punjab and Kashmir could be a potential project for coordination on climate action. In 2024, Pakistan proposed cross-border cooperation on smog control.³⁵ India pointedly chose to not respond. However, integrating these issues into a broader CBM framework tied to the LoC could create structured, issue-based engagement insulated from immediate political disruptions.

Conclusion

While diplomatic stagnation and recurring tensions have often derailed progress on the LOC, prioritising structured engagement increases the potential for de-escalation. Confidence-building measures, whether through military de-escalation, nuclear risk reduction, or an empowered backchannel are essential for crisis management in one of the world's most fragile conflict zones. Given the nuclear dimension, neither side can afford to operate in a communication vacuum or rely

³³ Al Jazeera. (2019, March 1). *Timeline: India-Pakistan relations*. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/3/1/timeline-india-pakistan-relations>

³⁴ The Express Tribune. (2019, February 27). *Post-Pulwama attack, India suspends Muzaffarabad-Srinagar bus service* <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1913113/post-pulwama-attack-india-suspends-muzaffarabad-srinagar-bus-service>

³⁵ Al Jazeera. (2024, November 1). *Climate diplomacy: Can smog bring India and Pakistan together?* <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/11/1/climate-diplomacy-can-smog-bring-india-and-pakistan-together>

solely on deterrence. A diplomatic impasse may serve political narratives in the short term, but in any model of strategic stability, the costs far outweigh the benefits of such sustained investment in belligerence as a policy tool. As both countries navigate an increasingly complex regional security landscape, a pragmatic approach—one that acknowledges the realities of geography, the dangers of miscalculation, and the necessity of engagement—remains the only viable path forward.



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