India and Pakistan are confronted by different futures as far as Kargil-like scenarios are concerned.

**Pakistan:**

- Militarily, Islamabad can only afford to attempt calibrating the heat of the insurgency. This is the best of the poor choices available to Pakistan and is likely to be emphasized in accordance with the political circumstances of the day.
- Diplomatically, the peace initiative remains with India. Pakistan can only persist in its offer to participate in peace talks at any time, place, or level and pursue the benefits to its public image that may accrue from these efforts.
- In light of its failed grand strategy and increasing political insignificance, Pakistan recognizes that it must devote resources to economic and social development. However, it will prepare to defend itself conventionally and with weapons of mass destruction (WMD) against possible Indian aggression, the trade-offs between defense and development remaining relatively unresolved.

**India:**

- India is unlikely to engage Pakistan “substantively” over Kashmir unless there is a larger strategic motivation to do so—even though it will eventually do so “procedurally.” This means that even though New Delhi may resume “talks” with Islamabad on a variety of issues, including Kashmir, there will be no real substi-
tute for the Indian pursuit of internal solutions to the Kashmir problem.

- India will undertake confidence-building efforts with Pakistan in order to enable Islamabad to sell domestically the concessions that New Delhi believes Pakistan will eventually have to make. India will seek to create a hospitable bilateral environment to help Pakistan achieve this aim.

- India will make a variety of military investments to improve its tactical position along the LOC. These include improvements in intelligence gathering, infrastructure, and rapid-response capabilities in Kashmir. India will also seek to develop military options that allow it to inflict costs upon the Pakistani Army at the LOC and beyond if required, but will be continually limited in the exercise of these options by both the political circumstances of the day and the necessity of preserving international support.

PAKISTAN’S PERSPECTIVE

Pakistan Will Seek to Calibrate the Heat of the Insurgency—But Risks Losing Control Over the Process at Great Cost to the Pakistani State

High-level political and military stakeholders as well as key non-state actors in Pakistan believe that Islamabad’s future options are quite limited. Most interlocutors indicated that while Kargil-like situations are certainly not preferred, Pakistan’s only realistic military option in the future is to continue seeking to calibrate the heat of the insurgency. Many in the Pakistani government and most in the military believe that this is a low-cost strategy by which Indian security forces in Kashmir and elsewhere can be tied up effortlessly. It imposes high costs on India in terms of the military manpower and logistics investments needed to sustain the counterinsurgency grid.

Leaders of key non-state organizations in Pakistan raised the possibility that if India continues its “intransigence,” the APHC will no longer be able to influence the militants who want to attack targets outside Kashmir. (This view, while understandable, obviously exaggerates the influence that the APHC has over the more militant jihadi groups, but this fact was not addressed by any of our interlocutors.)
Well-placed Pakistani journalists indicated that the mujahideen already have an interest in pursuing targets in India’s information technology (IT) centers and in other key cities that India values in terms of symbolism, tourism, and foreign direct investment. Attacking these centers of gravity is thought to impose on India significant political costs that would force New Delhi to pursue a softer strategy in resolving the Kashmir dispute.

At any rate, it is not clear how cognizant Islamabad is of “the delicate balance of instability”\(^1\) required for the success of this strategy. It is obviously well understood that this strategy produces a de facto state of war with India. What is less well understood is that the success of this strategy requires Islamabad to inflict high enough costs on New Delhi without provoking it into unleashing punitive reprisals. Whether Islamabad can “calibrate” the insurgency so successfully remains an open question. In any event, this strategy continually carries within itself the possibility of conventional conflict stemming “from deliberate Indian retaliation, India’s efforts to play tit-for-tat, or inadvertent action, miscalculation, or misperception on both sides.”\(^2\)

While the balance of instability is one risk posed by Pakistan’s asymmetric strategy, there are other costs that appear to be discounted by Pakistan’s leadership. First, the very nature of the jihadi activities besmirches Pakistan’s already poor reputation and reinforces the image of India as a front-line state against Islamic terrorism. Second, Pakistan’s reliance upon mujahideen and jihadi \textit{tanzeems} to pursue its low-intensity war with India exacerbates the “principal-agent” problems inherent in this strategy in that Islamabad can never ensure that these groups will conduct themselves in a way that conforms with Pakistan’s larger interests both domestically and abroad. There are several dimensions to this concern.

First, these organizations have their own political agendas—which are often at variance with Pakistan’s own interests or even the interests of the Kashmiris. For instance, most Pakistanis \textit{and} Kashmiris are not receptive to the aspirations of these groups for an Islamic

\(^{1}\)Ashley J. Tellis, \textit{Stability in South Asia} (Santa Monica, California: RAND, 1997), p. 44.

\(^{2}\)Ibid.
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(Sunni) Pakistan, which would include Kashmir. Moreover, many of the jihadi groups have ambitions that go well beyond Kashmir: extremist groups like the Lashkar-e-Taiba, the Jaish-e-Mohammad, and the Harkat-ul-Ansar view themselves as being in the vanguard of a worldwide Islamist resurgence, which requires for its success the progressive destruction first of India itself, followed by Israel, and finally the United States. Given the momentum these groups have already attained in pursuit of such political objectives, it is far from obvious that Pakistan can simply shut them down even if it were to, however remotely, try.

Second, these groups are very sensitive to any developments that bear on a potential resolution of the Kashmir problem. Consequently, if they were to conclude that Pakistan has become a “Kashmir Farosh” (literally, has sold out Kashmir), they could aim their jihadi sights on Pakistan itself. Even today, these groups pose a palpable law-and-order problem, and it is not obvious that Pakistan could contend with any expanded violence with its currently constrained resources.

Third, because of the prominence these groups have attained by virtue of their importance in Pakistan’s prosecution of its LIC strategy in Kashmir and because of the revisionist notions of jihad’s significance to Islam proper, protests from more-moderate Muslims are effectively silenced by fear or indifference. This gives the tanzeems considerable leeway with respect to operations domestically.

The Peace Initiative Is Believed to Lie with India

Pakistan will pursue stratagems that give the appearance of pursuing peace for at least two reasons. First, it must cobble together some semblance of standing within the comity of nations. Second, according to several Pakistani interlocutors, some stakeholders in Pakistan believe in the necessity of a political solution—even if this political solution is thought to be hastened by continued prosecution of LIC in Kashmir. However, all of these interviewees believed that Pakistan’s diplomatic options are extremely limited and that India will in effect set the terms and the pace of peace. Within these constraints, Pakistan can be expected to continue to push the envelope of peace initiated by India and will continue the present course that calls for dialog at any time, any place, and any level. However, it remains
unclear whether Pakistan truly wants to pursue peace or simply wants to appear to be pursuing peace.

It must be acknowledged that the Pakistani Army has a number of incentives to prefer the status quo. First, with the current, presumably low-cost strategy, Pakistan ties up many hundreds of thousands of troops in India’s counterinsurgency grid. It is far preferable, from a Pakistani military point of view, to have these troops in Jammu and Kashmir—where they pose a minimal threat to Pakistan—than in the Punjab or Rajasthan—where they could in fact become serious objects of concern.

Second, the ongoing Kashmir problem legitimizes continued high defense expenditures in Pakistan and preserves the bureaucratic primacy of the military. Pursuing a durable peace with India brings several benefits to the country as a whole but embodies high costs for the military as an institution. Pakistan’s calculus in this regard is highly complex and renders intractable an analysis of Islamabad’s true interest in resolving the Kashmir problem.

Third, it is not clear that Pakistan can undertake the difficult and costly decisions that would enable it to participate meaningfully in a robust peace process. Given the problematic legitimacy of the current government, the weaknesses of Pakistan’s political parties, and the continuous failures of civilian and military regimes in Pakistan, there is currently no leadership capable of making the politically difficult decision to shift Pakistan’s attention, resources, and national aspirations away from Kashmir.

Fourth, Pakistan has deep suspicion and distrust of India’s peace overtures. Kashmiri organizations within Pakistan, as well as the retired and uniformed military, are dubious that the various Indian cease-fire offers in Kashmir have any implications for peace. Some of their reservations are as follows:

- The cease-fire is thought to be a way to provide a much-needed breather for India’s “exhausted” troops, which may afford India the opportunity to reconfigure its force structure for a limited aims war. This view derives, confusingly, from two beliefs: that India is suffering manpower problems as a result of its counterinsurgency efforts and that it is interested in fighting limited aims wars.
• Many interlocutors explained that during the cease-fire, the mujahideen become more easily identified and targeted for elimination. Thus, they fear that the Indian cease-fires in Kashmir simply provide an opportunity to hollow out the mujahideen.

• Many Pakistani interlocutors also argued that the Indian Army simply swaps uniforms with the police forces during a cease-fire, in effect allowing India to continue killing without violating the announced stand-down of forces.

• Other interviewees feared that India is using the cease-fire to split the militants and create division amongst their ranks. In particular, it is believed that India wants to create fissures between Kashmiri fighters and the “guest militants.”

• Finally, some interviewees believed that the cease-fire will vitiate the momentum of the mujahideen because it is difficult to begin fighting again once the mujahideen have returned home. This concern becomes more salient the longer a cease-fire continues.

Pakistan is thus ambivalent, at best, about India’s intentions and consequently can be expected to prepare for peace (or at least give the appearance of doing so) while also preparing for the possibility that India is really serving its own self-interests.

Pakistan’s Weaknesses Make It Increasingly Politically Irrelevant, and Its Grand Strategy Offers No Exits

Pakistan’s inability to protect its interests vis-à-vis the international community and particularly India stems from the fact that its economic and political weaknesses increasingly make it strategically irrelevant. As discussed throughout this analysis, Kargil was significant because it demonstrated to Pakistan that it has virtually no cachet in the community of nations. Its weak economy is subject to the vicissitudes of multilateral funding institutions. Its government has become widely criticized for its association with odious regimes.

\[\text{For example, see “Kargil: Where Do We Go from Here.” See also Abbas Rashid, “Raising the Ante in Kashmir”; Imtiaz Gul, “Retreat Dictated by Economic Compulsions”; Shafqat Mahmood, “Losing the Peace”; Mahdi Masud, “Kargil Crisis: A Balance Sheet”; Aziz Siddiqui, “In the Aftermath of ‘Jihad’”; “Prime Minister Explains.”}\]
such as the Taliban and for providing training and support to militants fighting in India. It has been unable to sell the case that its interests in Kashmir are legitimate and are responsive to India’s human rights violations in the region. And it has been unable to convincingly corroborate its claims about India’s incursions across the LOC, including India’s occupation of Siachen.\(^4\)

Indeed, Kargil has seriously compromised the legitimacy of Pakistan’s claims on Kashmir. Further, while India has been reasonably successful in casting itself as a responsible nuclear-weapons state, Pakistan remains a suspect nation as far as the diffusion of strategic technologies is concerned. Whereas India has remained connected to the West on the basis of its pluralist democracy, Pakistan has had difficulty developing robust democratic institutions. Irrespective of what level of resources and commitment Pakistan devotes to tackling this cluster of complex challenges, Pakistan faces an uphill battle in its struggle to remain strategically relevant.

In the face of these challenges—many of which are economic—Pakistan will persist in its plans for defense modernization, affording little hope that Pakistan can resolve the inherent tension between its economic condition and its military allocations. Moreover, there is little hope that Pakistan can undertake meaningful steps to change any of the aforementioned factors that contribute to Pakistan’s irrelevance: so long as the Kashmiri cause remains the cause célèbre in Pakistan and Islamabad continues to preside over a garrison state, the painful political decisions necessary to steer the polity toward a more fruitful strategic trajectory cannot be made—to the detriment of both Pakistan’s future and the cause of stability in South Asia.

**INDIA’S PERSPECTIVE**

**India Will Pursue an Internal Solution to Kashmir**

Of all the broad policy options that confront India with respect to Kashmir, New Delhi has always emphasized the pursuit of an inter-
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nal solution—in part because the Indian nationalist understanding of the structure of the Kashmir dispute allows New Delhi no other alternatives. Prime Minister Vajpayee gambled considerable political capital in undertaking the initiative that resulted in the Lahore Declaration. This declaration, which could have provided some opportunity for bilateral discussions about Kashmir, quickly came to naught because of the Kargil war, which was probably initiated before the Lahore Declaration and viewed as cynical duplicity in India. Consequently, even the very modest Indian inclination to resolve the Kashmir problem with an acknowledgment of Pakistan’s equity in the situation has now been vitiated. After Kargil, however, even the more dovish elements in the Indian political spectrum have become wary of pursuing discussions with Pakistan. India thus will redouble its efforts to pursue an internal solution, and while there may emerge a larger strategic purpose in engaging Pakistan bilaterally on this issue (i.e., if Pakistan is seen as willing to accept, rationalize, or legitimize the status quo with some modification), this engagement will be pursued primarily to create preconditions for the success of the internal solution.

India’s internal solution centers on negotiating with the Kashmiris in order to arrive at acceptable terms for the cessation of violence and the resuscitation of a political process within the larger framework of the Indian constitution. To further this objective, New Delhi will continue its efforts to co-opt the Kashmiri moderates while marginalizing the extremists. Further, New Delhi will seek to woo the more moderate elements within the APHC, as well as other political forces in Kashmir. India is also likely to let the APHC formally discuss Kashmiri issues with Pakistan (which is already occurring anyway through clandestine means) if this facilitates communicating to Islamabad the boundary of practical solutions.

While pursuing negotiations with the Kashmiris, India will continue its strategy of marginalizing Pakistan internationally. Throughout the many Indian cease-fires in Kashmir, India has done much to cast Pakistan as the laggard. For example, Indian Army Chief S. Padman-

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5The public manifestation of “wooing the Kashmiris” may change frequently. However, the particular manifestation of these overtures is not relevant; rather, the point of interest is that the only palatable option to New Delhi is to negotiate a separate peace with the Kashmiris.
abhans has made numerous public assertions that Pakistan reduced infiltration across the LOC in November and December 2000, but he contested Pakistan's assertion of having pulled out troops from the LOC and from the international border in Jammu and Kashmir. Consequently, India will continue to exhort Pakistan to play a positive role in resolving the Kashmir problem even as India seeks to avoid making discussions with Islamabad the centerpiece of its solution for restoring peace in the disputed state.

Even as it pursues this strategy, as will be discussed below, India will be prepared to make infiltration increasingly difficult by plugging up the border and through aggressive prosecution of LIC within Kashmir.

**India Will Seek a Hospitable Bilateral Environment**

Eventually India will return to its long-standing offer of engaging in "composite talks" with Pakistan. Through this process, within which the Lahore Declaration may be understood, India will pursue the normalization of bilateral relations on a wide range of key issues such as visas, cross-cultural exchanges, trade, and commerce. Kashmir would thus be discussed primarily in the context of other confidence-building measures that will have to be implemented.

The larger Indian goal in this process is to provide a positive atmosphere so that the relevant Pakistani leadership can build public support for the concessions that Islamabad will eventually have to make. From India's perspective, the only acceptable concession is the conversion of the LOC (perhaps with some modifications) into a de jure international border, a fact privately admitted in interviews at the highest levels of the Indian government. Such a concession, if offered in the context of a lasting agreement with Pakistan, would ipso facto involve India's renunciation of its present claims over "Pakistan occupied Kashmir" and the Northern Territories.

Several issues bear on the success of this approach. First, what type of regime can convince the Pakistani polity that peace dividends will accrue to Pakistan domestically and internationally if a suitably

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6See "Army Chief for Extension of Truce Beyond R-Day."
modified LOC is ratified as the international border? Certainly a
military leader may not be in a position to pursue this option if such
a move is perceived as discrediting the institution of the Army itself.
No military leader, including Musharraf, is likely to take on the onus
of selling such a solution back home, even if a military leader is in
fact best situated to sell such a concession. In all probability, the
Pakistani military leadership would prefer a civilian leader to make
this concession and take the flak that would ensue (when it reaches
the conclusion that such a concession is in fact necessary). Second,
remains unclear how Pakistan could or would sell this idea given
that the Pakistani public has been told for fifty years that, come hell
or high water, Kashmir will be liberated from India. Third, even if a
solution centering on a suitably modified LOC as the international
boundary is sold to the majority, how will such a compromise be
received by the jihadi and other radicalized elements in Pakistani
domestic politics?

Whereas there is wide belief on both sides of the border that this will
be a hard settlement for Pakistan, stakeholders in both India and
Pakistan acknowledge that the Indian polity would have little prob-
lem accepting this as a solution so long as it is truly a means of buy-
ing a permanent peace in South Asia.

**India Will Enhance Its Operational Capabilities and May
Contemplate More-Aggressive Actions Along the LOC**

Kargil has amply demonstrated India’s military vulnerability along
the porous LOC and has illuminated the need for enhanced vigi-
lance. While it is generally agreed that more attention and resources
ought to be dedicated along the LOC and within Kashmir, effectively
operationallyzing security solutions is a complex undertaking.

The Kargil crisis highlighted the need for new surveillance and warn-
ing systems to augment India’s existing capabilities. India has “au-
thorized a new cluster of technology initiatives focused on rapidly
increasing India’s imaging capabilities through the acquisition of
both high-endurance unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and new
space-based systems together with their associated ground-based control centers and image processing facilities.”7

The Indian Air Force (IAF) received considerable attention as it engaged in OPERATION VIJAY. The poor showing of some of the aircraft used during the operation highlighted the need for more-advanced electronic warfare, early warning equipment, modern ammunitions, and joint institutions for planning, coordination, and operations. An unidentified senior IAF official interviewed by Rediff on The NeT expressed how the Kargil operations exposed the inadequacy of Indian equipment: “But for the first time we are feeling the pinch of waging a high-altitude war in Kargil because we are faced with an acute lack of modern electronic warfare. . . . We [the IAF] have been demanding the induction of state-of-the-art fighter planes into the IAF for many years now. We hope the government will agree to our demands after the Kargil operations.”8 The IAF’s poor showing in Kargil can be attributed to various factors: the IAF never seriously planned or practiced for high-altitude operations, and there are large and still unresolved systemic problems within the force, including problems associated with manning, training, and equipment.

The Kargil Review Committee Report highlights the key technological and structural improvements necessary for the Indian intelligence community to consider. Among the elements requiring attention are the flow of intelligence from tactical elements to strategic agencies, the analysis of the many pieces of information coming in from different sectors, the communication among the various agencies, and the necessary technological upgrades for early warning surveillance equipment. Effective strategic warning is also imperative, and it requires not only an investment in better technology, but also a com-

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mitment to better intelligence assessment and disseminating procedures at the highest political and diplomatic levels.\textsuperscript{9}

Given these assessments, the operational impact of the Kargil war has been a renewed Indian commitment to maintaining a robust forward defense. The Indian military is actively looking for technical means to secure this objective, including personnel sensors, communications interception gear, UAVs, and enhanced satellite surveillance equipment. Additionally, India will modernize its physical infrastructure in Kashmir. For example, India is likely to create a new road system to Siachen that does not come within range from the strategic heights of the Kargil-Dras sector. And finally, it will improve its rapid-response capabilities and its counterinsurgency grid system to deny the insurgents freedom of movement to the maximum extent possible.

Even as it pursues a more robust forward defense, India will also explore options that would permit it to inflict costs upon the Pakistani Army at the LOC and beyond if Kargil-like threats were seen to occur or the Pakistani Army’s support for the infiltrating insurgents were to increase in intensity. Presently, Pakistan’s military understands its conflict strategy to be low cost in part because it has transferred a substantial portion of these costs to the civilian population that participates in the “jihad.” If the Pakistani military’s support for the insurgency (or the threat of Kargil-like operations) were to increase, there would be increased incentives for India to contemplate strategies that would increase the costs borne by the Pakistani Army directly rather than simply by their insurgent proxies. These strategies could include a stepping up of small unit attacks on Pakistani Army positions at or along the LOC, the interdiction of rearward targets through artillery or air power, or covert attacks carried out on strategic facilities by special forces, in addition to dramatic new uses of air and naval power.

Any full-scale exercise of these options, however, would be at variance with the policy articulated in the \textit{Kargil Review Committee Report}, which suggests that the Indian response to Pakistani incursions

will be conservative and restrained. While this has in fact been the case historically, any upsurge in Pakistani military provocations in the aftermath of Kargil could bring a quick end to India’s traditional restraint.

Within the Indian Army and in the community of retired military officers, three options for dealing with increased Pakistani provocations (including Pakistan-supported incursions along the LOC) received great attention:

- Maintaining the current, dominantly reactive approach that calls for intercepting and engaging militants after they have infiltrated.
- Hitting militants at the LOC itself while they are infiltrating (if possible) or, preferably, before they infiltrate (either at their “concentration” points in Pakistan-held Kashmir or as they are en route to the LOC).
- Interdicting Pakistani Army assets at, along, or behind the LOC at tactically shallow depths.

The first of these options calls for maintaining a more vigilant reconnaissance and surveillance presence along the LOC while plugging the holes along the boundary. This is the strategy most clearly articulated within the Kargil Review Committee Report. From the perspective of the Indian military, however, this option is necessary but may not be sufficient if it is read as prohibiting the targeting of militants before they have infiltrated (as is usually the case). This approach exposes Indian troops to increased threat while restricting the Indian Army from inflicting costs on the Pakistanis. The second option would be optimal from an operational, and perhaps even a political, perspective: it would permit the Indian Army to inflict significant damage on Pakistani-supported infiltrating groups through aggressive policing of the LOC while still limiting India’s political exposure. The disadvantage of this option, however, is that its success requires highly effective intelligence, often sheer luck, and constant and successful small-unit patrolling along the LOC. The third option is the most aggressive of the three and thus far has been operationalized only sporadically and during periods of increased tension. The advantage of this strategy is that it imposes nontrivial costs on the Pakistani Army directly, as opposed to merely on its proxies, and it helps to render the Pakistanis psychologically
vulnerable. However, it increases India’s political exposure—if operationalized as the dominant strategy—and could lead to the loss of the international support that currently is available because India is viewed as a responsible state.

On balance, therefore, the first and second strategies are likely to remain the dominant authorized responses in the future. The third strategy is likely to be authorized only under conditions of great provocation: the Kargil war has demonstrated to India the value of being seen as moderate and responsible, and Indian policymakers, wishing to maintain this perception of India as a state, are likely to be extremely reluctant to authorize any strategy that would subvert this key grand strategic interest. The Indian Army, for its part, is a highly disciplined institution and thus unlikely to ever pursue such a strategy independently—that is, without explicit authorization from the national leadership. And the political costs attending such a course of action almost certainly preclude it from being adopted as an Indian response to Pakistan except under grave circumstances and then only covertly.

CONCLUSIONS

The Kargil war has conditioned Pakistani and Indian conceptions of their future choices, albeit for very different reasons. Pakistan has slowly come to appreciate the costs that it has had to endure as a result of Kargil. Pakistan is economically vulnerable, politically unstable, and internationally isolated, and has acquired the opprobrium of being viewed as a precarious, decaying, and increasingly Islamist state. The Pakistani elite finds this last perception particularly galling because most consider themselves to be Muslim, not Islamist. Pakistani moderates believe, however, that their political leadership and/or the military are more or less impotent against the jihadi elements, in part because of their need for them in the context of Pakistan’s larger grand strategy. One interlocutor, a moderate retired general, articulated the confusion over Pakistan’s destiny and the types of strategic calculus required to support this vision of Pakistan’s future: “Pakistan needs to figure out whether it wants to be Jinnah’s Pakistan, the Jamaat-e-Islami’s Pakistan, or the Lashkar-e-Taiba’s Pakistan. When it figures this out, the rest will follow.”
India is not likely to give Pakistan a chance to flirt with Kargil-like scenarios in the future. New Delhi will watch the border in Kashmir and elsewhere carefully and will redouble its efforts to prevent infiltration. India understands that the most probable response from Pakistan will be efforts to calibrate the heat of the insurgency. This may entail a continuation of terrorist attacks throughout India. However, New Delhi also appreciates that this strategy redounds to Pakistan’s own disadvantage—though it fears that Islamabad may in fact lose control over its proxies—and further confirms Pakistan as a sponsor of Islamist terrorism. In this struggle, India will not take international support for granted. As during Kargil, India appreciates the value of international, including U.S., support and understands that such support is highly contingent on circumstances. In this context, India realizes that military heavy-handedness in dealing with Pakistan will corrode its international reputation. Regardless of the psychological gratification that might accrue to a strategy of “giving Pakistan a bloody nose,” New Delhi will continue to exhibit substantial restraint—despite an occasional lapse—precisely because it seeks to secure geopolitical goals much larger than simply humiliating Islamabad.