

SEMINAR REPORT ON
CLAWS – CARNEGIE-STIMSON DIALOGUE
CHANGING CONTOURS OF NUCLEAR
DETERRENCE

05 November 2015



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The Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), New Delhi, is an autonomous think tank dealing with contemporary issues of national security and conceptual aspects of land warfare, including conventional and sub-conventional conflicts and terrorism. CLAWS conducts research that is futuristic in outlook and policy-oriented in approach.

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**CENTRE FOR LAND WARFARE STUDIES (CLAWS),
NEW DELHI**

REPORT OF

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Background

The global security environment has deteriorated, especially due to rising tensions in East Asia, South China Sea, West Asia, East Europe and continuing terror in South Asia with the increased security threat from Non State Actors (NSAs) and sponsored terror groups. In the past few decades, the developments on nuclear front and the rapidly changing scenarios in Asia are making this region unsteady. From just five NWS (P5), divided into two camps in the past, at present there are nine NWS out of which six are Asian countries. Thus the current discourse on “Nuclear Deterrence” is largely focused on Asia and not as much on intercontinental deterrence of the Cold War era. However, the real challenge with respect to nuclear deterrence today is not only the management of nuclear stockpile and the doctrinal aspects, but also the conflicts that persist under the nuclear umbrella. In the Asian context, nearly all the nuclear states can be seen as conflict states, ranging from belligerents, to ones having outstanding disputes with one another and with non-nuclear states. The extended nuclear deterrence in East Asia has repercussions on the rest of the region. East Europe is emerging as another area where tensions can spiral to the next level.

In this backdrop, a discussion on the **changing contours of nuclear deterrence** was conducted at CLAWS by way of a dialogue with US think tanks **Carnegie Endowment for International Peace** and **Stimson Centre**.

Speakers (In order of Presentation)

- Dr. Sameer Lalwani - Instability and Deterrence at the Sub-conventional Level.
- Dr. Varun Sahni - Ensuring Nuclear Instability by Design: The Case of Pakistan's Tactical Nuclear Weapons.
- Dr. Walter Ladwig - Proactive Strategies and Conventional Deterrence.
- Dr. Monika Chansoria - China's Nuclear Doctrine and Strategy – Implications for Deterrence.
- Dr. Toby Dalton - Evolving Counterforce Strategy and Capabilities: Implications for Deterrence.
- Lt Gen B S Nagal, PVSM, AVSM, SM (Retd), Director CLAWS- Placing India in a Nuclear World

❖ Instability and Deterrence at the Sub-conventional Level

- Sub conventional operations and activities have been a part of Indian subcontinent since 1947. Apart from India-Pakistan, other South Asian nations and even West Asia nations are well aware of sub-conventional operations as a tool of state craft. Sub Conventional operations are tool to pressurise enemy state or are sometimes employed as tools of punishments. They are cheaper to operate and mobilise, and with possible deniability, limit retribution actions and conflict escalation.
- Despite Pakistan's conventional limitations against India, sub-conventional operations are seen as tools to bridge this conventional gap and to limit Indian options. However, sub-conventional forces are not a substitute to conventional forces. In the case of Kashmir, India has not been able to address local concerns and issues. Local fissures in Kashmir are seen as a means for Pakistan to take advantage of. In Kashmir security situation has stabilised but the

political situation is yet to stabilise. Covert operations including supporting insurgency are tools of state crafts that all nations use to advance their national interests. Also, proxies are used as a pressure point and to that extent; Pakistan is using these tools to the hilt against India.

- Pakistan's sub conventional activities including conduct of cross border terrorism has had a negative impact in the region. The counter insurgency in India and Pakistan has resulted in significant portion of their armed forces (approximately one third of the army) being committed to tackle this menace. In the long run militant organisations like the LeT would lose its credibility since it has not been able to influence or extract a violent response from India. At the same time, the host nation, Pakistan would continue to face a lot of domestic blow back from these acts of terrorism.
- On the issue of counter strategy, there are three possibilities - Offensive Strategy, Deterrence Strategy and Denial Strategy. India is following a denial strategy to an extent. India has not considered an offensive dismantling strategy, though it can utilise the existing fissures inside Pakistan to its advantage.
- The option of adopting a denial strategy by India is sometimes seen as an absence of strategy. At the same time, India is used to dealing with "global disorder" or "ugly stability". This, in terms of India's Counter Insurgency operations is quite evident, since what has been achieved in the North East is essentially ugly stability and the same can be said about Kashmir. Ugly stability or messy stalemate is also true in international relations.
- However, the drawbacks of a denial strategy is largely in terms of cost, both in human lives and otherwise. Denial strategy also means that the state would have to spend a lot and divert a lot of resources. **India's denial strategy, despite all the short comings, is the right way to go through since it seems to be working over a period of time.**

- On the concern of why US is not able to reign in Pakistan, it was brought out that the US has limited leverage over Pakistan and cannot completely influence Pakistan. The US pressure has been largely in cutting off or limiting aid and other financial assistance but this has limits, since Washington's other concerns (viz global war on terrorism) overshadow its issues with Pakistan.
- On the question of impact of Pakistan fracturing into more than one nation, it was explained that it would not be in the interest of India as it would lead to regional instability. **India and Afghanistan would bear the brunt in the event of the collapse of Pakistan.**

❖ **Ensuring Nuclear Instability by Design: The Case of Pakistan's Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNWs)**

- India and Pakistan have their Nuclear Doctrines which are incompatible. **In the escalation ladder between India and Pakistan, asymmetric options remain at the bottom of the pyramid followed by use of sub-conventional and conventional means. Nuclear threat is at the top, as the last option.** Sub-conventional forces could include limited Special Forces (SF) Operations, whereas asymmetric options refer to proxy wars and cross border terrorism.
- Pakistan and India have diametrically opposite doctrinal challenges. **Pakistan's doctrinal challenge is to lower the nuclear threshold followed by blurring the distinction between conventional and sub-conventional options. Whereas, Indian doctrinal challenge is primarily creating the space for "limited war" by employment of conventional forces under nuclear conditions.**
- India prefers status quo strategy where as Pakistan follow a **revisionist strategy** by supporting Kashmir insurgency and fuelling cross border terrorism.
- India's status quo options are twofold - first is the Counter Insurgency (CI) operations against the cross border terrorism. As the Indian

response is at the same level of violence as the Pakistani action, it is *not escalatory*. The second option is the use of Special Forces operations against the camps across LoC, which has escalatory potential, as this defensive option could be construed as an offensive venture by Pakistan and thus would become escalatory in nature.

- Pakistan's revisionist strategy which hinges on support to the Kashmir insurgency, is shrouded in plausible deniability of asymmetric warfare as it claims that the insurgent groups are not Pakistan's instruments but the home grown fighters. Ironically, cross border terrorism remains in the realm of non escalation whereas an Indian sub conventional offensive - defence action against Pakistan's cross border terrorism could be viewed as escalatory in nature.
- Pakistan is thus using a **pincer** against India in the escalation ladder whereby **one arm of the pincer is trying to use the plausible deniability inherent in the asymmetric warfare to change the status quo in Kashmir, and other arm aims at restricting India's response options by lowering nuclear threshold and threatening escalation.**
- **Military Options for India :-**
 - Counter Insurgency (CI) and Counter Terrorism (CT) operations should be sustained with greater vigour.
 - India can strengthen Special Forces capability and put the same to use if and when considered necessary.
 - Develop other covert options that can destabilise Pakistan from within, by utilising existing fissures.
 - Creating space for limited war by the use of conventional forces.
- Nuclear Doctrine is not internal signaling but external. **Pakistan's Nuclear Doctrine is not only first use but also "Early Use" and its Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNWs) are to be seen in this light.** TNWs are a problem since they lower the nuclear threshold and

blur the distinctions between conventional and non-conventional/nuclear situation. **Always/Never dilemma** (Nuclear weapons should Always work when needed and Never work when they are not needed) is even greater because of TNWs, since their control is likely to be delegated to lower hierarchy unlike strategic nuclear weapons. Battle field deployment during armoured manoeuvre warfare may result in “**use them or lose them**” situation, thus, increasing the possibility of the use of TNWs in the heat of the battle.

- Pakistan’s TNWs are here to stay as it is the only military instrument to address the conventional asymmetrical capability of India. However, TNWs and Strategic weapons cannot be a replacement for conventional forces. Conventional wars will have to be dealt with conventionally in the realm of conventional weapons. Further TNWs falling into the wrong hands are a real possibility and another area of concern as far as Pakistan is concerned.
- On the question of South Asia being a nuclear flash point due to hot and cold relations of two nuclear neighbours, viz India and Pakistan, it was brought out that nuclear weapons give only strategic parity and buttress territorial status quo. Nuclear flashpoint is a possibility only if there is a spark. However, South Asia is not a flash point until India reacts to Pakistan’s misadventures, leading to the possibility of an escalation, and thus lighting a spark.

❖ **Proactive Strategies and Conventional Deterrence**

- Conventional military balance is seen as a cornerstone of the ugly stability that exists between India and Pakistan. India’s military modernisation and increasing military budget has raised some questions on the possibility of upsetting the region’s conventional military balance. **Indian military modernisation is viewed by some as a threat to Pakistan and a reason to opt for TNWs as a means of defence.** This is an incorrect premise since a significant portion of the budget of the Indian Military establishment is consumed

in a number of activities other than modernisation viz internal security operations like counter terrorism and counter insurgency operations.

- Whatever advantages that India enjoys via military modernisation will be mitigated by the lack of strategic surprise, owing to its geographic limitations. The geography does not offer any strategic surprise either. The entire border is also fortified. The terrain favours the defender and not the advancing force. A rapid mobilisation of forces will give India some advantages, but how this would manifest in a case of conflict situation would be a question mark.
- One issue that has attracted international attention is the capability that the Indian Army is developing to deter Pakistan's support to terrorism and opting for **punishment as a tool instead of denial** as a strategy. As a result, restructuring of the Indian Force Structure has taken place to cater for a short and swift military campaign which was once called as "Cold Start" and later renamed as proactive strategy. The aim is to carry out retaliatory attacks as a means to punish and deter Pakistan Army from encouraging terrorism in India and at the same time ensure that the conflict does not escalate into the level of nuclear weapons.
- However the Indian Army faces a series of challenges pertaining to the availability of critical equipment including select weapon systems and ammunition like air defence system, obsolete tanks and artillery, which will limit India's options for a proactive strategy. **Given the nature of terrorism which originates from Pakistan, it would have anticipated India's reaction to its provocations and thus will be better prepared to handle the situation.** This will limit the possibility of India implementing its proactive strategy. Further, given short fall of resources, India may not be in a position to sustain the operations beyond a few weeks.
- The Indian army has an overall manpower advantage of 2:1. However, in terms of deployment it will be closer to 1:1 with

18 divisions on either side. With current Pakistani deployment elsewhere, the ratio would be between 1.2-1.5:1. Thus, India does not have significant manpower advantage over Pakistani forces. Additionally, Pakistan Armoured forces are located closer to the border unlike India, and the Indian equipment face a number of limitations like obsolescence, limited night fighting capability etc, that further reduces the conventional edge.

- Because of these limitations, India can opt for air operations like striking terrorist bases and camps. However, the terrorist targets that are easy to attack are also those that have least strategic significance. The “most punitive targets are also the most provocative”. **Air strikes on the limited targets in terms of terrorist infrastructure in PoK, will have limited impact and will also result in all terrorist facilities going *underground*. Thus, air strikes may become symbolic actions and will not result in anything concrete.** Air attack and missile strikes have not been very successful the world over.
- Pakistan tries to project that its support to jihadis in Kashmir is moral and political in nature and thus being a political issue, it may not necessarily be amenable to conventional military options. Overall, South Asia is a region for an ugly stability but the India military is not the primary tool for addressing this situation.

❖ **China’s Nuclear Doctrine and Strategy – Implications for Deterrence**

- Chinese nuclear thinking and posturing has centred on the strategy of deterrence since a long time. While defining this strategic discourse Chinese strategists are not using words like ‘strategy and doctrine’, rather they are making it more realistic in terms of nuclear ‘policy’ which covers both strategic thinking and deterrence posturing. **The Chinese approach towards nuclear doctrine is primarily based on a survivable nuclear core structure that assures an effective second strike capability - thus making its nuclear deterrence**

'credible'. The Chinese are concerned with ensuring the efficacy of their deterrence capability and hence they heavily rely on assured nuclear retaliation and enhancing the survivability, for reassuring the ability to retaliate by ensuring shorter preparation timing. The basic campaign of the Second Artillery Corps is to ensure a limited second-strike force after absorbing the first-strike. There are two essential missions given to the Second Artillery Corps – nuclear retaliation and conventional missile attack campaigns.

- According to Chinese thinking, deterrence is the capacity of striking back after being struck by adversary. There is a clear thought on calculated ambiguity and how the Chinese approach the subject. China's nuclear thinking in terms of retaliating through a second strike means that retaliation will be carried out on the direction of the supreme command, however, the authority to launch a retaliatory strike could be delegated to lower levels under certain unspecified circumstances and therefore it has deliberate calculated ambiguity in the strategic guideline. What significantly continues to remain blurred in Chinese nuclear policy is the space between accepting the enemies' initial strike and use of pre-emption to defend the immediate attack. **From an Indian stand point, the most pointed ambiguity discussed from its doctrine is the conditions for NFU application in actual combat.** Will the NFU become a constraint as China pursues conflictual situations in areas which it claims to be its areas of core interests? The strategic discourse in China on minimum deterrence states, "... it has increased vulnerability of the state, because by adopting the NFU China has based its deterrence on retaliation and not denial".
- **Minimum deterrence from the Chinese perspective.** Chinese refer to nuclear effectiveness as nuclear minimalism – i.e., survivability from first strike and penetrating into adversaries' missile defence systems. During the operations, the C2 remains with CMC and its Chairman. However, the Chinese doctrinal strategies discussed in the public are not exactly as it is at operational or tactical level. The PLA especially the Second Artillery Corps has developed three

levels of doctrinal concepts:

- Credible minimal deterrence.
 - Shifting from credible minimum deterrence to limited deterrence.
 - Pre-emptive counterforce for fighting posture vis-à-vis China's active defence strategy concerns.
- **Nuclear Modernisation.** The debate surrounding deterrence in China points increasingly towards the viability of a robust modernisation campaign. **Chairman Mao had stated that nuclear modernisation shall be guided by three principles – building few weapons, keeping the number small, making the quality high**". The "great leap" in Chinese nuclear modernisation has been enabled by the militarisation of warheads with improvised delivery systems, solid-fuel technology and road-mobile vehicles. With the Chinese retaliatory capabilities remaining at risk, reliance on the expanded mobile force has grown in order to restore the value of China's deterrent. This includes increasing the mobility of the mechanised forces; enhance survivability of deployed assets, and free targeting position data.
- **Trends in Missile Developments.** The land-based and cruise ballistic missile forces have 38 operational missile units which are heavily oriented towards mobile-launched systems. **The Second Artillery Corps is developing short-range missiles which will be usable in local wars.** This consequently raises the question of the possibility of use of these tactical weapons for nuclear strikes in a limited war scenario. The units are further organised into brigades and each brigade has numerous warheads maintained in one or more garrisons, underground facilities, transfer points and field launch positions.
- **Cruise Missiles.** Chinese are focusing on producing large number of ground-launched cruise missiles. **The ground launched CJ-**

10 missiles with a range of 1,500 kms and can be designated both as a nuclear and conventional missile. To increase the sea-based deterrent, **China has introduced the SLBM range on the Type 094 SSBNs. The increased range versions are estimated to being beyond 7,400 kms.** With this, China's sea-based nuclear deterrent shall compliment its land-based systems.

- **Growing power projection in the Indian Ocean Region by China has been in focus with the deployment of its new Type 093 Shang-class fast attack nuclear submarine for three months in IOR in 2013-14.** Although the Chinese have stated that these initiatives are to assist its counter-piracy operations, however, the submarines were simultaneously conducting area familiarisation as well. On its western borders, **more than two percent of China's Tibet railway line is made of tunnels, which can be used as a secure storage sites for ballistic missiles.** Further, the Second Artillery Corps could use this high speed railway network to deploy short-range ballistic missiles in "certain strategic directions" [as reported in Chinese media] with strict ambiguity being maintained about the same.

❖ **Evolving Counterforce Strategy and Capabilities: Implications for Deterrence**

- Counterforce capabilities are evolving globally. **Revolution in military affairs (RMA) is happening in many states, in the form of upgrading accurate GPS guided cruise missiles, armed UAVs, and other stand-off platforms.** As these platforms spread, it raises interesting questions about deterrence, strategy, and escalation control. The capability will become more apparent in South Asia and elsewhere. The dilemma is whether it can be embedded in strategic thought that mitigates the very serious deterrence stability implications of these capabilities.
- **It is important to distinguish between nuclear and conventional counter force, which has different capability requirements and**

different deterrence logics. One has to start with capabilities, since supposition is that capabilities lead strategy, which in itself is an admittedly problematic assumption. Necessary capability conditions for successful counter force strategy include: Precision-guidance; ISR (Intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition, and reconnaissance) for real-time targeting; real time platforms with long loiter; air and air defence suppression; robust communications etc. Also, more of a software requirement: political military decision chain that can execute time sensitive missions.

- Today, few states are able to integrate all of these aspects to create a real-time counterforce capability – perhaps five or six states in total. Even the states that have it, don't always get it right, for example, the use of Russian cruise missiles in Syria. Weapons platforms are becoming more ubiquitous and guidance systems more precise, but enabling capabilities, namely ISR, are still the long pole in the tent. A decade from now, the number of states with conventional counter force will probably be closer to 10, including India and perhaps Pakistan.
- **New developments viz hyper sonic prompt strike weapons; cyber; anti space; missile defence will continue to shape evolving environment for counterforce, with substantial deterrence stability implications** – especially if perceived to threaten survivability of strategic forces. This leads to the more interesting questions on strategy, specifically what possession of a credible counterforce capability does for deterrence stability given implications for vulnerability, preemption and escalation control.
- US, Russia and Israel have used what essentially are counter force capabilities (including armed drones) in counter terrorist missions, or against enemies that have had minimal response capability; mostly this raises questions of efficacy, not of deterrence or conflict escalation. Other evidence about the effects of nuclear counter force comes mostly from big power relations – US-Russia and US-China.

In these dyads, as noted previously, we see upward pressures on arsenals and force postures because of concern about survivability.

- As US and Russia shifted from assured counter value response capabilities, targeting requirements went way up. Multiple Independently Reentry Vehicles (MIRVs) added an even more pernicious variable. Arsenal sizes went through the roof and alert levels were also raised. Some of this dynamic is playing out between US and China today – development of prompt strike platforms are perceived to threaten survivability of Chinese assured response capability – result is MIRVing of some DF5 missiles, consideration of anti-space, development of similar platforms, and fuel to fire on long running Chinese debate about NFU, numbers and posture.
- Much of the literature and evidence about counter force is steeped in Cold War philosophy of nuclear deterrence, thus may or may not have great purchase for considering today's environment, in which precision conventional counterforce capabilities have similar properties as small nuclear weapons, but raise fewer moral issues, whose use would have less stigma. Even so, **it is possible to identify a number of dilemmas raised by development of conventional counterforce.** These are briefly covered in the succeeding paragraphs.
- First is the **escalation control** – Counterforce capability permits greater calibration of targeting, which could be useful in tit-for-tat (if such thing is even possible in the real world beyond game theory). At the same time, it removes or perhaps weakens a potential firebreak that contributes to escalation control by providing ability to reach targets much further from borders. In South Asian context, LoC shelling is understood, controlled, very unlikely to escalate beyond geographic and, to an extent has lethality limitations. Removing these constraints suggests much harder ability to maintain limits on both means and objectives for violence, and thus very difficult to control escalation.

- Second is **precedence** – It is somewhat related to escalation control in the sense that possession of counter force capability removes a barrier on limitation of means of violence that might be present out of concerns of morality associated with potential for collateral damage. For instance, recently (and belatedly) there are significant concerns in Washington about the precedence problem with UAV warfare viz how to establish norms of use. Counter force is similar. Cross border use of UAVs or cruise missiles will set a new precedent. States would want to consider long term implications.
- Third is **damage limitation and survivability** – Robust counter force creates theoretical possibility for offensive damage limitation. With nuclear that was a concern in Cold War. There is a need to focus greater resources on survivability and mobility, which then also raises use control issues. Another is concerns about use or lose pressures early in a conflict, particularly with mobile assets. These used to be unique to nuclear counter force, but now the problem is posed for precise conventional capabilities as well.
- Fourth is the **dual-use discrimination** – Prevalence of systems that can carry conventional or nuclear warheads pose challenge of discrimination. If adversary's nuclear assets are threatened or attacked, even if attacker thought they were targeting conventional capabilities, it would provoke a nuclear retaliation.
- Finally, the **escalation dominance** – Search for capabilities to establish escalation dominance abets arms race pressures. For India, in this regard, counter force capabilities highlight the challenges described as the disjuncture in nuclear and conventional doctrines. India could find itself in a situation where the gap between an offensive conventional strategy aided by counter force, unintentionally highlights the credibility problem of a defensive nuclear doctrine that is delinked from the spectrum of warfare.
- The deterrence stability implications of development of counter force capabilities: whether nuclear or conventional, raises a host of

very difficult questions for strategy. And this is a problem in so far as the capability tends to outpace strategic thought and doctrine – a problem not unique to big powers, or the Cold War, but for contemporary regional security.

❖ **Placing India in Nuclear World Order**

- There is an ugly world order that exists in the nuclear world today. Multiple aspects have emerged in this nuclear world order or disorder (as some call it), but the issue is - where does India stand in this Nuclear World.
- The events that forced India to go nuclear, include 1962 war and conflict with Pakistan in 1965, in which China threatened India more than once. India didn't have any answer because China had tested its nuclear capabilities in 1964. During the war of 1971 with Pakistan, India being coerced by both China and US, was not left with any choice but to tread on the nuclear path. Thus, in less than three years from then, India carried out its first nuclear explosion in May 1974. **India entered the nuclear world not by choice but by compulsion.**
- Some analysts attribute the volatile situation in South Asia to India, by holding it responsible for the arms race including nuclear weapons with Pakistan. It must be understood that there has been never a requirement for India to go nuclear in context with Pakistan as India has always enjoyed a conventional superiority over Pakistan. **Pakistan was never India's target as far as nuclear deterrence is concerned. India had no requirement of deterrence by nuclear means against Pakistan. It was proven in 1965, demonstrated in 1971 and thereafter, in containment of cross border terrorism.**
- India always chose and recommended the path of **nuclear disarmament** to the world. It was the geopolitical situation which warranted that India should also go nuclear in line with the nuclearisation of its neighbourhood. When India tested its Nuclear

weapons in 1998, it clearly enunciated that this is to protect its strategic interests, and thus, came out with a nuclear doctrine which unambiguously enunciates its nuclear strategy.

- **India has imposed a self moratorium on its nuclear programme after it conducted six tests. The US has not ratified the CTBT even after 1000 tests.** The question is who is determining the nuclear world order? These are the leading powers viz USA along with Russia, China, UK and France. Further, the lack of progress on the disarmament issues will trouble the world order in decades to come, unless nuclear powers arrive at a consensus on this.
- India always followed rules and regulations of MTCR (Missile Technology Control Regime), and never shared technology with any other states and controlled the needs rather than expanding immensely.
- The FMCT (Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty) has seen no progress. The consensus on FMCT is as elusive as on the CD (Conference on Disarmament) because of China and Pakistan. Pakistan could not have constructed and designed the nuclear capabilities which it has created at Khushab by itself and it is well known where the help came from. Therefore, within the Nuclear World Order, there are countries with destabilising order and the world needs to examine that. Even today, the (nuclear) world has not abided by the **Clause 6 of the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT)**. However, India has not violated any of the NPT norms. Its very evident that there is no progress on the issue of Nuclear Disarmament; in fact it may have gone in the reverse direction.
- The emergence of newer nuclear weapon states, whether it is North Korea or Pakistan, have been abetted and aided by China and they form the mainstream of the Nuclear World Order. It is a dilemma which the world needs to look at. China's proxy state North Korea continues to rattle the US every now and then.

- **In the modern world, Space and Cyber domains are adding to the new nuclear dimension.** The world needs to take into consideration the larger picture as far as the Nuclear World Order is concerned. India is the most restrained Nuclear Power in the world because it has declared No First Use (NFU).
- India is not on any trigger alert situation; however nations and countries which are on trigger alert need to re-examine how it impacts the nuclear world order. India is not a perpetrator of arms race like Pakistan, which is producing many nuclear weapons every year including Tactical Nuclear Weapons (TNWs).
- India's stand may not be fully aligned to opinion of western countries, but its political leadership is very clear about what is to be done if a nuclear situation is thrust upon it, and those who disbelieve it do it at their peril. India does not brandish its signals every morning, therefore it would be wrong to assume that India would freeze at the explosion of first TNW (Tactical Nuclear Weapon). The Indian Armed Forces are designed to fight in the CBRN environment. India will retain escalation dominance if forced to go nuclear. India would retaliate in a manner that the adversary should be prepared to cease to exist. In Indian perspective, the conditions for going to nuclear war would be – when its very existence is at stake.

Conclusion

The seminar highlighted a number of issues related to the changing contours of the deterrence. It covered the whole gamut of deterrence, starting from sub conventional level to conventional and leading to nuclear deterrence. The deterrence stability implications of development of counter force capabilities: whether nuclear or conventional, raises a host of very difficult questions for strategy. The nuclear deterrence capabilities of the two neighbours viz China and Pakistan were well articulated including the use of TNWs by Pakistan. One point which clearly emerged during the course of dialogue was India's take on nuclear deterrence strategy. It was emphatically expressed that the threat of use of TNWs would not deter India to respond to Pakistan's

misadventures including acts of terrorism. It can be concluded that the central notion in the concept of 'deterrence relationship' is that a stable deterrence does not magically or alchemically emerge if two adversary states have nuclear weapons, but rather is an edifice that must be slowly and carefully constructed. Overall, it was a useful exercise to have such a dialogue between Indian and US Think tanks and it concluded with the resolve to have many more such interactions in the future.