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Bid for Nuclear Suppliers Group Membership: A Critique of Pakistan's Diplomacy

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Abstract *This paper attempts to analyze Pakistani policy positions through interviews from academic experts and officials of Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamabad, and secondary sources including media reports, research journals and onlire resources. Since India's bid for the membership of Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) in June 2016, an intense debate has started over its impact on the stability of South Asia and its effects on Pakistan's nuclear strategy with respect to India. This paper focuses on how this has effected Pakistan's policy options; how Pakistan raised this issue in the past at international level to build up a counter-narrative against India's move. With realignment on membership in NSG for India based on criteria-based approach makes Pakistan's position as a center of gravity in the context of this campaign demanding for a firm diplomatic and political resolve. Failure in this aspect may result in losing Pakistan's case for membership in future. The analysis presents recommendations in light of comparing views for future measures.*

Key Words:

Nuclear Suppliers Group, Nuclear Proliferation Treaty, Missile Technology Control Regime, International Atomic Energy Agency, CTBT, Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority

Introduction

In the present times of fast diplomacy and real-time media's reaction on global politics, International Relations are largely dependent on how foreign policy of a country is shared and communicated in unison to the world on a certain issue. In given circumstances, Pakistan's foreign policy apparatus is also examined within this arena to see whether it is proactive or reactionary in the backdrop of India's diplomatic move for Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) membership. It is imperative to see the policy position of Pakistan and diplomatic mechanism that drew the attention of the world towards Pakistan's bid for membership in the NSG. This paper is divided into three sections; the first presents the historical background of Pakistan-India's nuclear development programs and International Players' role in non-proliferation, second, nuclear diplomacy as foreign policy

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agenda and third, Pakistan's diplomatic posture on NSG membership and challenges supported by the opinions of academic experts and policy circles.

Pakistan-India's Nuclear Development Program and Nuclear Non-Proliferation

The history of nuclear development in South Asia begins with Indian nuclear test - "Smiling Budha" in 1974 which gave a new drive to the nascent nuclear program of Pakistan. India's motive behind nuclear capability was based on China as the main threat in developing its nuclear capability. Feeling naive about its testing, India was confident about Pakistan's technical incompetence in nuclear technology. However, Pakistan's nuclear development program that had started in 1950's gained momentum in late 1970's which was derived mainly from India's hegemonic designs that became evident in 1971 war. Despite the U.S. pressure and economic sanctions which were imposed time to time, the first manifestation of Pakistan nuclear test took place in May 1998 after India conducted its second nuclear explosion in 1998.

The history of nuclear development gives a pretext of present day scenario that has headed towards non-proliferation more seriously leading to various stringent measures from international players. "India's test in 1974 was a friendly punch in the nerves; a wake-up call for the international community to take non-proliferation more seriously. Though Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) had only entered into force in 1970, it was fairly new and undeveloped; therefore, it had to be supplemented by strong measures on export controls. The NSG was established in 1974 as a direct result of India's so-called peaceful nuclear explosion. Actually, India had violated its commitment using imported nuclear technology for only peaceful purpose" (Einhorn, 2015).

The dynamics of South Asia have totally changed due to nuclear development program of India and Pakistan in last few decades. Pakistan's nuclear tests of 1998 have prevented India from proving its prowess and hegemony in South Asia. (Waltz, 1981) states, even with an unclear status of Pakistan's nuclear posture in the beginning and its potential to react back to India had reserved the latter to conduct any test in the next decade (p.15). The role of international players has remained subjective and somewhat biased towards the nuclear development and nuclear non-proliferation agenda for Pakistan and India. For example, the legislation on Symington and Glenn Amendments (1976 and 1977) was a kick start to impose economic sanctions on Pakistan by halting the U.S. military and economic assistance in April, 1979 More specifically, the NSG cartel also enforced restrictions on its members for any kind of nuclear export to Pakistan in the wake of such sanctions which kept coming in the way of Pakistan's nuclear development program ("India-Pakistan nuclear rivalry" p.55). Contrary to this, India was not dealt with the same harshness. These sanctions

not only harmed Pakistan's budding nuclear power program, but also blocked its access to dual- use high technology (Jaspal, 2009, p.15).

Although, the history of non-proliferation dates back to the foundation of IAEA in 1957, followed by a landmark establishment of Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968, the expansion and proliferation of nuclear technology somehow continued. This led to the formulation of different check and balance mechanisms that were supposed to stop nuclear proliferation including Zangar Committee, NSG, Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and Wassenaar Arrangements (Khan, 2016). Changing dynamics of states aspiring to overcome their ever-growing energy demand and economic needs were other major concerns in addition to security concerns that led to the establishment of such non-proliferation regimes; NSG, a body of 48 members was established, therefore, in 1974 with the same spirit to protect the use of nuclear technology for military purposes.

In the drive to meet economic needs and national security as main driving factors, both India and Pakistan kept pursuing their nuclear development program which never became normalized despite the fact legal mechanisms were in place. The nuclear history of South Asia also reflects a strategic involvement of China and U.S., playing an active role in the nuclear development of non-NPT signatory's i.e. India and Pakistan. The U.S.-India's civilian nuclear deal signed in 2008 had a severe impact on the regional security as India did not have NPT and Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) signed till now. This deal has evidently shown an asymmetrical approach of the U.S. by exempting India and grabbing Pakistan in its principle policy of non-proliferation agenda. Consequently, it has helped India get legitimacy over Pakistan for expansion of its civilian nuclear program to strengthen its military might. Pakistan's nuclear development program is largely seen as a country with the terrible record of nuclear proliferation.

Dr. A.Q. Khan confessed in 2004 of his involvement in covert nuclear transfer to Iran, North Korea and Libya until 2000 (The International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament's report on Eliminating Nuclear Threats, 2009). Thus, Pakistan's die-hard need for nuclear energy is subsided and overlooked due to this negative global perception and biased U.S. policy towards Pakistan.

It is counted as a diplomatic success for India which has retained its standpoint on nuclear testing through U.S.-India nuclear deal, 2008 that *London Post* reports, resulted in number of benefits and agreements including the U.S. assurance of Indian nuclear recognition; NSG waiver, $4 billion loans and investments, ten-year bilateral defence agreement and most importantly, permanent seat in the UNSC (London Post, 2018). In this view, India's ever-expanding nuclear programme has compelled Pakistan to continue its course on nuclear development to counter hegemonic designs. It is the same reason as Dr.

P.I. Cheema, Dean Faculty of Contemporary Sciences, National Defence University (personal communication, November 13, 2016) says, when a country was pushed back against the wall like Pakistan, it had to look towards China for nuclear development and meet its energy demand. China's unrelenting support to Pakistan for its peaceful nuclear cooperation under 'grandfather' clause of international law enabled Pakistan to carry its civil energy programme for meeting energy demands. Thus, international politics has itself affected the nuclear non-proliferation issue in the form of alliances and deals which have engulfed the countries to pursue and find solutions to the nuclear proliferation based on politics and national interest.

Nuclear Diplomacy as Foreign Policy Agenda

In international relations, as stated by Hook (2015), national priorities, leadership's style, policy papers and recommendations of think tanks, intelligence reports, public opinion and media are important factors that shape foreign policy agenda (p.138). So any agenda set by these main elements determines the path for diplomacy apparatus of a state which according to Jean Robert-Leguey-Feilleux, the author of *Dynamics of Diplomacy*, is an actual implementation of foreign policy and provides a road map to how to go about it (p.8). Douglas Herd (cited in Sharp, 2009) says, countries good at diplomacy are sometimes said to be "punching above their weight" (p.56). This means diplomacy is an important domain for foreign policy to push its agenda and achieve the desired results with perception management central to it. In pursuing foreign policy agenda, the role of media is critical in the foreign policy domain especially in diplomacy when a country has to take a firm stand and reinforce its message globally. (Berridge, 2002) says, media has to be manipulated usefully to test opinions, thoughts and policy choices; shaping opinion; keeping momentum through perception management by sharing achievements and weighing various aspects of negotiation process (p.11).

In this context, the candidacy of India and Pakistan shows an interesting basis to examine the diplomacy mechanism for membership in NSG. At international level, states carry diplomacy to the degree of success they pursue their agenda. It is in this context, Pakistan's bid for NSG membership needs to be analyzed as to what extent diplomacy has achieved desired results, and could take this agenda forward at International level. Further what measures need to be adopted in future?

Despite the fact that NPT is the main yardstick to enter into NSG cartel, both India and Pakistan, the non-signatories of NPT have applied to NSG membership. They present this case on two grounds. First, both possess a striving civil nuclear energy program. Second, both aspire to legitimatize their de-facto nuclear status through NSG entrance. This leads to a debate over a diplomatic

posture from India and Pakistan towards the issue. India moved its membership on May 10, 2016 as the U.S.-India civilian nuclear deal, 2008 proved to be a "done deal" to pursue its case with more ease. India not only got a clean waiver from NSG rather signed bi-lateral agreements with other states in this cover. *The Hindu* reports, this agreement was aimed to allow NSG members to buy and sell nuclear technology to India despite having the non-NPT status ("NSG: All set", 2011). Taking this into account, it is perceived that India pursued its agenda against international norms of nuclear testing ignoring the NPT article-II through proactive nuclear diplomacy. This posture has remained one of the critical factors for India's steady progress in the nuclear development arena. With the signing of this unprecedented nuclear deal, India signed civilian nuclear agreements with around two dozen countries and an equal number of industrial houses while aspiring for the membership of NSG.

Pakistan's nuclear development program is seen from the backdrop of a negative perception that is ignited by India and western countries with an apprehension on its safety and high risk of falling into the hands of terrorists. This view became more vivid in the media reports that Pakistan might lose the opportunity of joining the club with intensive U.S opposition as well as restrictions on Pakistani companies for involvement in nuclear trade. (Shahid, 2018) said, U.S's move shows a deliberation that it want to stumble Pakistan ahead of upcoming NSG meeting because it has not provided record that why it has blocked Pakistani companies ("U.S. sanctions", 2018). This trend is consistently projected in U.S. media reports despite international nuclear experts confirmed the safety of Pakistan's nuclear program under the strict command and control mechanism. This is supported with IAEA's Former Deputy Director General, Denis Flory's views about Pakistan's took serious approach to the security of nuclear arsenal as a national responsibility since it placed its action plan in 2006, *Dawn* reported.

This action plan, Flory adds, is a road map which has contributed $1.16 million to nuclear security fund in order to implement this plan with an aim to strengthen its nuclear security and proving its strong leadership and commitment towards nuclear security ("Pakistan reaffirms", 2014). In this view, Pakistan therefore, faces more challenges in the nuclear landscape keeping Indian threat in view and an entirely hostile environment created by negative perceptions and the U.S. strategic partnership with India which has subjected South Asia towards miscalculation of nuclear power.

Pakistan's Diplomatic Posture on NSG Membership

Based on the above assumption on Pakistan's policy position on NSG often reported in the news media is cross-examined with views of academic experts and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamabad to get a comprehensive

perspective on two major assumptions. First, eligibility of Pakistan's bid for NSG membership which is mostly seen as a reaction to Indian's bid as submitted just ten days after India had applied for membership. "Pakistan's Ambassador in Vienna sent a letter to the chair of the NSG on May 20, 2016 to formally apply for NSG membership" (Khan, 2016). This reflects that Pakistan's lobbying foundation lacks a proactive stance instead, it is India centric and reactionary, identifying diplomacy gap in itself.

The academic circles are also debating over the Pakistan's policy positions and official take on the matter. A.S. Hashmi, Associate Professor, National Defense University (NDU), Islamabad argues as in most of Pakistan's policies particularly, the external ones are reactionary on the issue of NSG as well; it was more of in response to India's proactive policy to get approval for its membership that made Pakistani policy makers reach out to the international community. Most of the diplomatic efforts were to convince other countries to consider Pakistan's membership as well if they had to support India's bid. Having said that, it is also important not to ignore some of the diplomatic engagements by the advisers to put forward Pakistan's case. Similarly, "India-centrism of Pakistan's foreign policy frameworks has not only been detrimental to the country's foreign policy aspirations, but has also raised concerns over the attitude of Pakistan's foreign policy authors and projectors terming their approach "passive" and "reactionary" (Butt, 2016 p.14).

The response from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs official, M. K. Akhtar, Director General Disarmament presented as a denial over lack of responsiveness from Pakistan. He said, Pakistan did not apply earlier until May, 2016 because an understanding was given to Pakistan that NSG was still analyzing the political, technical and legal status of non-NPT states, and they were not yet ready to entertain applications because NSG were premised on NPT issue. In the meantime, the U.S. pushed Indian case discriminately at the NSG forum. Even before 2008, Pakistan has been pleading for membership. "We have been approaching the NSG verbally for Pakistan's membership. So, it was not at all a reaction to Indian application to the club. Pakistan started focusing on its credentials since quite long. Pakistan has done more homework than India, and to this date, Pakistan's credential list for NSG membership is more comprehensive as compared to Indian list", he remarked. This shows responsiveness has been on time as reported, but Pakistan's proactive diplomatic posture in public seems missing as per its official policy position which became public after India's membership case.

Offensive diplomacy has remained central to India's diplomacy agenda which expedited in the wake of U.S.-India nuclear deal, 2008. The efforts from Indian side had started in 2005 to engage the international community on civilian nuclear deals. This is a debatable issue that despite evidentiary reports showing international community's concern over the exemption as Carlson, 2018) argue,

India's Separation Plan did not offer a complete IAEA safeguard mechanism to all of its nuclear reactors related to civilian assistance thus they could be exploited for its military purpose (p.11), even then, India was given exemption for NSG. Although India could not enter into the club in the last Seoul meeting held from 23th-24th June 2016, it was considered to be a win-win situation for India to play its card with China who was still outside the MTCR. Pakistan has termed its diplomatic effort as a success in terms of refusal given to India to NSG. However analysts view this from different perspective. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal (2009) says, due to aggressive lobbying with the U.S. allies and sustained diplomacy posture, India has steadily moved ahead in getting the membership of MTCR which would be a step closer to the nuclear club (p.21).

This is a fact that Pakistan has made its policy position clear to member countries, but India's entrance to MTCR has got support from the Western countries and in other terms is a way forward to get closer to the NSG cartel. Pakistan's response seems reactionary as the Former Adviser to the Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on Foreign Affairs, Sartaj Aziz briefed media, quoted in *Dawn* that over the fall out of Indian diplomacy was because of Pakistan's intensive diplomatic lobbying and thus, India could not get a clear pass for NSG (Dawn, 2016, June 27). This will bear a serious impact on Pakistan's bid for the membership as (Saeed , 2016) argues, India will be on edge to get its goals achieved after its admission to the NSG, criticizing over foreign policy lacking calculated measures for achieving same stature for Pakistan in future. Shamshad Ahmad, former Ambassador and a savvy diplomat also called it a foreign policy failure by not determining its position over U.S.-India civilian nuclear deal in 2008, termed NSG's waiver an illegitimate step despite the fact India has shown non-compliance to NPT. The international media has also reflected in *The New York Times* with the headline, accepting India's de-facto nuclear status, at the same time criticizing it over noncompliance to NPT. The report also deliberates on the consequences of leaving Pakistan out which could continue its path of nuclear proliferation like it did with Iran, North Korea and Libya in the past ("No exceptions for a nuclear India", 2016). Such reports suggest that the western media appear to have accepted India as a "nuclear state" while Pakistan's position is still framed in negative terms. This poses a serious challenge for the Pakistan's diplomatic force to take concrete steps so that negative connotations could be dealt with carefully crafted messages.

Similarly, the impact of "India-specific" entry to NSG is an important factor that Pakistan has stated very clearly to the members that once India becomes NSG member ahead of Pakistan, it would surely block any follow-on for such a bid for Pakistan in future. Dr. P.I. Cheema says, there is a difference in being inside and outside of the club, terming it critical for Pakistan to do strong lobbying for on-time membership. It has serious repercussions that once India gets inside, it will sabotage membership from inside for Pakistan. in addition,

India has also strongly pursued its case of ‘nuclear route' since long to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, and NSG will be a first concrete step towards it. On Pakistan's front, Col (R) Z. A. Khan, Director General, Strategic Export Control Division (SECDIV), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Islamabad (personal communication November 14, 2016) responded, it was important for Pakistani policy makers to strategize for this issue. "I will not comment over why Pakistan did not object at this point, but it should not have been done", he added. This supports the study argument that Pakistan's foreign policy was silent at the time when the U.S. had pressured Pakistan for Indian exemption over the NSG membership in 2008. This was an opportunity lost for Pakistan's diplomatic stance. Akhtar however, denied this perception saying, Pakistan's lobbying proved successful in identifying certain shortcomings in Indian safeguard agreements which they signed in 2008 with IAEA, adding, "In fact, Pakistan's Foreign Office very diligently presented its case right on time while gauging the environment" For example, the Belfer Center stated in its report that 2008 exemption had actually compromised over strategic and security stability of South Asia and it could become the basis for NSG membership, acknowledging that India expedited its fissile missile program for military purposes after getting this exemption. As a result, Pakistan, Akhtar remarked, was now seen as a serious candidate for membership at par with India. These facts show that Pakistan made a quantum progress on two grounds. First, its case for membership right after India's move. Second, in sensitizing the international community over undue favor to India's un-safeguarded approach towards nuclear safety, demanding for an objective and non-discriminatory decision for incumbent countries.

Given NSG's strategic value for the nuclear security and its scope for maximizing outreach for nuclear non-proliferation, it has created an imbalance in South Asia by some of the NSG members who desired "India's only" entry. The perceptive diplomatic stance from India over the NSG issue has been consistent in blaming Pakistan. (Chaurasiya, 2016) senior Indian research fellow at the Center for Arms Program argues, Pakistan's attempt for the NSG membership is full of diplomatic moves at multilateral forums targeted against India. On the NSG membership, it has again adopted of comparing itself with India. Pakistan does not possess a reliable nuclear non-proliferation history; its sole aim is to spoil Indian efforts (p.1). From the prism of Indian claim, Pakistan's nuclear strength and diplomatic strategy are analyzed how Pakistan's progress has been on the diplomatic front after its formal application. Amir Ali, official of Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA) said, comparing with safety and security mechanism in Pakistan over non-proliferation, it was far stronger than India. For example, the nuclear safety of all civilian nuclear installations in Pakistan was regulated by PNRA. At present, five operational nuclear facilities in the country including three nuclear power plants and two research reactors all adhered to the

IAEA safeguards. India, on the contrary with eight reactors was not regulated uniformly under IAEA. Similarly, Akhtar argued, Pakistan has been working on Export Control Act since 2000 for which the first national export control list was prepared in 2007 in compliance with NSG guidelines. Pakistan submitted a detailed 300-page report that Foreign Office submitted after a thorough analysis and equipped with information and resources on export control mechanism.

After a strong objection from China over "India-specific" approach during the Seoul meeting, Indian leadership has continued its momentum showing fast-track diplomatic progress by engaging with China through intense negotiations. Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi's Government has raised the issue on media and with delegates of member countries to get onto the NSG cartel. India and China held, "substantive and constructive" discussions as India's bid for NSG membership held during the second round of talks between their top nuclear experts in Beijing. Modi held one-to-one talks with Chinese Premier, Xi-Jinping in Tashkent just a day before the NSG meeting was scheduled. After China's veto, India has been pursuing a strong lobby at work and meeting senior officials in China's diplomatic circles. (NDTV, 2016, October 31).

Indian media's aggressive posture was also reported by the international mainstream media. (Bearak , 2016) says reflects a tug of war between Indian and Chinese media is reflected in news reports, blaming each other for having nuclear proliferation record. The report quotes, *Global Times, a* Chinese newspaper that Indian media aggressively drove propaganda against China and developed strong public opinion over the issue while framing it in a negative light. The report further highlights that China has demanded for "norm-based" instead of discriminatory selection of Indian media coverage. This shows that Indian media is proactively taking the issue in public and generating anti-Chinese sentiment after its refusal to Indian induction to the club. This manifested an Indian's bid for membership is not based on principles rather supported with political and diplomatic strategies to proceed for the membership case.

A competition for nuclear capability has remained a serious issue for economic progress and bringing stability to South Asia region. In this scenario, India's jingoism for nuclear development has majorly compelled Pakistan to remain India-centric in its foreign policy which remains the main deadlock in taking the region to development path. Thus, NSG membership and South Asian security dynamics are closely inter-linked. Pakistan's credentials of NSG also show that nuclear energy is a critical component of energy mix which it requires for meeting its energy crisis. Nuclear energy can take Pakistan out of energy shortfall and social unrest as its cause. Currently, It makes the 2.34 percent of Pakistan's total energy generation which is insufficient for meeting energy demands ("Civilian nuclear deal", 2016 March 13). The membership for Pakistan and India will bring regional stability by restricting nuclear proliferation and

economic stability to the energy starving region. Otherwise, a country-specific exemption to India will ignite the nuclear race and instability in South Asia.

It is a well-established fact that NSG exemption was driven by the U.S. interest to build India as a counter-weight to China. France and Russia even started negotiating nuclear cooperation with India, year before NSG exemption got finalized. At one hand, the U.S. desired for a nuclear restrain and improved relations between India and Pakistan, on other hand; it pursues actions which accelerate arms race and instability, showing its double standards. This speaks for U.S duality towards nuclear non-proliferation agenda.

There was a complete disregard to how the NSG exemption would impact the regional stability in South Asia. The NSG exemption at one hand freed up India's domestic reserves for the military program due to lack of proper safeguards in the supply of foreign nuclear material, it further facilitated India's nuclear weapon development and increased nuclear race in South Asia. This is a major factor that the NSG is now fixed in dilemma for giving NSG membership to India. Though U.S. continues to push for "India-only" approach including the UK and Russia, there is a favorable stance for Pakistan too as China and other members including Austria, Ireland, Argentina and New Zealand have called for deliberations and many amongst them favored Pakistan's argument of a criteria-based approach. This gives leverage to Pakistan to move diplomatic machinery in a calculated manner.

In this scenario, Pakistan's diplomacy is required at both domestic and international level. At present, Pakistan's efforts have moved the debate in the right direction. NSG is faced with a challenge to rectify its global image and regulate disequilibrium caused due to the Indian-specific approach of great powers. This myopic bequest has come up to the NSG table since Pakistan raised its viewpoint at the diplomatic level, recently. However, it's not sufficient as Akhtar maintains, the only diplomatic talk from Foreign Office is not enough. It gives an impression that Pakistan wants membership in the NSG for military purpose.

It is the media, politicians and intelligentsia who should collectively raise their voice so that once they start speaking for a certain issue; it conveys a positive signal to the international community as a collective aspiration of Pakistan. He argues, the problem is somehow that this issue does not appear to be a newsworthy issue for Pakistani media. The journalists rarely approach the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for this issue. When the Government briefs them, they do not have requisite political and diplomatic background. He recommends for media-specific training that educate journalists to write comprehensively on such issues. For example in UK, there is course on disarmament for Journalists, which educates their media on diplomatic processes and foreign policy on export control and disarmament issues. Such orientation and regular engagement with media and think tanks are required to educate journalists to build a counter-

narrative which is already damaging Pakistan's image by the Indian journalists. This shows that Pakistan's Foreign Office lacks a dedicated public diplomacy setup to confront the challenges through a proactive diplomatic force which is the gap in its defense, despite having a mighty military and secure nuclear capability.

For Pakistan, a criteria-based approach is the official response to address this conflict. It has indicated its interest to play its part as a mainstream partner in global non-proliferation efforts therefore, calls for neutral criteria for membership for India and Pakistan. Freedom (2015) cautions over the unintentional cost of the biased decision taken by NSG based on geopolitics, rather than uplifting the non-proliferation cause. He also suggests for a thorough review of the pros and cons of criteria-based membership to non-NPT states including India and Pakistan that would be helpful for establishing the culture of nuclear control that ultimately stabilizes South Asia (p. 44). Col (R) Khan also states that Ministry of Foreign Affairs is pursuing an active diplomacy through sharing information with think tanks, but it is not only public diplomacy that carries all the weight. On responding to a row of Indian leadership's visits to member countries, he maintains, it is also the economy, market dynamics, political and bureaucratic fabric that speak for itself and push forward a country's agenda more swiftly.

On the account of diplomacy, Col (R) Khan says, the international community needs to see what has been achieved for giving exemption to India by NSG. Assessing on three main points; commercial; political norms or geopolitics, nothing significant has happened. He says, it has been a mix if targets are to be evaluated. For example, on commercial basis, the U.S. business lobby was intended to create 27000 jobs by the U.S. companies. The U.S. intended to earn more than $100 million through selling nuclear technology to India which never happened. On the other side, India benefitted from gaining access to the nuclear installations in the U.S. Thus, it has damaged the non-proliferation norms of NSG which was the very basis of this non-proliferation regime. Pakistan has turned the situation to its favor in the backdrop of Indian bid because this move is now criticized in the Western think tank lobby, and as result, the case for NSG has gone more critical by weighing options for Pakistan now seen as a serious candidate in the competition.

Pakistan has to take other countries in its network besides China by expediting diplomatic efforts at all levels. It has not to work in isolation nor should it look towards China and U.S. only. Hashmi suggests, the U.S. support is clearly there for India and one needs to see it in connection with a host of other objectives that the U.S.'s larger interests demand vis-a-vis India. Hence, NSG membership for India is linked with U.S.-India strategic partnership and its confidence on India's responsible nuclear state status. But due to India's reluctance towards NPT and CTBT, a strong argument did come as a point to argue against its position on nuclear non-proliferation. Pakistan along with China

will continue to press on this point in future too, it has to take Turkey which has also been quite vocal on the issue and opposed India. The discourse on the issue would be focused more on India's decision to adhere to NPT and CTBT as Pakistan has a strong argument that if the rules are bent for India then Pakistan fulfills the credential as well. Col (R) Khan explaining official view says, Pakistan's purview for membership to NSG is to supply its products and services. It is not reactionary nor is it blocking India's technical credentials, "when we diversify our services we need to expand our circle to get diverse markets as international relations have gone more complex on the principle of interdependence", he remarked. Technically, Pakistan is equally capable of supplying as well as offering technical assistance to the members of NSG and it supports this idea ("Pakistan's Credentials for NSG" Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan, August 2016). This argument is supported by international agencies as a well-rounded approach for the NSG is needed to get benefit from states who have increased and possess important responsive potential particularly, "reprocessing and uranium enrichment (Hibbs, 2016).

Based on above arguments, Pakistan has sought to take the membership issue to its favor up till now in the perspective of India. Despite its offensive diplomacy course, India has fallen flat to achieve its desired results. The NSG participating governments have not reached to the final consensus over the membership cases. Pakistan's technical front is equally impressive and its diplomatic front has taken an initial stand firmly to bid for the membership.

Conclusion

The general perception about India is that it has effectively advocated and lobbied its case on the NSG table. By considering "India-only" exemption to the NSG cartel has itself added its nuisance value terming it a political and economic group which can compromise over its principle stand. Both India and Pakistan are capable of producing highly enriched uranium and plutonium for peaceful nuclear uses as technically capable states for nuclear trade having same status as non-NPT states. However, it depends on how NSG decides to end the discriminatory treatment and brings into its radar the membership case in its real value and allows a peaceful use of the technology for a strategic stable South Asia.

In the current scenario, Pakistan needs to accelerate as well as enhance its diplomatic campaign to achieve its objectives and goals before the next meeting is planned in 2017. The move for entering into non-proliferation regime is conditional to better diplomacy as Pakistan possesses technical capabilities and conditions fulfilling IAEA supervision and export control acts. This narrative has to be projected with a consistent media and diplomatic firmness and unity.

It is imperative to set up a dedicated section of public diplomacy within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to keep the momentum apace up at all levels. This is still lacking in the diplomacy structure from Pakistan side. Diplomacy is not only required during military conflicts, it is equally important to highlight the soft power value of a country at all levels. Pakistan needs an effective, proactive and result-oriented diplomacy for seeking NSG membership to gain support from other countries as well. Relying on China is not the permanent solution for Pakistan seeking desired results As Akhtar points out rightly, the big powers on NSG should not be looking in terms of supporters to India or Pakistan. Whenever NSG is expanded to include the non-NPT states, it should be in a manner that it strengthens the non-proliferation regime. Under these circumstances, the strategic vision for NSG is to see India and Pakistan moving towards non-nuclear proliferation and enhancing confidence building measures which is possible when great powers extend equal treatment to both countries.

To conclude, Pakistan's diplomatic cadre is hopeful that this time NSG is looking this issue with more responsibility as commitment from both the countries is to be sought in what they can do to strengthen the non-proliferation regime. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs states:

> *Pakistan has been interacting with NSG in seriousness. Diplomats are reaching out to China and other countries which dispel this perception that Pakistan does not have supporters. India does not have supporters, either. There are many other countries that totally share the views of New Zealand, Austria, Ireland and China though Canada, U.S., Australia, France, Russia and UK are supporting India. Foreign Office stance is understandable that these countries are either going to sell reactors or nuclear fuel to India instead focusing on the principle stand of the non-proliferation regime. They are concerned with their economic and strategic interests.*

In this view, Pakistan should also see that all big powers are in favor of India which has given added edge to Indian lobbying. Therefore, Pakistan requires an offensive lobbying at all levels and engaging its diasporas to make substantial talks with member countries by sending delegates to allied states and win this strategic battle.

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