Background for Simulation

United States

Pakistan

The last two years have seen a drastic souring in U.S-Pakistani relations. Tensions between the two countries are at an all-time high due to an escalation of U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan, the violence on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), and the virtual non-cooperation between the U.S. military and the Pakistani army and Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI). In addition, the U.S. drawdown in Afghanistan has been hampered by Pakistani support of anti-government and insurgent movements in Afghanistan. While roughly 15,000 U.S. troops remain in Afghanistan, primarily in advisory and support capacities, the prospects for the U.S. to meet its withdrawal timeline are dim. Despite the continued violence in Afghanistan, there is little public support in the U.S. for a continued presence in Afghanistan.

In response to Pakistan’s continuously antagonistic policies, the President and Congress cut all military aid to Pakistan in early 2013 and are currently undergoing a serious debate on whether to cut all humanitarian and development aid as well. Budget cuts continue to affect the Department of Defense’s foreign and military priorities and operations, and the U.S. now relies more heavily on Special Operation’s forces to conduct U.S. military operations throughout the region. There has been a general shift away from counterinsurgency and state building operations and commitments by the United States.

India

Conversely, the United States and India have made significant strides in cultivating a strategic economic, political, and military partnership. After the historic U.S.-India Nuclear Cooperation Agreement and the initial delivery of the $5 billion 2011 arms agreement, ties have progressively deepened. The U.S. has loosened export controls on defense technology to India. Over the past several years the U.S. has also made a serious push in the U.N. to make India a permanent member of the Security Council. A free-trade agreement has been proposed in the U.S. Congress and support is widespread for the agreement as U.S.-India economic ties have grown substantially in the last few years.

China

The U.S. is wary of the growing partnership between China and Pakistan, but it has thus far not led to a significant change in the status quo relations between the U.S. and China. However, Chinese naval expansion is an increasing concern to U.S. policy makers. China has expressed concerns over the U.S. efforts to make India a permanent member of the U.N. Security Council, vetoing attempts to do so.
The U.S. strategic pivot to the Asian Pacific region that occurred under President Obama in early 2012 is another significant Chinese security concern. Despite these concerns, the U.S.-China relationship has maintained its status quo since 2012 and no major international incidents have occurred.

**China**

**Pakistan**

Relations between China and Pakistan have increased significantly over the last two years. There have been increased military sales from China to Pakistan, and Pakistan continues to support Chinese efforts to combat the Uighurs in the border regions between the two countries. The Gwadar naval port was recently completed in southwest Pakistan with the significant financial backing of China. It is seen as a cornerstone of cooperation between the two countries and Chinese Naval Officials are interested in establishing a permanent military presence in the port. Trade has also increased significantly between the two countries, with increased free trade agreements. In 2012, China was Pakistan’s second largest trading partner, with over $9 billion in trade. 2012 also saw the two countries begin construction on a railway linking Pakistan occupied Kashmir with the city of Kashgar in Xinjian, China. Both China and Pakistan are concerned about the growing U.S.-India relationship. Despite this growth, there are still several areas of discontent between the two counties. Pakistan would like to expand their diplomatic and economic relations with China, and China has continued to express concerns over the stability of the Pakistani state.

**India**

The Chinese-Indian relationship has largely remained the status quo since early 2012. Both countries are still concerned about the economic, strategic, and military challenges and threats that each poses to the other. China’s maritime expansionism is of particular concern to India, as they view it as an attempt to contain India strategically. While there have not been incidents to date, Indian foreign ministers have repeatedly indicated that India is preparing to protect its strategic interests should Chinese maritime expansionism become threatening. Despite this sometimes tense relationship, economic relations between the two countries are strong. China remains India’s number one trading partner and current projections indicate that trade will reach $100 billion by 2015.

**Pakistan**

Pakistan’s internal security has continued to deteriorate. The 2013 elections saw the Pakistan Muslim League (PLM-N), a center-right conservative party, come to power. Tensions remain at a high level between the civilian government, military, and ISI for effective control of
the state. In early 2013, the Pakistani government signed another peace accord with the Tehrik-i-Taliban (TTP) which ceded effective control of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province to the TTP in exchange for discontinuing attacks towards the Pakistani military forces.

The loss of U.S. funding for the Pakistani military has substantially hampered its effectiveness, and recent gains against militants in the FATA have evaporated. Throughout 2012 and 2013 ethnic Baloch separatists have increased attacks in Baluchistan and there have been several substantiated reports stating that Indian intelligence forces are arming the separatists.

India

India has seen important changes to its political landscape which has increased tensions with Pakistan. There has been significant growth in the political power and support of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and they are currently poised to take control of the Indian parliament and the office of Prime Minister in the 2014 elections. The BJP is a political party that is strongly Hindu nationalist, and practices a highly nationalistic foreign policy and national defense. It strongly advocates the view that Kashmir should be kept a key part of the country. The growth of the BJP has raised fears among Pakistan’s of a more aggressive India which would threaten its security and potentially ignite a conflict in Kashmir. Tensions between the countries were further escalated in November, 2013 when India foiled an attempted terror attack by Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) on a major Diwali festival in Gujarat.

India is concerned by Pakistan’s growing political, economic, and military instability. Pakistan recently redeployed troops to its eastern border with India and continues to use insurgent groups as proxies to inflict casualties on India, as evidenced by the foiled November attack. Pakistan fears that the growth of BJP signals India’s resolve in contesting the Kashmir region. Consequently, Pakistan has stepped up its activities in Kashmir and a low level of violence between the two have become commonplace in the region.

Afghanistan

As U.S. withdrawal in Afghanistan continues, Indian and Pakistan have started to compete for influence in the country and to fill the ensuing power vacuum. India has provided military assistance and training to the government in Kabul, but Pakistan’s use of Pashtun insurgents such as the Haqqani network threatens civil war in the country. India has continued to offer economic assistance to the government in Kabul as a means to exert influence. The use of proxies by both sides has also increased their influence in the country. While the Afghan government still exerts some control throughout the western and central parts of Afghanistan, the Pakistani-backed insurgents now control the southern and eastern parts of the country. Afghanistan is on the verge of becoming a full-blown proxy war between India and Pakistan.