National University of Computer and Emerging Sciences

Assignment # 1

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Section:

International Relations (BCS-3B)

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Negative Peace Between India and Pakistan

Introduction

The conflict between India and Pakistan has caused severe instability in the region for many years. Although there are ceasefires, mutual collaborations, and diplomatic efforts, however, the peace between two nuclear powers is considered more as a "negative peace". Positive peace, which includes social, economic, and political agreement, is different from negative peace, which refers to the absence of only public violence or war. In this study, we carefully examine the idea of 'negative peace' in relation to India and Pakistan, also examining the reasons for this state of affairs and suggesting ways for them to move forward.

Main Theme/Discussion

1. Historical Context

The India-Pakistan conflict started way back to their partition in 1947, leading to territorial disputes, cross-border conflicts, and three full-scale wars. The conflict centers on the Kashmir region, which both nations claim in its entirety. The history of hostilities and unresolved disputes has contributed significantly to the perpetuation of negative peace in the region.

2. Military Posturing and Nuclear Deterrence

Both India and Pakistan possess nuclear weapons (alarming in both power and number), which has created a dangerous state of deterrence. While this has prevented both nations from going into an all-out war with each other (due to fear of fallouts of a nuclear war), it has also increased the chances of a catastrophic conflict between them. The constant military posturing on their respective independence days & defense days, the missile tests & new military equipment tests, and the border skirmishes between the two nations maintain an atmosphere of insecurity and mistrust between them.

3. Proxy Warfare and Terrorism

The key features of the India-Pakistan conflict are their use of proxy warfare. Both nations have been accused of supporting insurgent as well as terrorist groups in each other's territories. Such a strategy allows both of them to engage in conflict indirectly while maintaining plausible deniability. These proxy wars have resulted in continued violence and suffering for many innocent civilians.

4. Diplomatic Stalemate

Efforts to resolve the conflict through diplomacy, including numerous rounds of talks and negotiations, have often ended in stalemates. Key issues, such as Kashmir and water-sharing agreements, remain unresolved, further perpetuating the state of negative peace.

Results/Recommendations/Way Forward

1. Confidence-Building Measures

Both nations should engage in confidence-building measures to reduce mistrust and tension. These measures may include cultural exchanges, trade initiatives, and people-to-people contacts.

2. Resumption of Bilateral Talks

India and Pakistan should restart meaningful bilateral talks, focusing on resolving key issues like Kashmir and water resources. A sustained dialogue process can help build a framework for conflict resolution.

3. International Mediation

The international community (such as the United Nations etc.) which consists of major powers and Multinational organizations, should play a more active role in mediating the India-Pakistan conflict. These third parties can help bridge the gap of trust and facilitate a peaceful resolution between the two nuclear-armed nations.

4. Track II Diplomacy

Track II diplomacy involving civil society organizations, academics, and experts from both countries can provide alternative perspectives and creative solutions to the conflict.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the India-Pakistan conflict represents a classic case of negative peace, where the absence of overt war does not equate to true peace. The historical context, nuclear deterrence, proxy warfare, and diplomatic stalemate all contribute to this state of affairs. However, there are opportunities for positive change through confidence-building measures, resumed bilateral talks, international mediation, and track II diplomacy. Achieving positive peace in the region is a

challenging endeavor, but it remains an essential goal for the sake of regional stability and the well-being of millions of people.

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