Introduction

This issue of CISS newsletter provides a snapshot of the host activities undertaken by the Center including research publications, holding of seminars, roundtable discussions, book launches, during the past 6 months. The time period covered in the newsletter has been eventful for International Politics. Few developments could illustrate that better than the Korean rapprochement. North Korean leader Kim Jong-un crossed the demilitarised zone and met his South Korean counterpart. Later in a joint statement, both sides agreed to remove nuclear weapons from the Korean Peninsula.

In the Middle East, Daesh has been weakened but not completely eliminated: despite its so-called defeat in Iraq, the militant group has survived on the scores of loyalists left behind in Syria and parts of Iraq. It is now looking to expand its influence by shifting its headquarters and franchises elsewhere. Moreover, it is also seeking to regroup all their leftover fighters in the Middle Eastern region.

In February, forces loyal to President Bashar al-Assad launched an assault on the Eastern Ghouta that reportedly left more than 1,700 civilians dead. The Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) says that the initial tests of samples collected from two sites detected "various chlorinated organic chemicals", along with explosive residues.

Close to Pakistan, several developments demand attention. On the 8th of May, President Trump withdrew from the Iran deal. This put the US in violation of its obligations under the agreement, and thus establishes a unilateral American withdrawal from the deal.

In Pakistan’s neighbourhood India continues with its weapon buying spree, with the latest being the acquisition of the Russian S-400 air defense system. This trend would further disturb the strategic stability in South Asia.

The CISS team has analyzed all of these important international developments in greater detail.

Happy reading!

Editor Newsletter
Syed Sadam Hussain Shah
Conferences

The Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy (March 14, 2018)

A one-day seminar was organized by the Center for International Strategic Studies (CISS) and the Pakistan Institute of International Affairs (PIIA) on ‘The Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy and Pakistan’ with DG IAEA, Mr. Yukiyo Amano in attendance. Press release can be accessed at http://ciss.org.pk/the-peaceful-uses-of-nuclear-energy-and-pakistan/.

Seminar on Chemical Weapons Convention Implementation Challenges (May 15, 2018)

“Pakistan remains fully committed to the objectives of CWC and continues to actively and constructively participate in OPCW’s work.” This was stated by Pakistan’s Foreign Secretary Ms Tehmina Janjua while speaking at the Seminar on Chemical Weapons Convention: Implementation and Challenges, organized by the Center for International Strategic Studies Islamabad.

Ambassador Naqvi, in his opening remarks, stated that CWC is deeply connected to customary international law and the International Humanitarian Law, specifically in the context of the prohibition of use of discriminate force and principle of use of proportional force. Full press release can be accessed at http://ciss.org.pk/seminar-on-chemical-weapons-convetion-cwo-implemention-challenges/
The Center for International Strategic Studies held a one-day national conference on “Pakistan’s Foreign Policy: Challenges and Opportunities”, on July 18, 2018 at Marriott Hotel, Islamabad. The Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Abdullah Hussain Haroon was the keynote speaker. In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Ali Sarwar Naqvi while laying out the agenda for the discussion, outlined the challenges as well opportunities in wake of the upcoming elections and looked forward to fruitful proceedings that can provide useful input on foreign policy for the new government. Complete press release can be accessed at


The Center for International Strategic Studies held a one-day national conference on “Pakistan’s Foreign Policy: Challenges and Opportunities”, on July 18, 2018 at Marriott Hotel, Islamabad. The Foreign Minister of Pakistan, Center for International Strategic Studies (CISS), a think tank based in Islamabad, organized a one-day National Seminar on Biological Weapons Convention: Implementation Challenges on September 19, 2018, at the Multipurpose Hall Islamabad Club, in Islamabad. Ambassador Ali Sarwar Naqvi, Executive Director, CISS in his welcome address stressed that the prospect of biological weapons use in real life, however, is a lot more sinister and a lot less thrilling. Their use in the past has resulted in chilling effects on the human population and led the international community to reach consensus to ban this entire class of weapons of mass destruction. For complete press release visit at

Roundtables

Tunisian Ambassador held an in-house Meeting at CISS (September 12, 2018).

Tunisian Ambassador to Pakistan HE Adel Elarbi called on Ambassador Naqvi on 12th September 2018 at the Center for International Strategic Studies, Islamabad. Ambassador Naqvi provided an overview of the CISS activities, including publications of books and research journals and organization of seminars, conferences, workshops and round tables. Complete press release can be accessed at


Visit of Dr. Suba Chandran to the CISS Office (September 18, 2018).

Indian scholar Dr. Suba Chandran visited the Center for International Strategic Studies on September 18, 2018 and discussed Pakistan-India relations with CISS team. Ambassador Naqvi provided an overview of the CISS activities, including publications. For complete press release visit


CISS Round Table with Mr. Adrian Levy, September 18, 2018

A Round Table was held at the Center for International Strategic Studies with Mr. Adrian Levy who is an investigative journalist and filmmaker specializing in foreign affairs and South East Asia. His recent books include The Exile: The Stunning Inside Story of Osama Bin Laden and Al Qaeda in Flight and The Siege: The Attack on the Taj. For complete press release visit


Visit of Swiss Delegation to CISS (April 25, 2018).

Swiss Ministry of Defence official, Mr. Adrian Lobsiger, and Swiss Deputy Head of Mission, Mr. Bernhard Furger visited CISS on Wednesday April 25, 2018. Executive Director CISS, Ambassador Ali Sarwar Naqvi, welcomed the delegation. Ambassador Naqvi briefed the delegation about CISS and presented a brief summary of CISS activities. Complete press release can be accessed at

http://ciss.org.pk/visit-of-swiss-delegation-to-ciss/
Round Table on Non-proliferation Issues and Peace Initiatives of Kazakhstan (13 Aug, 2018).

A Round Table was held at the Center for International Strategic Studies on ‘Non-proliferation Issues and Peace Initiatives of Kazakhstan’ on Friday. The Ambassador of Kazakhstan, Mr. Barlybay Sadykov spoke on the occasion about the Kazakh experience of disarmament after the disintegration of Soviet Union. Complete press release can be accessed at http://ciss.org.pk/round-table-on-non-proliferation-issues-and-peace-initiatives-of-kazakhstan/

Discussion and the overview of the developments at the NPT Prep-Com and other Nuclear, Non-proliferation and Disarmament Issues (08 May, 2018).

A roundtable on recent nuclear developments at the global level was organised at the Centre for International Strategic Studies (CISS) here on Tuesday. The subjects covered were Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Preparation Committee (Prep Com) and other nuclear, non-proliferation and disarmament challenges and issues. Press release can be accessed at http://ciss.org.pk/discussion-and-overview-of-the-developments-at-the-npt-prep-com-and-other-nuclear-non-prolif

CISS Round-table with Dr. Christopher Clary on Changing Nuclear Dynamics in South Asia (June 13, 2018).

The Center for International Strategic Studies Islamabad, hosted Dr. Christopher Clary for a round table discussion on “Changing Nuclear Dynamics in South Asia” on June 13, 2018. Dr. Christopher Clary, an Assistant Professor of Political Science at the State University of New York in Albany. He spoke on the changes in Pakistani and Indian nuclear doctrines and postures as well as development in their capabilities since 1998. Complete press release can be accessed at http://ciss.org.pk/ciss-round-table-with-dr-christopher-clary-on-changing-nuclear-dynamics-in south-asia/

Round Table with Amb Arnout Pauwels from Belgium on (June 13, 2018)

The Centre for International Strategic Studies, hosted a Round Table Discussion on Pakistan’s perspective on regional and international issues with Ambassador Arnout Pauwels.

Round Table on Pakistan-China Relations with the Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China Mr. Yao Jing (August 7, 2018).

The Ambassador of the People’s Republic of China H.E. Mr. Yao Jing was invited for a round table discussion on “Pakistan-China Relations and Chinese Perspective of Regional Situation” on August 7, 2018. The round table session was held in the CISS Conference Room. Ambassador Jing candidly discussed Sino-Pak cooperation for last seven decades. He stated that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) would dominate China’s foreign policy, particularly neighbourhood policy for decades to come. He said that Pakistan and China have a strong all encompassing strategic partnership of which CPEC is an important but not the sole determining factor. Full press release can be accessed at http://ciss.org.pk/roundtable-on-pakistan-china-relations-with-the-ambassador-of-the-peoples-republic-of-china-mr-yao-jing/
Wrong Signalling  
**Huma Rehman**

A signalling between hostile states can be useful to both the sender and receiver of the messages; if the signals are properly conveyed, they can reduce the likelihood of tensions by suggesting and alarming, ahead of time, that how to avert the chance of military action. Poorly sent signals, however, can be...for complete article visit http://ciss.org.pk/wrong-signalling/

Countering Extremism Drive in Pakistan  
**Afeera Firdous**

In the contemporary world, violent extremism has surfaced as a serious national issue. Pakistan is one of those countries which are severely affected by it. As a complex phenomenon, it is visible in Pakistan’s social fabric in the form of extreme views held by individuals, sectarianism and terrorism. Violent extremism is a major factor which has damaged the peaceful nature and tolerant ethos of the Pakistani society. The alarming increase in religiously-motivated targeted killings and attacks on places of worship demand re-examination of internal security policy to effectively deal with this issue. For complete article visit http://ciss.org.pk/counter-extremism-drives-in-pakistan/

Destabilizing Indian Military Developments  
**Samran Ali**

India is accelerating induction of advanced weapon systems and platforms putting the South Asian strategic stability in danger. These developments include the Ballistic Missile Defence system. According to Defence Research and Development Organisation chief V.K. Saraswat, BMD system was ready to be deployed for two cities namely New Delhi and Mumbai on... for complete article visit http://ciss.org.pk/destabilising-indian-military-developments/

Is Afghanistan the next Caliphate?  
**Syed Sadam Hussain Shah**

Terror outfits often expand their influence by merging into other groups or by cobbling together alliances. They essentially do it when their existence is threatened or for consolidation of power in an alien territory. It helps them to expand their scope, scale of operations, and influence. Moreover, it also helps them to foster human resource, wealth, technology and ideas. This is quite true for the Islamic State. Despite its so-called defeat in Iraq, the militant group has survived on the scores of loyalists left behind in Syria and parts of Iraq. It is now looking to expand its influence by shifting its headquarters and franchises elsewhere. Moreover, it is also seeking to regroup all their leftover fighters in the region. Complete article can be accessed at http://ciss.org.pk/is-afghanistan-the-next-caliphate/
China Factor in Afghan Peace Process

The Chinese Vice Foreign Minister, Li Baodong, speaking at Tashkent Peace Conference on Afghanistan, extended China’s support to the inclusive political reconciliation process in Afghanistan. He said China saw Afghanistan as an important partner under its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) project. Although limited in the past, the Chinese interest in Afghanistan... complete article can be accessed at http://ciss.org.pk/china-factor-in-afghan-peace/

Cyber Security Issues in Pakistan

A special report on cyber-security norms by Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) concluded that many engineered systems, around the world, which depend on digital-computational parts can be ‘hacked’. The states have been trying to deal with such vulnerabilities for many years and the development of protection is known as information-systems... visit http://ciss.org.pk/cyber-security-issues-in-pakistan/

Growing Challenges for the global nuclear order

As the 50th anniversary of the treaty for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons approaches in 2020, the global nuclear order is more divisive and challenging. These challenges include continued nuclear testing by North Korea, threatening a nuclear confrontation against the United States and its East Asian allies as well as US President Donald Trump’s skepticism about the Iran nuclear deal. For the complete draft visit http://ciss.org.pk/growing-challenges-for-the-global-nuclear-order/

A new narrative requires patience

John Bolton assumed office as a new National Security Adviser of the Trump administration on April 9, 2018. Since his name resurfaced after fifteen years, a number of articles has been written that argue that Bolton holds radical views on foreign policy issues. Not to forget his interview/speech in which he described Pakistan as Iran or North Korea on steroids, in case the nuclear weapons fall in terrorists’ hands. For complete article visit http://ciss.org.pk/a-new-narrative-requires-patience/

A step towards peace or a gimmick?

In the arena of global politics, one does not always expect sharp and unanticipated turnarounds. Few developments could illustrate that better than last month’s Korean rapprochement. It was a historic moment marked by dozens of cameras, when North Korean leader Kim Jong-un crossed the demilitarised zone and met his South Korean counterpart. Later in a joint statement both men agreed to remove nuclear weapons from the Korean Peninsula. “The two leaders solemnly declared before the 80 million Korean people and the whole world that there will be no more war on the Korean Peninsula and thus a new era of peace has begun,” the joint declaration said. For complete article please visit http://ciss.org.pk/a-step-towards-peace-or-a-gimmick/
Navigating & Preventing Vehicle Borne Terrorism

Syed Sadam Hussain Shah

The global trend of Vehicle Borne Terrorism (VBT) is mainly fuelled by religious affiliations and revenge motivations. Ever since the resurgence of the global Vehicle Borne Attacks (VBA), terrorism has become easier, cheaper and cost effective. Terrorists carry out simple attacks by cutting down passengers, while driving onto them. For complete article visit http://ciiss.org.pk/navigating-and-preventing-vehicle-borne-attacks/

Syrian Conflict’s Chemical Weapons Dimension

Shahabudin

The Syrian Civil War is arguably the worst humanitarian crisis since the Second World War, with over a half million killed, wounded, or missing, and half of Syria’s 22 million population displaced from their homes. Syria’s largest uprising has devolved into a regionalized civil war that has ravaged the country. President Bashar al Assad’s actions would have remained obscured from the world had it not been for the use of chemical weapons during this conflict. For complete article please visit http://ciiss.org.pk/syrian-conflicts-chemical-weapons-dimension/

India-Pakistan settling the blame

Aminah Tauhidi

Despite the adherence to the 2003 cease fire agreement by both India and Pakistan the Line of Control has witnessed worse artillery exchange and friction since the Hindu Nationalist leader Narendra Modi took charge in 2014. The year 2017 is marked as a year of worst artillery exchange leading to massive civilian loss. The LOC is a 450-mile-long military control line which was demarcated in July 1972, slicing the disputed princely state of Kashmir into Indian Occupied Kashmir and Azad Jammu Kashmir. For complete article visit http://ciiss.org.pk/india-pakistan-settling-the-blame-game/

The US withdraws from the Iran deal: The aftermaths

Samran Ali

Trump’s politics of building walls and international disengagement ascended new heights when Trump withdrew from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The decision is termed as bad as the decision to enter Iraq. The two are not similar in their nature but both are equally disruptive in their effects. Its aftershocks will be felt for a long time to come. For complete article visit http://ciiss.org.pk/the-us-withdraws-from-iran-deal-aftermaths/

8 Ways Iran could respond to Trump

Syed Sadam Hussain Shah

There is nothing permanent in the arena of global politics. Few developments could illustrate that better than the US withdrawal of the Iran deal. On 8th of May, President Trump torpedoed the Iran deal. This aggressive bid is a mixed blessing. It will help Trump win popular support from right-wingers. But, on the other hand, the move will not only sow dissension among the US and its western allies but will also isolate the US diplomatically. Though, the withdrawal is aimed at administering a regime change, and shaping a chaotic regional order. For complete article visit http://ciiss.org.pk/8-ways-iran-could-respond-to-trump/
Changing Face of India
For most of its history after independence, India has been seen as a liberal, tolerant and peaceful state for people of all religions and ethnicities. Indian civilisation is famous for assimilating various cultures and remaining peacefully coexistent. However, the Hindu nationalist political force, BJP, and its ideological wing, RSS, have adopted such policies that have changed the face of India. For complete article visit http://ciiss.org.pk/changing-face-of-india/

Riaz Khokhar

Nuclear South Asia at 20: The Strategic Impact of the 1998 Nuclear Tests
India demonstrated its nuclear prowess, for the first time, in May 1974, though it chose to call that nuclear explosive test a ‘Peaceful Nuclear Explosion’ (PNE). This characterization served to alleviate international pressure and sanctions, and provided a convenient smoke screen for the global powers to react mildly to this development... For complete article visit http://ciiss.org.pk/nuclear-south-asia-at-20-the-strategic-impacts-of-the-1998-nuclear-tests/

Dr. Naem Salik

Yom e Takbeer
Twenty years ago today, Pakistan made the detonating five nuclear devices as a direct response to Indian nuclear aggression. This was an unparalleled scientific and strategic achievement. We celebrate this day today as the National Science Day or as Youm-e-Takbeer, the day of greatness. For complete article visit http://ciiss.org.pk/youm-e-takbeer/

Muhammad Umar

The Pak-Russia Strategic Re-alignment
The end of Cold War witnessed a tectonic shift in world affairs: a transition from bipolar world to a unipolar one. The fall of the Soviet Union ensured the US status of sole-superpower. Till date, the US has ensured to withhold its status as a global power in this evolving multi-polar world. However, some recent advancements at the international level, such as the withdrawal of the US from Trans-Pacific Partnership, Paris Climate Accord and the Iran nuclear deal under the Trump administration have raised some serious questions for both its allies and adversaries. The change in the US policies has indeed worked as a strategic impetus resulting in strategic realignment among states. Complete article can be accessed at http://ciiss.org.pk/the-pak-russia-strategic-re-alignment/

Aminah Tauhidi

European Interests and the Iran Nuclear Deal
By the calculus of madman theory of diplomacy, Donald Trump thinks he can use the tactics of diplomatic compellence to pressurize the opponents into adopting a behaviour that suits the U.S. interests. Let alone the U.S.’ vaunted opponents (North Korea and Iran), its trans-Atlantic partners in Europe are not expressing any pliancy on scuttling the Iranian nuclear deal. Complete article can be accessed at http://ciiss.org.pk/european-interests-and-the-iranian-nuclear-deal-oped/

Riaz Khokhar
Will China's SCO fix Asia's Problem?

Aminah Tauhidi

The Central and South Asian region has been labelled the most fragile region in the world, presenting similar patterns of limited cooperation and weak regional integration. In this context, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) aims to promulgate the idea of economic and security cooperation leading to new incentives for regional solidarity. Complete article can be accessed at http://ciss.org.pk/will-chinas-sco-fix-asias-problems/

Fake News, Disinformation, & Political Process

Afeera Firdous

Social media's role in a common person's life has blurred the online-offline divide. Online activity has a huge potential to improve the quality and quantity of communication across the globe. However, at the same time, it also raises severe challenges. Whether it is about social issues or national and political matters, social media gives issues a good amount of attention. Along with the other social media-related challenges, fake news and disinformation has become one of the most serious problems to face us. The phenomenon of fake news has attained wider implications for law and order, alongside the safety and security of the citizens, and the democratic creden-

Will bashing Pakistan help?

Riaz Khokhar

The US has not only failed in eliminating terrorism from Afghanistan but also has been unable to eradicate opium production, rid the country of 'irredeemable corruption' and inefficiency of Afghan officials. It has also ceded vast swathes of territory, especially in rural areas, to the Taliban, guided arguably by its 'force protection'...complete article can be accessed at http://ciss.org.pk/will-bashing-pakistan-help/

Reviewing Foreign Policy Part - 1

Amb Ali Sarwar Naqvi

As the newly elected government assumes the reins of power, it is an appropriate moment to review our foreign policy, covering both its making and its execution. Some pointers regarding both these may help the government at this stage. Foreign policy is essentially aimed at promoting the national interest, in contradistinction to all areas of domestic policy, which are aimed at furthering, or even creating, matters of national interest. Thus, foreign policy is largely projection, while domestic policy creates or improves the product or the substance that foreign policy promotes. We often tend to apply the wrong purpose to one and the other, with the result that neither policies then deliver. But that is another discussion. Complete article can be accessed at http://ciss.org.pk/reviewing-foreign-policy-part-1/

Reviewing Foreign Policy Part – II

Ambassador Ali Sarwar Naqvi

We have spent far too long establishing our ‘influence’ in the unfortunate country that is Afghanistan; the country has been suffering from civil war conditions for decades. Our policy towards Afghanistan should honestly execute and implement what we have always declared, but never acted on, i.e. respect for its independence and sovereignty. For complete article visit http://ciss.org.pk/reviewing-foreign-policy-part-ii/
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<th>Topic</th>
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<td>Economic Prosperity through Diplomacy</td>
<td>Riaz Khokhar</td>
<td>Pakistan’s economic diplomacy currently starts with, and ends at, seeking foreign loans and assistance from ‘friendly’ countries and multinational financial institutions. Much ink and energy has been spent on discussing the many ways through which Pakistan can improve its domestic economic structure and reform its civil service, but economic diplomacy—encompassing the full spectrum of diplomatic tools available with a state to achieve its national interests—remains a critical aspect of the country’s foreign policy that has long been ignored. Complete article can be accessed at <a href="http://ciss.org.pk/economic-prosperity-through-diplomacy/">http://ciss.org.pk/economic-prosperity-through-diplomacy/</a></td>
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<td>Overview of Imran’s Foreign Policy</td>
<td>Riaz Khokhar</td>
<td>Imran Khan has promised to bring about a change in Pakistan. This would entail taking vital steps in the way the country is being run. Pakistan’s foreign policy has greatly suffered over the last few years as it is said to have not been handled in a proper manner. Is Imran Khan on the right track in foreign relations in view of Pakistan’s role in the region and the world? For complete article visit <a href="http://ciss.org.pk/overview-of-imran-khans-foreign-policy/">http://ciss.org.pk/overview-of-imran-khans-foreign-policy/</a></td>
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<td>Bilateral Dynamics of India Pakistan:</td>
<td>Huma Rehman</td>
<td>Indo-Pak relations have remained a major foreign policy challenge for South Asia’s strategic and crisis stability. The unending twists and turns in Indian foreign policy and military planning, towards Pakistan is a vital cause for not achieving the goals, of peace and stability in the region. The way bilateral relations are being handled by India are not commensurate stabilising tactics; which many lead to further mistrust and tension between the two countries... can be accessed at <a href="http://ciss.org.pk/bilateral-dynamics-of-india-pakistan-volatile-yet-unpredictable/">http://ciss.org.pk/bilateral-dynamics-of-india-pakistan-volatile-yet-unpredictable/</a></td>
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<td>The Indian Somersault has Political</td>
<td>Saima Aman Sial</td>
<td>As the United Nations hosts the high-level meetings of the 73rd Session debate, the South Asian region is again embroiled in a war of words, instigated by India. After assuming office, Pakistan’s PM, Imran Khan, in his victory speech put forth his administration’s priority for restoring and upholding peace initiatives in...complete article can be accessed at <a href="http://ciss.org.pk/category/articles/page/2/">http://ciss.org.pk/category/articles/page/2/</a></td>
<td>Undertones</td>
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