

# Space Lusitania: India and Pakistan

Move 3 Pakistan Team Briefing

June 15, 2023

# Move 3 Questions

- What might be the best way to de-escalate the conflict? Who should take the lead in doing what toward this end?
- What would be the optimal state of relations between the U.S. and India before the conflict? Between the U.S. and Pakistan? What is the best way to achieve these optimal states?
  - Is it useful to have the U.S. as a trusted broker? What does this require before any conflict?
  - What are the benefits and the risks of tilting U.S. relations towards either Pakistan or India?
- Should any of the teams have shared more information, officially, earlier in the game?
- What treaties, national laws, and international political understandings, if any, should nations be held to regarding how non-state actors might be able to access commercial, dual-use satellite services?

# What might be the best way to de-escalate the conflict? Who should take the lead in doing what toward this end?

## CHINA

- Agreement between China and US to cease hostilities, simultaneously or slightly following US needs to pressure India to cease aggression
- Any de-escalation must have face-saving measures
  - Assuming China is actually looking for an off-ramp, China and US agree to mutual ceasefire and a Chinese statement upholding China's right to defend its space capabilities and reaffirming peaceful use of space
    - It is unrealistic for China to offer an apology, having them make a strong parting shot could make them look stronger while deescalating
- China doesn't want the US interfering with its satellites as they will already be worried about this blinding of ISR and communications looking similar to a first move by the US before attacking China on the ground
  - China could compensate Maxar for damage, though this creates an adverse incentive to attack space capabilities and just buy a return to normalcy after
    - Is there a way to make this a one time only thing or is that impossible?
    - Even this bad outcome could be better than letting the conflict continue to escalate
- Private assurance to the US that China will investigate any misuses of its satellite services and review it to ensure security
  - Subtextually point to terror attack against India without explicitly mentioning it
- China could move its co-orbital satellites away from other countries' satellites and moving ground forces away
  - China would not need to announce this and suffer a public loss of face, other countries would notice it without an announcement

# **What might be the best way to de-escalate the conflict? Who should take the lead in doing what toward this end?**

## **US**

- Mutually stop hostilities against satellites along with China
- Privately assure China that US actions are only in response to this specific crisis, not the start of a general war
- US should privately share intelligence that the attack came from Pakistan to support a joint investigation into the attacks
- US should encourage India to join this joint investigation into the initial terrorist attacks with the US and Pakistan
- US should take the lead in pushing for four-party talks, supporting Pakistan's public push

# What might be the best way to de-escalate the conflict? Who should take the lead in doing what toward this end?

## INDIA

- Cease hostilities against targets in Pakistan and heated anti-Pakistan rhetoric and overly triumphal rhetoric about India having “won”
  - Recall some forces from the Pakistani border and/or Line of Control – could be publicly for training purposes as a face-saving measure
- Join the joint investigation into the initial terrorist attacks, along with Pakistan and the US
- Join the four-party talks, could possibly involve the ASEAN Regional Forum to share their perspectives
- India recognizes heightened escalatory risk of using cruise missiles and deemphasize them in its military plans involving Pakistan
- Agree to compensate China for the destruction of its satellite by the laser system

# **What might be the best way to de-escalate the conflict? Who should take the lead in doing what toward this end?**

## **PAKISTAN**

- Refrain from a tit-for-tat cruise missile attack
- Emphasize to the US Pakistan's relatively responsible behavior in the crisis compared to India
- Invite US and India to a joint investigation into the initial terrorist attacks
  - Keep General Khan in custody
- Agree to the four-party talks
- Clamp down on cross-border terrorist groups, including sending counter-terrorist forces to the areas that India struck
- Public commitments

## **What would be the optimal state of relations between the U.S. and India before the conflict? What is the best way to achieve this optimal state?**

- Make sure India doesn't feel like it has a green light to attack Chinese satellite and Pakistani territory and assume US will have its back
- US should regularly message to India that it does not have its automatic support for military action against Pakistan and China
  - Could include putting space cooperation at risk by threatening that companies may not wish to collaborate given risk of losses and that US would have to support an Article 3 case against India if they took aggressive actions
  - Could involve notifying China or Pakistan about Indian threats of space or counter-space actions ahead of time
- US should message to India that India should not expect the US to do more sophisticated attacks in space on India's behalf

## **What would be the optimal state of relations between the U.S. and Pakistan before the conflict? What is the best way to achieve this optimal state?**

- Baseline trust between US and Pakistan was needed before the crisis
- Early US messages suggested they were leaning far toward India, including intercepting our private communications with China and generally supporting Indian narrative
- US could make an offer to Pakistan to provide space capabilities similar to China's offer so Pakistan is less reliant on China
- Consistent, high-level, strategic dialogue between the US and Pakistan outside of crisis situations

# Is it useful to have the U.S. as a trusted broker? What does this require before any conflict?

- Would be useful but would require greater high-level good faith strategic dialogue with both India and Pakistan
  - China's behavior was incredibly unhelpful to Pakistan but we didn't see a strong alternative
- Requires a preexisting trust before a crisis starts
  - Cooperation in multiple areas, not just counterterrorism, would expand the scope of cooperation. Economic collaboration, etc.

# What are the benefits and the risks of tilting U.S. relations towards either Pakistan or India?

- Tilting too far either way is very risky. Creates moral hazard as that country will feel empowered to act more aggressively with the assumption that the US will have its back
- The state you tilt away from, you lose influence and trust and risk pushing them into the hands of your strategic rival



# Should any of the teams have shared more information, officially, earlier in the game?

- China should have been more forthcoming. They shared basically no information about their plans, actions, or intentions
  - This delayed Pakistan's response and left us a step behind for the entire game and forced Pakistan to be reactive rather than proactive
- The US should have reached out early and more constructively
  - US could have worked more closely with us on four-party talks and be less publicly in lock-step with India
  - The delay in the US confirming intelligence that the attack came from Pakistan forced us into a more defensive position rather than cooperating earlier
  - The US could have privately shared its intelligence with Pakistan to help Pakistan construct diplomatic off-ramps in a timely manner
    - Could have created a cover story to avoid revealing sources and methods, as long as we knew that they knew
  - Message alluding to the fact that they are reading our messages eroded trust
- India could have worked with Pakistan to privately offer off-ramps. We only got aggressive rhetoric, similar to the public rhetoric, but no backchannel or any intent to deescalate
- Pakistan debated heavily through much of Move 1 whether and when to release information about investigation and clamping down on terrorist group and General Khan
  - Pakistan held onto it as a bargaining chip for later
  - In retrospect, should have done that earlier knowing how it turned out

# What treaties, national laws, and international political understandings, if any, should nations be held to regarding how non-state actors might be able to access commercial, dual-use satellite services?

- Liability Convention Article 3
- Commercial operators are aware of who their customers are unless they are deceived and could cut it off
  - In many legal arenas, groups like pirates and terrorists do not have legal protections so if a country knowingly allows them to stay there, that country is liable
  - Analogous to Know Your Customer rules in banking
- UNSC 1373

# Email traffic on Financial Action Task Force

- [https://drive.google.com/file/d/17iozqhRN2aCia\\_whuoxfsY-jKs8lik4V/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/17iozqhRN2aCia_whuoxfsY-jKs8lik4V/view?usp=sharing)