

**Moeed Yusuf. 2018. *Brokering Peace in Nuclear Environments: U.S. Crisis Management in South Asia*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. 320 pp. ISBN 978-1-5036-0485-8.**

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**Syed Jaleel Hussain<sup>1</sup>**

The nuclearization of South Asia changed the nature of regional strategic dynamics in a number of ways. At the regional level, it led to the establishment of deterrence between India and Pakistan that redefined the nature of strategic interactions between them. A conventionally superior India had to factor in nuclear weapons before any strategic moves against Pakistan. The nuclearization of South Asia evidently paid more security dividends to a conventionally weaker Pakistan. There is, however, no consensus on the impact of nuclearization on security and strategic stability in the region (Kapur, 2007; Ganguly, 2008).

Besides the changed bilateral dynamics, South Asia's nuclearization created an unprecedented great power interest in strategic developments in the region. Though the international community was also concerned about the safety of nuclear weapons in Pakistan where non-state actors continue to flourish, their interest was primarily aimed at arresting the escalation of any regional crisis to a nuclear level. The distinctive mediatory role played by the US in all the major crises between India and Pakistan after 1998 is indicative of this concern. Arguably, in the absence of the US, these crises had the potential to escalate to the nuclear level. Therefore, an understanding of the role played by the US, including its motives and interests becomes extremely important. So far, most of the literature on these crises has focused either on the causes or the outcomes. Yusuf's book, *Brokering Peace in Nuclear Environments*, is a novel attempt to theorize the role of third party in crises in a nuclearized South Asia.

At a conceptual level, Yusuf's book makes some valuable contributions. First, the crisis bargaining in south Asia is tripartite not bilateral. In spite of India's 'fetish of bilateralism' that involves deeply ingrained

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<sup>1</sup> Nelson Mandela Centre for Peace & Conflict Resolution, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, Email: [mehdijalil@gmail.com](mailto:mehdijalil@gmail.com)