

p-ISSN: 2521-2982

e-ISSN: 2707-4587

GLOBAL
Political
REVIEW *empowering humanity*



GPR

GLOBAL POLITICAL REVIEW
HEC-RECOGNIZED CATEGORY-Y

VOL. X, ISSUE II, SPRING (JUNE-2025)

DOI (Journal): 10.31703/gpr

DOI (Volume): 10.31703/gpr/.2025(X)

DOI (Issue): 10.31703/gpr.2025(X.II)

Double-blind Peer-review Research Journal

www.gprjournal.com

© Global Political Review


Humanity Publications
sharing research

Article Title

Confidence Building Measures between India and Pakistan: A Critical Analysis of Pervez Musharraf Era

Abstract

This article delves into the evolution and impact of confidence building measures (CBMs) between India and Pakistan during the tenure of General Pervez Musharraf, a period marked by heightened tensions, diplomatic breakdowns, and cautious reconciliation. After the nuclear tests and the kargil war, the relations between India and Pakistan were greatly strained. Nevertheless, the Musharraf era also saw several important diplomatic interactions focused on reducing tensions and establishing normal relations. The study explores both military and non-military CBMs, including ceasefire agreements along the line of control (LoC), initiation of composite dialogues, restoration of high-level diplomatic contacts, cross-border travel and trade initiatives. While emphasizing the achievements, the article also acknowledges the limitations and vulnerability of CBMs, especially in the wake of significant terrorist incidents such as Indian parliament and Mumbai attacks. The article emphasizes the importance of establishing and maintaining ongoing dialogue mechanisms to promote lasting peace and stability in South Asia.

Keywords: Confidence Building Measures (CBMs),
India, Pakistan, General Musharraf era,
Non-state Actors

Authors:

Rashida Hanif: M.Phil. Scholar, Department of International Relations, Government College University Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

Ghulam Mustafa: (Corresponding Author)
Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Government College University Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.
(Email: ghulammustafa@gcuf.edu.pk)

Adnan Nawaz: Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations, Government College University Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

Pages: 28-40

DOI: [10.31703/gpr.2025\(X-II\).03](https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gpr.2025(X-II).03)

DOI link: [https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gpr.2025\(X-II\).03](https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gpr.2025(X-II).03)

Article link: <https://gprjournal.com/article/confidence-building-measures-between-india-and-pakistan-a-critical-analysis-of-pervez-musharraf-era>

Full-text Link: <https://gprjournal.com/fulltext/confidence-building-measures-between-india-and-pakistan-a-critical-analysis-of-pervez-musharraf-era>

Pdf link: <https://www.gprjournal.com/jadmin/Auther/31rv1olA2.pdf>

Global Political Review

p-ISSN: [2521-2982](https://doi.org/10.31703/gpr.2025(X-II).03) e-ISSN: [2707-4587](https://doi.org/10.31703/gpr.2025(X-II).03)

DOI (journal): [10.31703/gpr](https://doi.org/10.31703/gpr)

Volume: X (2025)

DOI (volume): [10.31703/gpr.2025\(X\)](https://doi.org/10.31703/gpr.2025(X-II))

Issue: II Spring (June-2025)

DOI(Issue): [10.31703/gpr.2025\(X-II\)](https://doi.org/10.31703/gpr.2025(X-II))

Home Page

www.gprjournal.com

Volume: X (2025)

<https://www.gprjournal.com/Current-issue>

Issue: II-Spring (June-2025)

<https://www.gprjournal.com/issue/10/2/2025>

Scope

<https://www.gprjournal.com/about-us/scope>

Submission

<https://humaglobe.com/index.php/gpr/submissions>



Visit Us



Citing this Article

03	Confidence Building Measures between India and Pakistan: A Critical Analysis of Pervez Musharraf Era		
Authors	Rashida Hanif Ghulam Mustafa Adnan Nawaz	DOI	10.31703/gpr.2025(X-II).03
		Pages	28-40
		Year	2025
		Volume	X
		Issue	II
Referencing & Citing Styles			
APA	Hanif, R., Mustafa, G., & Nawaz, A. (2025). Confidence Building Measures between India and Pakistan: A Critical Analysis of Pervez Musharraf Era. <i>Global Political Review</i> , X(II), 28-40. https://doi.org/10.31703/gpr.2025(X-II).03		
CHICAGO	Hanif, Rashida, Ghulam Mustafa, and Adnan Nawaz. 2025. "Confidence Building Measures between India and Pakistan: A Critical Analysis of Pervez Musharraf Era." <i>Global Political Review</i> X (II):28-40. doi: 10.31703/gpr.2025(X-II).03.		
HARVARD	HANIF, R., MUSTAFA, G. & NAWAZ, A. 2025. Confidence Building Measures between India and Pakistan: A Critical Analysis of Pervez Musharraf Era. <i>Global Political Review</i> , X, 28-40.		
MHRA	Hanif, Rashida, Ghulam Mustafa, and Adnan Nawaz. 2025. 'Confidence Building Measures between India and Pakistan: A Critical Analysis of Pervez Musharraf Era', <i>Global Political Review</i> , X: 28-40.		
MLA	Hanif, Rashida, Ghulam Mustafa, and Adnan Nawaz. "Confidence Building Measures between India and Pakistan: A Critical Analysis of Pervez Musharraf Era." <i>Global Political Review</i> X.II (2025): 28-40. Print.		
OXFORD	Hanif, Rashida, Mustafa, Ghulam, and Nawaz, Adnan (2025), 'Confidence Building Measures between India and Pakistan: A Critical Analysis of Pervez Musharraf Era', <i>Global Political Review</i> , X (II), 28-40.		
TURABIAN	Hanif, Rashida, Ghulam Mustafa, and Adnan Nawaz. "Confidence Building Measures between India and Pakistan: A Critical Analysis of Pervez Musharraf Era." <i>Global Political Review</i> X, no. II (2025): 28-40. https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gpr.2025(X-II).03 .		



Cite Us



Title

Confidence Building Measures between India and Pakistan: A Critical Analysis of Pervez Musharraf Era

Authors:

Rashida Hanif: M.Phil. Scholar, Department of International Relations, Government College University Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

Ghulam Mustafa: (Corresponding Author)

Associate Professor, Department of International Relations, Government College University Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

(Email: ghulammustafa@gcuf.edu.pk)

Adnan Nawaz: Assistant Professor, Department of International Relations, Government College University Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan.

Contents

- [Introduction](#)
- [Key CBM Initiatives during Musharraf Era \(1999-2008\)](#)
- [Diplomatic and Political CBMs](#)
- [Military and Security-Related CBMs](#)
- [Economic and Trade CBMs](#)
- [People-to-People and Cultural Exchanges](#)
- [Conclusion](#)
- [Reference](#)

Abstract

This article delves into the evolution and impact of confidence building measures (CBMs) between India and Pakistan during the tenure of General Pervez Musharraf, a period marked by heightened tensions, diplomatic breakdowns, and cautious reconciliation. After the nuclear tests and the kargil war, the relations between India and Pakistan were greatly strained. Nevertheless, the Musharraf era also saw several important diplomatic interactions focused on reducing tensions and establishing normal relations. The study explores both military and non-military CBMs, including ceasefire agreements along the line of control (LoC), initiation of composite dialogues, restoration of high-level diplomatic contacts, cross-border travel and trade initiatives. While emphasizing the achievements, the article also acknowledges the limitations and vulnerability of CBMs, especially in the wake of significant terrorist incidents such as Indian parliament and Mumbai attacks. The article emphasizes the importance of establishing and maintaining ongoing dialogue mechanisms to promote lasting peace and stability in South Asia.

Keywords:

[Confidence Building Measures \(CBMs\)](#), [India](#), [Pakistan](#), [General Musharraf era](#), [Non-state Actors](#)

Introduction

India and Pakistan established Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) throughout the rule of Musharraf between 1999 and 2008 even though the entire period remained unstable. Different diplomatic strides combined with economic progress and military tension reduction schemes together with people exchanges formed a primary focus toward

establishing stable relations between both nations. Several progressions in CBMs occurred during this period yet their extensive effects were stifled because of longstanding political divisions along with security complexities and institutional problems. Several initiatives succeeded in crisis management and diplomatic maintenance although they did not establish a sustainable structure for



peace since fundamental conflicts including Kashmir issues with cross-border terrorism persisted.

The Musharraf era focused its effort to implement CBMs on military negotiation and strategic tension reduction because of the intense Kargil conflict (1999) and the 2001 Indian Parliament attack. The Pakistan military adopted various CBMs through the 2003 LoC ceasefire agreement and pre-notification of ballistic missile tests combined with joint military dialogues. The established measures functioned to decrease unintended escalation risks while building up strategic stability (Alam, 2010). Despite creating a transitory improvement in military relations the adopted CBMs remained easily breakable because they lacked proper institutional structure and enforcement systems. The 2008 Mumbai attacks disrupted all military-based improvements that previously strengthened relations and left the peace process exceptionally fragile.

During the Musharraf era, diplomatic CBMs emerged as noteworthy initiatives because summits and secret negotiations took precedence. The Agra Summit (2001) alongside the Islamabad Summit (2004) represented essential meetings that aimed to develop official mechanisms for peace creation. The administration of Musharraf conducted secret discussions with Indian leaders which yielded innovative concepts to address the Kashmir question including plans to take troops out of the area and to give the region greater self-governance abilities (Alam, 2010). The diplomatic attempts encountered rigorous opposition by militantly hostile political elements especially in both nations because they interpreted concessions as signs of weakness instead of progress toward confidence-building. The diplomatic CBMs between India and Pakistan did not lead to sustainable stability because both countries faced domestic opposition as well as changes in their political environments.

The Musharraf administration brought essential changes to India-Pakistan relations between 1999 and 2008 by exposing both advantageous and restrictive aspects in their pursuit of Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) for peace-building. The deteriorated relations between India and Pakistan following the damaging Kargil conflict of 1999 formed an emergency requirement for diplomatic diffusion efforts. The crisis demonstrated that

earlier Confidence-Building Measures showed weakness thus revealing potential misjudgment in nuclearized South Asia. Both countries implemented a fresh analysis of Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) as tension management tools following internal and external pressure (Tellis, 2017). The deep mistrust between the countries persisted while political shifts along with security emergencies and outstanding territorial disputes especially in Kashmir often halted any progress. The period experienced various diplomatic efforts as well as clandestine talks and armed forces interactions which aimed to establish orderly methods for managing conflict (Basu, 2015).

The international diplomatic push led by the United States along with other entities from the United Nations facilitated the restoration of CBMs through their active encouragement of dialogue between India and Pakistan. After the 9/11 events in the global security landscape both India and Pakistan needed to cooperate more because they shared similar dangers from terrorism and instabilities in the region. Pakistan made a bid for regional responsibility under General Pervez Musharraf by aiming to enhance ties with India for economic development alongside peace in the region and improved international status. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee and his successor Manmohan Singh started to realize the value of regional stability in India which led them to use diplomatic ways to stop military confrontations (Kukreja & Yousef, 2020).

Multiple CBM initiatives took shape during this duration while covering diplomatic as well as military along with economic fields and people-to-people engagement. The Agra Summit (2001) along with the Islamabad Summit (2004) brought together major leaders to restart negotiations for continuous diplomatic processes. Both the 2003 ceasefire agreement that established a truce along the Line of Control (LoC) and the newly established procedures about missile tests served to decrease military strains while monitoring unnecessary conflict growth. The initiatives for economic cooperation contained both bilateral trade dialogues alongside agreements for building fresh cross-border trading channels designed to expand economic connections as a foundation for enduring partnerships. The Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service launched in 2005 along with other gradual people-to-people CBMs

serve as examples of enhanced cultural exchanges that seek to close societal divisions and develop shared comprehension among the populations (Basu, 2015).

The effectiveness of CBMs was restricted because structural obstacles and fundamental disagreements that split the two nations continued to exist. The core dispute involving Kashmir continues to obstruct diplomatic improvement between New Delhi and Islamabad despite unsuccessful attempts at addressing the Kashmir issue. Important security incidents like the 2001 Indian Parliament attack and the 2008 Mumbai attacks further eroded trust levels between both nations. The Pakistani attempts at peace building under Musharraf failed to gain acceptance from Indian leadership because Pakistan's domestic political turmoil along with military control of foreign policy and non-state entities diminished its credibility. The extent of peace initiatives between India and Pakistan was restricted by both Indian public opposition toward Pakistan alongside the country's strong political factions following hardline positions. The provisional state of Indo-Pakistani foreign relations prevented CBMs from establishing sustainable solutions to the core causes of the conflict as demonstrated by Kukreja and Yousef (2020).

The Musharraf regime used economic collaboration along with other confidence-building measures to reduce political conflicts and develop mutual interdependence between India and Pakistan. Both governments expanded trade agreements, bilateral business forums, and cross-border trade routes through this period while discussing methods to elevate trade amounts and eliminate non-tariff barriers. The opening of the Wagah-Attari trade route alongside business community visa liberalization marked a strategic turn from political to economic initiatives for confidence-building according to Ashraf (2017).

Economic CBMs remained underdeveloped between the two countries because frequent political tensions blocked trade agreements while non-tariff barriers acted as major market access restrictions. Economic cooperation between India and Pakistan remained limited because Pakistan did not establish formal economic treaties and refused to extend MFN status to India. According to Ashraf (2017), economic cooperation shows promise for

transforming Indo-Pakistani relations yet its progress depends on unattainable political stability between the two countries. Economic CBMs by themselves lacked the capability to replace resolving important security and political disagreements because this prevented achieving wider peace goals.

The Musharraf administration actively supported people-to-people CBMs through programs involving cultural swapping academic partnerships and media cross-border connections. The Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service became operational in 2005 as a major event that let Kashmiri families separated for decades finally meet (Alam, 2010). Sporting engagements through cricket matches between India and Pakistan proved crucial for making public attitudes more positive and building friendly relations among the citizenry. Although these confidence-building measures produced positive progress they focused primarily on symbolic gestures which faced interruptions during security emergencies. Numerous people-to-people programs ceased operations in 2008 after the Mumbai attacks which led to the revival of intense hostile dialogue between public leaders. These Civilian Building Measures at the civil society level lacked sustained commitment which prevented them from disrupting entrenched negative narratives between nations (Ashraf, 2017).

The Musharraf administration made numerous progressions with CBMs yet they could not establish sustainable peace because various obstacles emerged. The chief obstacle to progress stemmed from a deficit of trust between Pakistan and India because each state distrusted its neighbor's goals and promises. Two sides continued to prevent the resolution of the Kashmir dispute through backchannel procedures because they refused to give any substantial concessions. The 2001 Indian Parliament attack along with the 2008 Mumbai attacks triggered stronger antagonism between India and Pakistan because each country further distrusted the other's actions (Alam 2010). The quest for peace involved dealing with political instability as well as facing resistance from domestic groups. The Pakistani government under Musharraf who relied on military control found it impossible to sustain lasting peace initiatives because they had no domestic public support while Indian domestic factions consistently opposed Pakistan-related diplomatic moves after terror incidents occurred.

The hardline security elements throughout both countries prevented the implementation of CBMs because military objectives commonly overrode diplomatic efforts (Ashraf, 2017).

The security initiatives implemented by Musharraf during his leadership period became notable milestones in Indo-Pakistani CBMs but they never matured into long-lasting peace infrastructure. Ministry actions towards de-escalating troops helped stop battlefield clashes but security worries persisted which maintained tensions alive. The potential benefits of economic CBMs remained unreachable because of political unrest combined with trade limitations. Similar programs based on human interactions brought brief periods of good feelings yet proved unable to endure because security threats quickly dismantled their effectiveness. Impactful exchange systems implemented by Musharraf illustrate both what is possible and the restrictions that arise when India and Pakistan seek peace. The initiatives showed that conflict resolution was possible yet showed the critical shortcomings of diplomatic strategies which neglect to handle fundamental disagreements between the two nations. Henceforth CBMs can be effective only when they receive institutional support alongside domestic backing and protection from political disturbances. The absence of sustainable resolution between India and Pakistan will maintain their relations within periodic bargaining phases and interspersing conflicts thus blocking permanent peace.

This chapter focuses on the critical assessment of Musharraf Era CBM initiatives to study their implementation strategies and their results on Indo-Pakistani diplomatic relations. The intervention of specific measures managed tensions yet remained ineffective in establishing enduring peace agreements because of security risks alongside political restrictions and ongoing uncertainties between the two nations. This research evaluates CBMs implemented during the Musharraf era which offers an understanding of Indo-Pakistani conflict management obstacles and future regional peace initiatives.

Key CBM Initiatives during Musharraf Era (1999-2008)

During Musharraf's leadership time (1999–2008) the Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) included

various diplomatic along with military and economic and cultural exchanges representing the intricate multi-faceted dynamics between India and Pakistan. Standalone initiatives among CBMs did not exist while these initiatives worked together to reduce tensions through enhanced dialogue and sustainable peace efforts. Multiple Common Bond Measures proved ineffective toward sustainable progress because of existing structural obstacles along with unstable political conditions and deep-seated suspiciousness between parties. A thorough examination of these programs demonstrates their achievements and shortcomings in providing essential knowledge about the obstacles to peace-building between Pakistan and India as nuclear powers.

Diplomatic and Political CBMs

Formal channels of communication together with institutional dialogue at various levels formed the main components of diplomatic and political CBMs during the Musharraf era peace process. Both foreign secretaries, national security advisors, and heads of state participated in routine talks which proved their readiness to negotiate despite ongoing disputes (Siddiqui, 2018). The Agra Summit of 2001 emerged as a flagship diplomatic CBM although it ended without reaching an agreement due to its attempts to conduct direct and significant talks about the contested matters (Joshi, 2021). The nations advanced their CBMs at the Islamabad Summit of 2004 to develop expanded engagement programs in trade and people-to-people contact.

Between 1999 and 2008 the diplomatic and political Confidence-Building Measures (CBMs) between India and Pakistan developed essential formal dialogue channels while deepening high-level diplomatic relations. The tense history between India and Pakistan with ongoing hostilities and mistrust prompted officials to establish diplomatic CBMs that built lasting dialogues and stopped misperceptions while developing a clear diplomatic interaction system. The effectiveness of these diplomatic efforts to maintain contact between India and Pakistan became limited by existing political disagreements and domestic policy shifts as well as external security threats (Nasir et al., 2021).

In 2001 President Pervez Musharraf and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee of India met at the

Agra Summit to hold direct formal talks that became one of the signature diplomatic CBMs during this era. Since the Kargil conflict had seriously damaged their relations both sides showed willingness during the summit to restart their dialogue processes. The summit failed to produce a concrete agreement because Pakistan and India maintained different perspectives on cross-border terrorism and disagreements regarding the Kashmir issue (Nasir et al., 2021). The summit's success was temporary since there existed no formal system to maintain dialogue-making progress after the event.

The Islamabad Summit (2004) started official dialogue sessions after tensions had escalated because of the 2001 Indian Parliament attack between the nations. The economic dialogue process resumed after leaders from India and Pakistan participated in the Islamabad Summit which tackled various subjects ranging from trade security and border crossings. As one of the outcomes of the Islamabad Summit Pakistan formally renewed its promise to ensure its land would resist all forms of terrorist practices. Such diplomatic progress stood out because it established continuous dialogue about important subjects (Baqai, 2013). Although the joint statement created at the Islamabad Summit represented advancement it failed to gain substantial traction due to subsequent terrorist activities and changes in political direction in both Pakistan and India.

The most concrete diplomatic linkage for crisis prevention involved direct communication channels between military officers to prevent misunderstandings before accidental conflicts erupted. Military officials established this hotlines initiative which served as an essential approach to manage tensions along the Line of Control (LoC) because stakeholders saw it as a practical tool for conflict avoidance. The bus service reestablishment between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad (in 2005) brought back connections between vital cities which became a notable expansion in Indo-Pakistani relations according to Manchanda (2011). These diplomatic measures increased interaction between India and Pakistan yet did not overcome Kashmir as the main obstacle preventing bilateral progress between states. Diplomatic CBMs between the two nations met constant resistance from political disagreements along with domestic priority

adjustments that repeatedly interrupted these measures causing their continuity to be unstable.

The primary function of backchannel diplomacy functioned along with summit meetings to generate connections between Pakistan and India. Musharraf's government conducted hidden talks with Indian officials which led them to analyze non-territorial solutions regarding the Kashmir dispute. Neither country embraced any of the proposed terms during their discussions which involved demilitarization measures alongside Kashmir self-governance increases and border infrastructure expansion. Official support institutions failed to endorse these talks between India and Pakistan therefore making them susceptible to political upheavals and leadership transitions (Baqai, 2013).

Means of accident prevention between military forces were established as part of diplomatic attempts to reduce tensions. Military-to-foreign-ministry hotline connections proved crucial by minimizing both unexpected occurrences of conflict and incorrect assessments between countries. Hotlines enabled diplomatic interest to keep advancing and stay connected through times of contention according to Nasir et al. (2021). Despite their success in crisis prevention these measures failed to resolve hostility at its core thus their usefulness lasted only until short-term crisis management.

The Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service (2005) established during this period offered a diplomatic CBM to enable Kashmiri people on both sides of the border to meet their family members. This program represented a critical symbolic move designed to unite people and promote interpersonal relationships. The goodwill gesture was disrupted frequently due to security threats together with bureaucratic obstacles and renewed border conflicts in the LoC region (Baqai, 2013).

The resolution of fundamental causes defining Indo-Pakistani tensions such as Kashmir and political distrust and cross-border militancy proved unattainable even though diplomatic CBMs increased. The dialogue continued because of high-level interactions yet these contacts failed to produce enduring solutions. Sustainable peace efforts lacked an established framework so diplomatic CBMs depended heavily on individual political leaders who faced both political pressure at home and replacement threats from new leaders.

High-level diplomatic CBMs which took place under Musharraf's leadership proved that two rival countries could build diplomatic communications that provided mutual advantages. Leadership meetings together with secret dialogue and official communication networks helped decrease urgent diplomatic conflicts while allowing officials to talk about specific policy matters. The effects lasted only briefly because political turmoil security threats and popular nationalist speeches steered efforts toward regression. In order for diplomatic CBMs to succeed Nasir et al. (2021) state these measures need additional conflict resolution approaches that tackle root causes of suspicion and hostility. Future diplomatic CBMs need institutionalization because dialogue must persist regardless of political and security changes. The absence of a sustained peace structure will maintain diplomatic actions between times of peaceful cooperation and hostile interactions thus preventing South Asia from establishing enduring stability.

Military and Security-Related CBMs

During the Musharraf era (1999–2008), Indian and Pakistani militaries resumed working on a number of Military and Security Confidence-building measures (CBMs), specially intended to reduce the likelihood of accidental military confrontations, enhance transparency, and prevent crises from reaching the stage of taking the war to the full scale. Military CBMs were considered necessary to ensure stability in a nuclear South Asia given the history of military confrontation including the Kargil conflict (1999), the 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament, and other occasions. Some of the initiatives helped bring about a temporary de-escalation, but consequently, they were mere smoke without fire, which barely institutionalized a stable long-term military engagement framework (Kardousd & Javaid, 2017).

Since the Indo-Pakistani border has been historically very volatile, military and security-related CBMs were essential in de-escalating tensions at the LoC. The focus of these measures was aimed at avoiding accidental escalation, avoiding cross-border confrontations, and mechanisms of communication in the event of a crisis. The 2003 ceasefire agreement along the LoC was the most important CBM of the Musharraf era and caused a major decrease in border skirmishes and enhanced stability in civilian areas of the border (Kerr, 2020).

While not frequently violated, this ceasefire was among the longest spent endured by any Indo-Pakistani war, and it endured for a few years.

Also in the military domain, there were other CBMs which included reductions in troop strength in highly sensitive areas, dialogue on military issues, and agreements on notification with ballon missile tests (Cheema, 2023). The importance of these initiatives in pursuing to lower the risk of an unintended escalation among countries that have nuclear capability. Cross-border infiltration and militant activities tended to test the effectiveness of both, with both governments frequently tending to accuse and counter-accuse each other. At the end of Musharraf's term, the 2008 Mumbai attacks, which saw the non-state actors derail the peace process illustrated the limit to the use of military CBMs.

The 2003 ceasefire agreement along the Line of Control (LoC) was one of the most important military CBMs during the Musharraf era, which cut cross-border hostilities and reduced casualties in the region. The ceasefire which was agreed upon after intense diplomatic efforts and international pressure, was widely seen as a major breakthrough because, after years, this was the first formal agreement to halt military operations along the LoC. The border communities that had suffered for decades from cross-border shelling and skirmishes were given temporary relief. But the ceasefire violations did not end, in fact, there was a lull but it continued intermittently, especially after terrorist incidents, such as the 2008 Mumbai attacks and it strained Indo-Pakistani security relations (Ashraf & Shah, 2021).

Agreements on reducing the risks that the military might miscalculate and increase military transparency included another key military CBM, namely the provision of pre-notification of ballistic missile tests. As nuclear-armed states, India and Pakistan realized that it was necessary to communicate regarding the test of their strategic weapons to prevent unintended escalation. Signed in 2005, this agreement called for the countries to notify each other before test-firing a ballistic missile to prevent any military maneuvers from being mistaken to be aggressive (Yerankar, n.d.). It was seen as a very successful CBM, as it was one of the very few Indo-Pak agreements that went beyond the political cold one. Yet, military stability brought by such agreements had little impact in the broader

strategic environment of mutual suspicion, and unresolved territorial disputes.

During this period, military-to-military communication was also strengthened through the creation of hotlines between senior military commanders and foreign ministries, enabling direct engagement in crises. What: At least on paper, the Director General Military Operations (DGMO) hotline was originally set up in 1971, and made more of a habit during the Musharraf days, to avoid any miscommunication during border tensions. This mechanism, particularly was useful in clarifying troop movements, addressing incidents on the border, and reducing the chance of inadvertent escalation (Jaffer, 2018). However, the hotline did not institutionalize itself within a broader conflict prevention frame and was limited to engaging when there was an active engagement between the two countries.

Despite these, the security challenges and Indian and Pakistani deep-rooted mistrust did not permit military CBMs to fully benefit. A big kiss of the issue was Kashmir, which had kept the cross-border militancy alive. A major concern for India was Pakistan's reluctance to completely end militant networks which are operating in its territory, while Pakistan, in turn, accused India of human rights violations in Kashmir and that New Delhi is not flexible in terms of crucial territorial issues (Ashraf & Shah, 2021). The absence of mutual trust meant it was unable to maintain military CBMs, with both powers considering the other's commitments to be insincere or transient.

In addition, however, non-state actors and terrorist organizations destabilized military relations between Indo and Pakistani and frequently impaired diplomatic and military engagement. Both the 2001 attack on the Indian Parliament and the 2008 Mumbai attacks made CBM efforts illusive and served as a high point in hard-line security policies on both sides. After the Mumbai attacks, India ended peace talks and undone progress made in military CBMs under Musharraf (Jaffer, 2018). The events these translated revealed the instability of CBMs in the absence of a comprehensive sharing of counterterrorism cooperation, and asserted that military engagement, alone, was not sufficient for long-term stability.

CBMs of the Musharraf era regarding military and security-related points of engagement, ceasefire

agreements, and crisis communication mechanisms showed that controlled engagement, ceasefire agreements, and crisis communication mechanisms can significantly reduce the risks of escalation of conflict. Both the 2003 ceasefire agreement and the missile pre-notification pact as well as the use of military hotlines became an important means to de-escalate and to manage crises. Nevertheless, they failed due to underlying political hostility, the absence of institutional guarantees, and the significant role played by non-state actors in Indo-Pakistani security affairs. Without attending to the root of territorial disputes, cross-border militancy, and fundamental mistrust, as argued by Kardousd & Javaid (2017), military CBMs are likely to remain fragile and collapse when tensions soar. Both nations have to go beyond temporary agreements and develop a long-term framework that engages joint counterterrorism efforts, conflict resolution mechanisms, and structured military dialogues in order to make military CBMs sustainable. However, the limitation of the Musharraf era CBMs does provide much insight into how military engagement can enhance diplomatic and political negotiations. Present military CBMs to be taken forward, however, while serving as short-term solutions and not as durable confidence-building measures for long-term peace in South Asia, are insufficient in the absence of parallel efforts to address fundamental disputes.

Economic and Trade CBMs

CBMs of an economic nature among other CBMs in the Musharraf era (1999–2008) rested on the assumption that economic interdependence could contribute to the stability of relations between India and Pakistan. It was hoped that increased trade ties, lessened economic restrictions, and joint ventures, by creating mutual economic benefits, would reduce the incentive for conflict. Nevertheless, while trade liberalization was started with some initial optimism and some progress was made at the CBM level, these CBMs did not fully realize their potential because of political constraints, security concerns, and bureaucratic inefficiencies. During this period, some positive results were encountered regarding economic cooperation but remained for the most part, limited, reactive, and very much subject to political fluctuations (Purushothaman, 2019). Ease of visa conditions, especially for businessmen of both countries to conduct direct commercial

negotiations and participate in trade exhibitions, was one of the most important CBMs of the Musharraf era. This step was created to entice an atmosphere of political enemies rather than an enemy to economic collaboration, wherein business links were developed across political hostilities. Furthermore, the two countries looked at the prospect of the development and expansion of cross-border trade, especially between the Wagah-Attari borders. Such dialogue between the private sectors of the two nations was thus facilitated through the establishment of joint business forums and trade delegations which discussed ways of investment opportunities, trade barriers, and economic cooperation (Khan et al., 2021).

The premise of stimulating economic CBMs was that economic trade and cooperation would function as an anchor for peace encouraging mutual economic benefits and reducing incentives for conflict. During the Musharraf era, several initiatives were tried out to improve trade, ease business travel, and encourage comparative economic ties (World Bank, 2022). Steps for economic interdependence (Chary, 2021) were visa relaxation of business communities' addition to trade fairs and search for joint ventures. However economic CBMs brought with them serious structural problems with their initial optimism. There were of course a myriad of protectionist policies, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and security concerns that hindered trade between India and Pakistan from coming close to its potential. On the issue of MFN status, discussions on Pakistan's granting India's Most Favored Nation (MFN) status were held, but Pakistan never formally did it despite the emphasis on political rather than economic logic. At the same time, economic cooperation was often obstructed by political and military tensions at the cross-border trade thus, showcasing that economic bonds do not evolve in isolation from the rest of institutions. The slow work on economic CBMs helped sustain the belief that ending the conflict would entail progress on diplomatic fronts simultaneously with security and that economic initiatives alone were not enough to keep the two South Asian states engaged.

Nevertheless, considering that these promising steps had not been sufficient yet to increase the volume of Indo-Pakistani trade to its full potential, the reasons being structural barriers and political

roadblocks were quite apparent. The absence of Most Favored Nation (MFN) status for India, unavailable to Pakistan because it was hesitant to give out the trade privilege, was one of the key challenges. On the other hand, India imposed non-tariff barriers in the form of restrictions in the global market for Pakistani goods and these barriers were highly imbalanced. However, these economic restrictions enforced mistrust in that the trade policies tended to be dictated by security concerns rather than economic rationale (Rajiv et al., n.d.).

On the other hand, the high level of bureaucratic inefficiencies and restrictive trade regulations between the two sides constituted another major barrier to economic CBMs. In particular, complicated customs procedures, excessive documentation requirements, and especially frequent disruptions as a result of diplomatic tensions discouraged businesses from entering into long-term trade partnerships. Despite the opening of such trade routes as the Muzafarabad-Srinagar trade corridor, the volume of goods exchanged was never really substantial because of restrictions regarding security, the narrowness in the tradable goods, and the absence of banking infrastructure (Purushothaman, 2019). The role of the external actors (particularly the United States) also drove economic CBMs in the region. In the post-9/11 period in particular, the U.S. was a driving force in encouraging economic engagement between India and Pakistan, where a stable South Asia was considered integral to global security. Economic ties, it was felt, might alleviate tensions between the emerging nations: American diplomatic efforts advocated for the development of increased trade cooperation. Yet their progress was stymied by the fluidity of political tensions and security issues which made economic CBMs difficult to take off the ground (Ghori, 2014).

At the same time, although economic CBMs could alter Indo-Pakistani relations, they were highly vulnerable to security crises and political instability. Suspending or lowering trade initiatives after the 2001 Indian Parliament attack, the 2002 military standoff and the 2008 Mumbai attacks show that economic engagement by itself was insufficient to offset security-centric dynamics of a bilateral relationship. First, due to the lack of a formalized economic treaty or institutionalized trade agreements, any economic CBM progress was easily

reversible during periods of heightened political tensions (Khan et al. [2021](#)). Nevertheless, economic CBMs managed to be expanded in the Musharraf era, but progress was hindered by persistent political and security barriers. Symbolically important initiatives like trade delegations, business visa relaxations, and route opening to trade were undertaken but achieved nothing in terms of economic integration. Restrictive trade policies, the absence of an institutional framework, and economic decisions that were saved to politics all continued to hamper real economic cooperation. In addition, trade alone was unable to drive peace, when economic CBMs were filled with gaps and interfered with by security incidents, and indeed economic CBMs proved to be highly reactive. CBMs need to be depoliticized, institutionalized, and insulated from political disruptions for them to be sustainable economically, and for both countries. It can only turn into a missed opportunity for confidence building in the Indo-Pakistani trade by ignoring its structural weaknesses.

People-to-People and Cultural Exchanges

When the Musharraf era began, people-to-people and cultural exchanges became one of the most visible and coveted sectors of CBMs, aimed at decreasing societal hostility and refuting conventional stereotypes. Through such initiatives as academic collaborations, media exchanges, and artistic engagements, direct contact was created between the citizens of India and Pakistan, which increased the understanding (Kumar, [2012](#)). Restarting of cross-border bus services, especially such as Delhi to Lahore, and Srinagar to Muzaffarabad, acted as a major step in reinstating cross-border connectivity between divided families. Although people-to-people CBMs were very symbolic and important, it was difficult for them to translate into enduring attitudinal effects. The exchange was often unproductive in reducing distrust due to media sensationalism, nationalist rhetoric, and other portrayals of 'other'. Furthermore, similar CBMs were very sensitive to politics, as after the Mumbai attacks in 2008, hundreds of cultural initiatives were suspended. While these exchanges helped do well for a moment, they did not lead to basic narrative change, as mutual suspicions remained part of how the average person thought of their own citizens and the other country.

Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) of People-to-people and cultural exchanges between India and Pakistan during the Musharraf era (1999–2008) were an integral part of CBMs of reducing hostility, enhancing mutual understanding, and challenging old stereotypes. These CBMs were motivated by the expectation that stronger connections in the human sphere and cultural exchanges could at least begin to shift popular narratives from enmity to existence. Since diplomatic high-level or military CBMs were frequently blocked by political roadblocks, people-to-people CBMs were a special space in which to engage at the grassroots level, potentially providing for dialogue, collaboration, and cross-border reconciliation (Yerankar, [n.d.](#)). One of the most important take-ups in this sector was the launching of cross-border bus services, especially the Delhi-Lahore bus service and Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service (2005). These symbolic breakthroughs opened the doors of divided families to meet and interact directly with humans across borders. In particular, the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service was perceived as a historic confidence-building step, allowing Kashmiris from both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) to visit relatives in a volatile matter. While these services were seen as peace initiatives, they however quickly turned out to be excessively vulnerable to political strains and security risks that were prone to abrupt suspension following the terrorist attacks or military escalation (Hussain, [n.d.](#)).

Another most important people-to-people CBM was sports diplomacy, and especially cricket, with the resumption of bilateral cricket between Pakistan and India. Both countries' cultures were deeply involved with cricket and it became a powerful tool to help ease tensions and cement goodwill. Such high-profile cricket series as that of the 2004 India-Pakistan tour had overwhelming public support and were backed by diplomatic and cultural engagements and business summits. The atmosphere produced here was a camaraderie that shared cultural passion that could cut across political rivalries with these matches. While sports diplomacy had a short-term impact, higher security concerns and Tran's border conflicts often nullified the goodwill produced through such occasions (Iqbal & Dashti, [2020](#)).

Indeed, bridging the gap between the two societies was an important role played by academic and media exchange. Joint academic conferences, journalist exchanges, and cultural festivals were organized to bring miracles of dialogue on the common historical and socio-political challenges. The objective of these engagements was to deny misinformation and confront nationalistic propaganda that frequently radicalized hostility. But nationalist groups on both sides were also resistant to such initiatives as they saw people-to-people CBMs as appeasement rather than meaningful engagement. Moreover, one of such efforts is undermined by media sensationalism as negative portrayals of the 'enemy' persist and continue to dominate public discourse, further reinforcing rather than dismantling stereotypes (Khan et al., 2024).

One cultural CBM that also emerged was religious pilgrimages whereby both countries agreed to facilitate visas for those making a pilgrimage to the religious sites in each other's territory. These included moments of spiritual and cultural connection with Pakistani Sikh pilgrims visiting Gurdwara Darbar Sahib in India and Indian Muslims visiting Sufi shrines in Pakistan. Although these initiatives were important, they remained restricted and not extensively adopted or institutionalized such that they did not contribute meaningfully to promoting the process of societal reconciliation in the long term (Khan et al. 2021). Despite people-to-people CBMs' potential, they were mainly symbolic and prone to political disruptions. The Mumbai attacks of 2008 were a heavy setback and a lot of cultural initiatives had been stopped and the relationships between the two nations are worsening. Secondly, the absence of sustained government support and institutional structures ensured that these CBMs were not hardened enough to survive the diplomatic crises. Consequently, people-to-people exchanges were occasional occasions of optimism but failed to achieve a structural transformation in Indo-Pakistani relations (Khan et al., 2021).

During the Musharraf era there were people-to-people and cultural exchanges that could potentially open up to engagement beyond existing diplomatic and military channels, but most remained extremely fragile and greatly dependent on the general political climate. Although cross-border travel,

cricket diplomacy, academic exchanges, and religious pilgrimages offered hints of reconciliation, security concerns, political instability, and the absence of institutional support often overtook them. According to Hussain (n.d.), if these CBMs are to have any impact on enhancing sustained long-term peace, they should be immune from political fluctuation and integrated into a wider framework of sustained bilateral engagement. People-to-people CBMs will continue to remain fragile, temporary gestures rather than base transformative elements enhancing peacebuilding in South Asia unless assisted by governmental commitment and public support.

Conclusion

This inclusion of CBM from 1999 – 2008 stands out as one of the most structured attempts at Indo-Pakistani engagement through diplomatic dialogues, military de-escalation measures, economic cooperation, and cultural exchanges. However, limited progress continued to be constrained by fundamental political disputes, security concerns, and temporary crises despite the existence of these CBMs. CBMs performed in this regard served to maintain dialogue through diplomacy, but the core issues, for example, Kashmir, were not resolved. CBMs in the military area helped ease border tensions but were fragile where terrorist incidents occurred. Trade opportunities were held out through economic CBMs, but bureaucratic and political obstacles outweighed them. Interaction was promoted through CBMs between people, but this did not fundamentally change mutual perceptions. Overall, the CBMs introduced under the Musharraf era did help to temporarily stabilize the Indo-Pakistani relations but did not ultimately lead to a transformational change in their relations. Overall, there were unquestionably institutional lacks in the forms of institutional guarantees and a long-term peace framework, the influence of external and internal security challenges, and a long-term peace and consequently a relative vulnerability of these CBMs. In the future, CBMs must be institutionalized, insulated from politics, and supported through other mechanisms that facilitate the resolution of a conflict to remain viable and effective.

The CBMs introduced during this period reflected a gradual, though fragile, attempt to build mutual trust and reduce the likelihood of conflict escalation between the two nuclear-armed neighbors. Important military CBMs like the 2003 local ceasefire agreement, regular flag meetings, and hotline communication played a vital role in easing tensions on the ground. Non-military CBMs, particularly the launch of people-to-people initiatives like the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad and Poonch-Rawalakot bus services, the revival of the samjhauta express, and increased cultural and sports exchanges, brought a semblance of normalcy and optimism to bilateral ties. Musharraf's leadership played a crucial role in facilitating this process. His pragmatic shift from a military commander involved in the Kargil war to a statesman advocating for peaceful solutions—most notably seen in his four-point formula on Kashmir—signaled a willingness to explore alternative paths to resolution. Furthermore, the revival of the composite dialogue process (CDP) in 2004 provided a structured platform for addressing key issues, including Kashmir, terrorism, and economic cooperation.

Nevertheless, the limitations of these CBMs became more apparent as they encountered ongoing structural challenges. Trust issues, political

instability within the countries, and the ongoing activities of non-state actors operating from Pakistani territory greatly hindered the effectiveness of these measures. The 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, which took place towards the end of Musharraf's time in power, tragically highlighted the fragility of the peace process and disrupted years of diplomatic efforts. Looking back, while Musharraf's time in power did not lead to a permanent solution to the main disagreements between India and Pakistan, it emphasized the significance and possibilities of long-term involvement, gradual advancements, and adaptable diplomacy. The lessons from this period emphasize the importance of establishing CBMs as permanent structures, safeguarding peace processes from extremist influences, and promoting a culture of ongoing communication and collaboration.

Ultimately, the events of 1998–2008 indicate that while CBMs alone cannot completely resolve deep-rooted conflicts, they are essential in establishing the groundwork for productive negotiations and lasting peace. The achievements achieved during this period, though delicate and short-lived, should not be disregarded, rather, they should be regarded as a solid base and a point of reference for future diplomatic endeavors between India and Pakistan.

Reference

- Alam, M. B. (2010). In Pursuit of Peace: A Micro Study of Confidence-Building Measures between India and Pakistan. *Indian Journal of Asian Affairs*, 23(1/2), 41-60.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Ashraf, H. M. T. (2017). *Economic cooperation as an instrument of confidence-building: The case of Pakistan and India* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Malaya, Malaysia).
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Ashraf, M. T., & Shah, A. S. (2021). Impact of Security Issues on Pakistan-India Relations: Remedies and Political Advantages. *sjesr*, 4(1), 315-323.
[https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol4-iss1-2021\(315-323\)](https://doi.org/10.36902/sjesr-vol4-iss1-2021(315-323))
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Baqai, H. (2013). New trends and paradigm shifts in Pakistan and Pakistan-India relations: Pakistan's perspective. *Journal of International Relations and Foreign Policy*, 1(1), 55-68.
https://www.academia.edu/73709554/New_Trends_and_Paradigm_Shifts_in_Pakistan_and_Pakistan_India_Relations_Pakistans_Perspective
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Basu, S. (2015). *Kashmir: The storm within*. Oxford University Press.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Chary, P. R. (2021). *India and Pakistan: The troubled relationship*. Routledge.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Cheema, P. I. (2023). *Understanding Pakistan: The search for identity*. Oxford University Press.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Ghori, K. K. (2014). The Role of the US in 21 st Century Pakistan-India Relations. *Pakistan Horizon*, 67(1), 23-41.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Hussain, A. (n.d.). *A perspective on Pakistan-India relations: Power dynamics, democracy and development*.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Iqbal, A., & Dashti, A. (2020). Pakistan-India Relations: An Overview of Foreign Policy during Pervez Musharraf Regime. *Pakistan Journal of International Affairs*, 3(2).
<http://pjia.com.pk/index.php/pjia/article/download/15/32>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Jaffer, N. (2018). *Troubled India-Pakistan relations and major stumbling blocks in the peace process*. *Institute of Regional Studies, Islamabad*, 36(1), 46-88.
https://www.academia.edu/50760245/TROUBLED_INDIA_PAKISTAN_RELATIONS_AND_MAJOR_STUMBLING_BLOCKS_IN_THE_PEAPE_PROCESS
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Joshi, N. (2021). *India-Pakistan relations: A critical appraisal*. Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Kardousd, M., & Javaid, U. (2017). Foreign Policy of Pakistan Towards India In Musharraf Era. *The Journal of Political Science*, 35, 40-51.
<https://nja.pastic.gov.pk/JPS/index.php/JPS/article/view/189/183>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Kerr, D. (2020). *Confidence-building measures in international relations*. Palgrave Macmillan.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Khan, A. Z., Rahman, A., Shahzad, M. A., & Ashraf, Z. (2024). Historical Probe of the Extents of Far-off Policy of Pakistan During Musharraf Era. *International Research Journal of Management and Social Sciences*, 5(1), 789-801.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Khan, M. M. A., Hussain, M., & Muneer, S. (2021). A 'new' wave of Indo-Pak bilateralism or peak of futile talks and CBMs: An estimate of Musharraf era (1999-2008). *Journal of Indian Studies*, 7(1), 201-212.
http://pu.edu.pk/images/journal/indianStudies/PDF/13_v7_1_21.pdf
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Kukreja, V., & Yousef, H. (2020). *Pakistan's foreign policy: A concise history*. Routledge.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Kumar, R. (2012). *Bridging the divide: Peace initiatives and prospects in Kashmir*. Sage Publications.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Manchanda, R. (2011). *Remaking India: One country, many futures*. HarperCollins India.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Nasir, M. T. A., Jan, A., Farmanullah, N. H., & Ahmad, Q. (2021). *Confidence building measures between India and Pakistan 1998-2004 (Critical analysis)*. *Multicultural Education*, 7(8).
<http://ijdri.com/me/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/30.pdf>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)

- Purushothaman, D. (2019). *Critical study of non-military confidence building measures between India & Pakistan during NDA-I (1999–2004) and UPA-I (2004–2009) regimes* (Doctoral dissertation, Centre for South Asian Studies, Pondicherry University).
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Rajiv, S. S. C., Panda, J., Singh, P., & Shrivastav, S. K. Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Siddiqui, F. (2018). *Conflict and cooperation in South Asia: A comparative study*. Routledge.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Tellis, A. J. (2017). *India's evolving strategic landscape*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- World Bank. (2022). *South Asia economic update: Resilience amid uncertainty*. World Bank Publications.
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/sar/publication/south-asia-development-update>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Yerankar, S. (n.d.). *India–Pakistan relations since independence*. *Scholarly Research Journal for Interdisciplinary Studies*, 31.
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)