CHAPTER 4
DIFFERENT DIMENSIONS OF THE PEACE PROCESS:
A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a critical analysis of the peace process initiated at regional, national and international levels. Various dimensions of the peace process have been examined with a view to evaluate the prospects of peace process between India and Pakistan. There has been an analysis of factors, which propelled both countries to adopt flexible strategies in their foreign policies. In fact, internal as well as external pressures have been taken into account that readjusted the bilateral equation between the two countries. For example, an important factor which had a significant effect on the Kashmir issue was the 9/11 incident as it resulted in inducing greater flexibility in the approach of Pakistan towards the Kashmir issue. Major constraints and obstacles in the peace process which have roots in the domestic compulsion of both countries are highlighted. Views of the scholars, politicians and media have been expressed to present a comprehensive analysis of optimistic and apprehensive approaches towards the peace process. For the purpose of this thesis, the main objective is to point out the political implications this process had for restoration of democratic discontent in the state.
4.2 Peace Process in Post-Kargil Era

The peace process initiated at domestic and international level has added a new chapter in the history of Jammu and Kashmir State. In the post-Kargil era, there are chances of generating a process that could eventually create the climate for durable peace. A three-pronged strategy has been adopted in Jammu and Kashmir by the Central government to improve situation.\(^1\) Firstly, unified and coordinated operations of security forces have been started to curb insurgency. Before, there were more than one unified headquarters in the state and a tendency of compartmentalization was observed between different forces in different areas of operations. There has also been lack of accountability of all forces to one professional authority. For the last two years, there have been efforts to resolve these.

The Army commanders have been brought into the counter insurgency loop and compartmentalization has been thwarted between different forces. Second strategy is of economic development, the state government with the help of government of India has been working in this regard. Recently, the Prime Minister has announced a Rs. 24,000 crore economic development package for the state. The railway line is being extended from Jammu to the Valley and on 13 April 2005, the Prime Minister flagged off the first passenger trains from Udhampur. Another important development project is construction of 1000 mini hydel projects in border and remote villages. These projects will provide electricity to every border or remote village in the state by the end of 2005.

The third strategy comprises psychological initiatives to bring about an attitudinal change among the people. Operation Sadbhavana has been launched by the

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Army on massive scale. The Army has been carrying out extensive civil action programmes like organizing medical camps, constructing roads and bridges, providing veterinary cover, running schools, establishing model villages, arranging free education at Army schools for orphans of violence, establishing model villages an so on.

Besides the developmental projects, the violence has also been reduced in the state. For the first time after so many years in 2003, Amarnath pilgrimage was free from any terrorist violence. In fact, in subsequent years it has been free from violence and number of pilgrims has also been increased. The number of tourists visiting the valley has also shown a record high. Despite boycott calls given by separatists and violence by terrorists, the participation of people in the Assembly election 2002 has proved that there is an overwhelming sentiment against violence in the state. It has re-established the legitimacy and primary of the ballot over the bullet. This election has introduced a new era of competitive politics that has the effect of providing a sense of participation to the people, which they never had in earlier elections.

In 2005, two major developments in Jammu and Kashmir have galvanized the state’s populace. The first development, which has an external dimension, was the decision of the Indian and Pakistan governments to start a bus service on the Srinagar-Muzafarabad road network. This was projected by the analysts and the media as a giant step towards solving the problems of millions of people on either side of the LoC. The idea of ‘softening’ the border between India and Pakistan along the state of

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2 Ibid.
Jammu and Kashmir is based on humanitarian grounds. The primary argument is that it will help families, which are currently divided due to partition to routine.

Second development was the local bodies elections in February and March 2005, which led to a record participation of people. These elections were held after more than two decades. Sopore town, which was considered the bastion of pro-Pakistan separatist leader, Syed Ali Shah Geelani, recorded 26% voter turnout. It was the town’s highest voter turnout in the last 15 years. These elections have given a boost to grass root level of democracy.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh also announced to hold talks with Pakistan for opening the road between Kargil and Skardu in Pakistan controlled northern areas and with China to open the route to Tibet through Aksai Chin. Ladakh, was geographical cut off from the rest of the world in the later half of the 20th Century due to border tensions, so opening the road will help in uniting the divided families of Kargil who live in northern areas.5

A lot of significant developments are taking place in the state, which is providing the positive environment for the peace process. The moderate faction of the Hurriyat conference which is willing to negotiate with the Indian government and representatives of Kashmiri Pandits began a path breaking interactive process for the first time in 16 years. Both sides agreed to continue efforts to ensure the safe and honorable return of thousands of Pandit families living outside the Kashmir valley. It was unanimously decided to support the ongoing dialogue process between India and Pakistan to resolve all issues, including Kashmir.

5 'Ladakhis Welcome Manmohan’s Announcement On Kargil-Skardu Road’, The Hindu, 13 June 2005.
Describing the meet as a significant development, Mirwaiz Umer Farooq, Hurriyat leader, said: “All those Kashmir groups who believe in ‘Kashmiriyat’ should work for the return of the Pandit.”

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited the world’s highest battlefield Siachen Glacier in June 2005 and suggested to convert this battlefield into a “Peace mountain.” He said, “Siachen is called the highest battlefield, where living is very difficult. Now the time has come that we make efforts that this is converted from a point of conflict to the symbol of peace.” He became the first Prime Minister to visit Siachen, where he appealed to demilitarize the glacier from both India and Pakistan sides. Though, he asserted that, in search of peace, existing boundaries couldn’t be changed as these are related to our protection and prestige.

Separatist leaders like representatives of the APHC have also shown a positive change in their attitudes. During the visit of all party Hurriyat conference members to Karachi in June 2005, Omar Farooq leader of APHC said that efforts should be made to “erase” the artificial line dividing Kashmir. Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf who met APHC members also mentioned that a “permanent settlement” of the Jammu and Kashmir ‘dispute’ is only possible if the wishes and aspirations of the Kashmiri people are taken into account.

JKLF, Chief Yasin Malik also wants a Central place for Kashmiris on the negotiating table. His argument is that Kashmiris alone can decided their fate and neither India nor Pakistan has any business to be formulating Kashmir problem.

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7 'India, Pakistan Take A Step Forward On Siachen', The Hindu, 14 June, 2005.
8 'Siachen; Solutions For The Taking', The Hindu, 12 June 2005.
9 'Take Kashmiris Wishes Into Account', The Hindu, 8 June 2005.
4.3 Pakistan’s Attitude towards the Peace Process

President Musharraf also offered to put aside the UN Resolution of plebiscite on Kashmir. Even the Hurriyat conference holds the same position that there can be options on Kashmir other than ‘plebiscite’. India is not sticking to its stand that Jammu and Kashmir is a settled issue and its not open to discussion. However it has asserted that geographical boundaries can’t be altered. On the Pakistan side also there have been significant changes. For the first time, a Pakistan head of state has publicity stated that military option cannot provide a solution to Jammu and Kashmir problem. The persistent demand for implementation of UN resolutions has been abandoned.\(^{11}\)

There is now a talk of soft border and irrelevance of LoC from Pakistan’s side. Support for terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir is changing its dimensions. Initially the stand was that there is no terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir and there is only a freedom struggle. Cross border terrorism was totally denied. Now a stand has been taken against terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. The terrorist attack at tourist reception center in Srinagar on 6 April 2005 was condemned by Pakistan. Pakistan has been holding composite dialogue with India and it is no longer insisting that the core issue of Kashmir should be settled before discussing any other issue\(^{12}\)

Inside Pakistan also from politicians to big businessmen and from civil society organizations to formal lobbies, everyone is talking of normalizing relations with India. Even within the right-wing religious parties alliance, the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA), the opinion is sharply divided on the question of peace process with

\(^{11}\)“Greeting From The General”, Kashmir Trends, 7(528): 7425-7426.

India. The Jamiat Ulema-I-Islam is in favour of a dialogue while the Jamaat Islami is opposed to any kind of talk with India.\textsuperscript{13}

Other mainstream political parties like the Pakistan people's party (Benazir Bhutto) and the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz Sharif) too see gains for themselves in the peace process. There is a belief that once the Pakistan Army enters into a peace deal with India; Army's role in the country's politics will end. The ruling Pakistan Muslim League (Q) and its coalition partners too are backing the peace process. President of the ruling party, Chaudhry Shujaat Hussain brought a delegation of his party to establish contacts with Indian political leaders. Sushant Sareen argues, that Eastern Punjab was the province where being hostile towards India was seen a badge of honour. Now the Punjabi civil war seems to be over and a process of reconciliation and rediscovery of cultural and ethnic roots of a divided people seems to have started.\textsuperscript{14}

Another very important change that can be witnessed inside Pakistan is the feeling that Pakistan can gain a lot from India by entering into a cooperative relationship in economic sphere. Prof. I.N.Mukherji observes, due to existence of the 'information gap' and lower priority attached by the businessmen of the both countries, even pragmatic business organizations find it hard to expand their bilateral trade and investment relations. Both countries have intra-industry trade in several products at the bilateral level.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{15} Mukherji, Inder Nath (2005), "India-Pakistan Trade And Investment Relations: Status And Potential", Paper presented at the Seminar on "Contemporary Pakistan In The Changing Global Paradigm" Held under the auspices of The Special Area Studies Programme of Pakistani Studies, South Asia Studies Division, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi from 24\textsuperscript{th}-25\textsuperscript{th} November.
Firms involved in industries may benefit from joint ventures among them by identifying profitable avenues from intra-industry trade in several products. So, trade and India's technical expertise in areas like Information Technology, Engineering and Agriculture are attracting as number of Pakistanis. More importantly, after 9/11, the international environment changed and there was a lot of pressure on Pakistan from U.S side to curb terrorism. In fact, the role of Pakistan as a major US ally and providing the main force for combating terrorism has made the Army the most favored partner of the US policy makers. Condoleeza Rice, US Secretary of State, on October 30, 2003 remarked, "it is absolutely the case that infrastructure of terrorism has to be dismantled. It is absolutely the case that everybody needs to do more, and Pakistan needs to do more to make sure that there cannot be terrorist acts taken in from Pakistan or from Kashmir against targets there."\(^{16}\)

The former US ambassador to Pakistan, Nancy Powell also said, "The Government of Pakistan must ensure that its pledges are implemented to prevent infiltration against the LoC and end the use of Pakistan as a platform for terrorism". In fact other countries have also pressurized Pakistan for combating terrorism. Russian President Vladimir Putin also said, "We must call upon the leadership of Pakistan in the first place to put an end to the terrorist activities being carried out from its territory, in India, Kashmir and to do everything to ensure that society in Pakistan becomes transparent, democratic, predictable and understandable."\(^{17}\)


\(^{17}\) Ibid.
4.4 Critique of Peace Process

Many analysts and observers are still skeptical about peace process and they see that for peace to break out between India and Pakistan both countries have many more bridges to cross and many more hurdles to remove. Ashutosh Misra opines, India and Pakistan have fought four wars over Kashmir and have held several rounds of talks to resolve the 57 years old issue, but without any tangible success. The only progress thus far has been that India has agreed to discuss the issue as part of the composite dialogue process and Pakistan has shown willingness to explore options other than the UN resolutions on Kashmir.\(^{18}\) He further argues, although both India and Pakistan are trying to breakaway from the past, yet both fail to bring about any significant policy shifts. For Pakistan, it still is the ‘problem of Kashmir’, i.e., Kashmir as a ‘disputed territory and an ‘unfinished agenda’ of partition. For India, it is the ‘problem in Kashmir’, which suggests that accession of Kashmir to India is final and complete and the challenge is now to combat cross border terrorism and to address the problem of development and grievances of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Vikram Sood also observes that both India and Pakistan still have different attitude on Kashmir issue. Pakistan says, it will talk peace with India provided Kashmir is sorted our first and India says, we will sort out all bilateral issues and in that process, Kashmir will get resolved.\(^{19}\)

In fact President Musharraf faces domestic constraints in proceeding the peace process with India. When he talked of UN resolutions becoming irrelevant, many of his Pakistani critics accused him of a sellout. When he offered to find out other than other options to resolve Kashmir disputes plebiscite, he was charged for having “sold


out” on Kashmir. The political parties ranging from ‘progressive’ PPP, to the Nationalist ANP, the moderate Muslim League (N) and the Islamist MMA have denounced the offer as “surrender before India”. The entire opposition staged a walkout from the Senate in protest alleging that “the General has taken a U-Turn on Kashmir under US pressure”.

The then Prime Minister, Mr. Jamali had taken a position that UN Resolutions provide the basis for the Resolution of Kashmir dispute. A section of the political class has been maintaining that the General’s offer tantamount to the negation of the ‘two nation’ theory, which formed the basis of Pakistan.

Sushant Sareen doubts that while apart from the Jamaat Islami, none of the other political parties are averse to the peace process, yet there is a danger that the peace process may become a victim of the political struggle between the military regime and the political opposition. MMA poses a challenge to the legitimacy of the Musharraf government on a number of issues. These include the President holding the post of the Army Chief and introduction of many amendments in the constitution. Public anger and discontent against the regime, if channelized by the opposition could very easily disrupt the peace process.

Prof. Kalim Bahadur observes that General Musharraf, Army chief in 1999 sabotaged the Lahore Declaration of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee because he felt, it did not deal with the Kashmir issue to his satisfaction. He asks, ‘How could India be assured that Musharraf would abide by the

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decisions taken by Prime Minister Jamali? And 'could such a regime take any important decisions in the dialogue with India?'

Kashmiri Identity, Self Determination and Peace Process

The deeply plural character of the Jammu and Kashmir polity makes it imperative to devise instruments and processes for re-structuring the rules of the game to ensure that power sharing is inclusive. To judge by the historical record, no movement in the state has succeeded in achieving its objectives unless it was inclusive in its political character and social base and unless it represented the political interests of all groups as distinct from those in the majority. This explains the failure of the Kashmiri’s secessionist agenda in the 1950’s as well as the 1990’s. They demanded the right to self determination in the name of “the people of Jammu and Kashmir” but campaigned only on behalf of the majority community: Kashmiri muslims. The minority social groups sought autonomy from the Kashmir valley. The collective opposition of the state’s linguistic, regional and religious minorities have obstructed the Kashmiri muslims demand for secessionism. Likewise the most important reason for the failure of Jammu’s political demands has been the lack of mass support in the region. The Ladakhi Buddhists have not succeeded in securing Union Territory status for Ladakh because the idea is bitterly opposed by the Kargil muslims who make up nearly half of Ladakh’s population. This shows that Kashmir’s self rule or autonomy from New Delhi will be acceptable to different cross-sections of the society only if it is viewed as part of a broader process of devolving power to the regions. Rekha Chowdhary mentions that Kashmir problem is a multi layered and multi dimensional problem. There are many actors involved in this, so to make peace

process effective it is needed that all the actors are involved in the talk. Peace process should reach at the grass root level\textsuperscript{25}.

4.5 Domestic Compulsions in Pakistan

Maj. Gen. (Retd.) Afsir Karim states that Pakistani Army has been playing a pivotal role in all strategic and foreign policy initiatives of Pakistan. He asserts that there is a segment of the Army that has come under the influence of the fundamentalist parties and doesn’t like the role of Pakistan as a major US ally. This segment can divide the Pakistan Army and can lead the country into a terrible blood bath. The Army is presently hinting Al-Qaeda in Wazirastan, defending borders and is embroiled in earthquake relief in Pakistan and POK. It is over stretched, tired and angry so it is enable to play any significant role in the national affairs of the country. Under these circumstances if fundamentalists gain greater support within the Army, the US influence will suffer a major set back in this region\textsuperscript{26}.

Some analysts also point out that the role of the terrorist groups and the jihad militias in the present situation also cannot be ignored. They are still active, recruiting people, collecting funds and engaging in activities and propaganda that is attracting people towards them.

It appears that, they are now becoming politically active and aligning themselves with mainstream political forces like PPP, PML (Nawaz) and the MMA in forging a common front to challenge the government. It has been suggested that

\textsuperscript{25} Interview with Prof. Rekha Chowdhary, Head of Dept. of Political Science, Jammu University on 3.7.2006
\textsuperscript{26} Karim, Maj Gen. (Retd.) Afsir “Role Of Pakistan Army In The Changing Global Paradigms”, Paper presented at the Seminar on “Contemporary Pakistan In The Changing Global Paradigm” Held under the auspices of The Special Area Studies Programme of Pakistani Studies, South Asia Studies Division, School of International Studies. Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi from 24th-25th November.
although the jihadis had been funded, trained and equipped by the Army and the ISI. It is doubtful that now the interests of Pakistan and those of the jihadis are fully aligned.27

Not very long ago Hafiz Saeed, leader of the terrorist group Jama'at al Dawa (formerly Lashkare Tayyaba) declared in the context of Kashmir that 'suicide bombing is the best form of jihad', and further that 'need for jihad against India is paramount'.28 Prof. Kalim asks-'will the jihadis abide by any agreement reached by the government in Islamabad?'

It is also usually assumed that jihadis are the product of the Madrassa culture and President Musharraf has been unable to reform the culture of Madrassa. Some observers have argued that recent efforts to contain the jihad in Jammu and Kashmir are merely tactical and military and Majaheddin are in fact allies. Pakistan has put Lashkar-e-Taiba on watch list but raids and sealing of offices of jihadi outfits is just a farce.29

The announcement by the Hizb-ul-Mijahideen of a unilateral ceasefire for three months in July 2000 was welcomed by India. Indian parliament passed a resolution authorizing the union government to hold talks on further autonomy to Kashmir based on the situation that prevailed at the end of the talks with Sheikh Abdullah in 1975.30

The Hizbul's cease-fire decision and its offer in conditional talks with the central government were also endorsed by the US government and a few Kashmir

28 The Friday Times, 11-17 April 2003.
30 Ganguly, Rajat (2003) "From Jang To Jihad, Continuity And Change In Pakistan's Kashmir Policy, 1947-2002" in Om Prakash Mishra and Shweta Ghosh (eds.) Terrorism And Low Intensity Conflict In South Asian Region, New Delhi: Manak Publications.
secessionist organizations. Predictably the Hizbul was denounced as a traitor to the cause of jihad by the pro-Pakistan jihadi outfits, who vowed to carry out insurgent and terrorist operations in Kashmir. The Hizbul was also kicked out of the leadership of the United jihad council. This decision was criticized by the Hurriyat conference also.

In spite of these obstacles, a few rounds of talks did take place between the representatives of the Hizbul and the Indian government. However, without the political backing of the Hurriyat and opposition from Pakistan based jihadi outfits such as Lashkar-a-Taiba and Harkal-ul-Mujahidden, the PoK based Hizbul leadership was under tremendous pressure to call-off the talks. The Vajpayee government was also criticized by its political opponents for holding talks with an insurgent outfit at a time when militants who were reportedly belonging to the Lashkar outfit, massacred 80 Hindus in Kashmir.31

The Hizbul Chief based in the PoK, Syed Salahuddin called off the ceasefire for India’s refusal to involve Pakistan in the talks. India has remained unconvinced by President Musharraf’s pledge that the Pakistani military and ISI have stopped all support to Kashmiri insurgents and terrorists. The infiltrations of militants across the LoC and the frequency and intensity of terrorist attacks in Kashmir has not come down considerably. This means, as Rajat Ganguly asserts that either President Musharraf has no control over his own military and factions within the military who are pursuing their own agenda or he doesn’t have control over the jihadi forces.32

The All party Hurriyat Conference (APHC) and Indian government resumed dialogue recently for a durable solution in Kashmir. This is the first time that any Pakistan head of state, i.e. general Musharraf has welcomed the dialogue process

31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
between the Indian government and separatists. There are certain serious question
emerge like whether this resumed dialogue which excludes the jihadi hardness would
lead to the ultimate solution of the Kashmir?

More importantly only moderate faction of the APHC under Mirwaiz Umer
Farooq has shown its willingness to talk, which again raises important question if this
faction is the representative of the Kashmiri people’s aspirations? Groups like the
jamait-ul-Majaheddin, Hizb-ul-Mijahideen and Jaish-e-Mohammad have already
made clear their dislike for the dialogue with APHC. Luv Puri asks, whether any
settlement reached by any separatist leader or any group can be acceptable to the
people of Kashmir.  

Even if some of the agreements reached between Prime Minister Manmohan
Singh and the Hurriyat such as troop reduction in the state are met, this will hardly
influence militant outfits to announce internal ceasefire, as Hurriyat’s Control over
these militant outfits is questionable. Across the Line of control (LoC), the
representative character of the Hurriyat has been challenged. The Prime Minister of
Pakistan administered Jammu and Kashmir, Sardar-Sikander Hayat Khan says
Hurriyat does not represent non-Kashmiri areas of the state.

At present there is not even a single executive member from the non-Kashmiri
speaking Muslim Community within the Hurriyat. There is opposition of Hurriyat
form other equally important non-Kashmiri speaking Muslim communities within the
state. The Gujar leadership that is Muslim and forms 12 percent of the state’s
population has already challenged the Hurriyat right to represent them. The Pahari
living in the border areas and with close affinity with PoK also questions the

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representative character of the Hurriyat. In fact, the Shia Community living in Kargil also never entertained Hurriyat’s visits.34

So, although resumption of dialogue between the Indian government and APHC has renewed the prospects of peace process, but other leaders in the region have challenged the Hurriyat’s leadership as for them it does not represent all communities in the state.

The external factor has been emphasized more in the peace process, which involves Pakistan. There have been several meetings between India and Pakistan on other issues also apart Kashmir. All these meetings are still far from reaching any concrete agreement on issues like Siachen, Sir Creek, Wullar barrage/ Tulbul Navigation project, trade and economic cooperation, terrorism and drug trafficking etc.

The experts argue that neither India nor Pakistan has yet reached the “Second generation” stage, which involves follow-up discussions and negotiations on confidence-building measures. “Second generation” stage on confidence and security building measures is militarily more significant because it focuses on restraint of military pastures and deployment of weapons. Till now, all categories of CSBMS have been unsuccessful in limiting or reducing force levels and weaponry. They do not resolve disputes, but may generate a congenial atmosphere for managing crises. They are not substitutes for arms-control measures, but may facilitate mutually agreed programs of inspection and verification.35

A large number of CBMS have been suggested which comprise military CBMS, political measures, communication links, people to people contacts and

34 Ibid.
increased economic cooperation. Still, there has been no further progress in the second of talks. P.R. Chari Observes, political will is lacking in both India and Pakistan leaderships to implement these measures.\(^{36}\) For instance, India is willing to withdraw from the Siachen glacier provided its current line of occupation is recorded in maps or ground. This is unacceptable to Pakistan. Similarly Pakistan does not want any travel documents for travel by the Muzaffarabad – Srinagar highway, which is unacceptable to India. So, now a permit system is suggested instead of visa.

Several rounds of discussions have highlighted that India wants to broaden phase the bilateral agenda, while Pakistan wants to bring the Central issue of Kashmir before resolving any other issue. The ongoing controversy over the construction of Baglihar and Kishan Ganga projects could also prove detrimental to the future of the peace process. Pakistan approached the World Bank for Baglihar rather than sorting it out bilaterally. Moreover, while the issue is before a neutral expert any decision that goes against Pakistan can be used by its opposition to criticize government of surrendering Pakistan's water to India and making the country suffer from water shortage.\(^{37}\)

### 4.6 People to People Contact

There is a new momentum to people-to-people contacts with ordinary citizens through 'Track 2' and 'Track 3' diplomacy. 'Track 2' dialogues provide a second line of communication between states at an unofficial level, which are acknowledged and sometimes even supported by government. Such a forum is the India-Pakistan

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\(^{37}\) Ibid. p. 13
Neemrana initiative formed in 1991. Former diplomats, military leaders and academicians meet at regular intervals alternatively in India and Pakistan.\textsuperscript{38}

‘Track 3’ initiatives provide an exchange views among elites where governments can’t participate directly. It involves groups, which are independent of the state, which are capable of reordering national security priorities, and can outline alternative policy options. New networks of research institutes and scholars have emerged and potential leaders have interacted with each other. Meetings have been organized through Pakistan India People’s Forum for Peace and Democracy (PIPFPD) and The Association of Peoples of Asia etc.

Women’s bus for peace was also taken by both countries in 2000 to interact and share views. A large number of people have experienced each other’s hospitality and got firsthand information about the other country. There are constraints and obstacles also in these meetings, which is a result of deep-seated suspicion and hospitality between two countries. The inputs by research institutes and Think tanks are minimal on foreign decision-making. Observers say officials do not welcome these alternative though processes.\textsuperscript{39}

There are problems of communication with poor telephone lines and insufficient air and train links. There have been massive complaints about the difficulties in obtaining visas, which are often refused at the last moment. One major criticism of this dialogue process is these meetings are very elitist and only influential


\textsuperscript{39} Ibid
people get visa to visit other country. Now, efforts are being made to broad base these meetings with the inclusion of professional groups.40

At the UN General Assembly meeting in New York in 2005, General Musharraf again bluntly refused that there are no terrorists training camps in Pakistan. He said Pakistan had done whatever was needed to be done to check cross-border terrorism. There is a freedom struggle going on in Jammu and Kashmir, which is comparable with Pakistani struggle. He further said, Jammu and Kashmir is a core issue and no progress could be made in any other areas of the composite dialogue unless the dispute of Jammu and Kashmir was resolved.41 This has again brought the peace process back to square one.

In fact, APHC leader Umer Farooq also proceeded to New York where he again met President Musharraf. After meeting the President he said, “The matter (dialogue on Jammu and Kashmir) looks fast becoming triangular”.42 The Hurriyat’s stand has been for a tripartite talk involving India, Pakistan and Kashmir people, which has been consistently countered by the Indian government’s stand for bilateral talk involving India and Kashmiri people only.

Prime Minister Manmohan Singh also gave clear message to Pakistan at UN meeting that there can be no forward movement on Kashmir till there is cessation of violence in the state. He pointed out, “No cause could ever justify the indiscriminate fitting of men, women and children”.43 Again it shows the difference in attitudes of India and Pakistan on Kashmir issue where Pakistan sees the issue as the ‘problem in Kashmir’.

40 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
43 ‘Nowhere Near A Democracy’, *Hindustan Times*
Other issues of economic cooperation and development are being constantly hampered because of Kashmir issue. A joint statement was issued on the proposed India-Pakistan-Iran pipeline in October 2005.\textsuperscript{44} Both countries reiterated their commitment to this project and India said it had recently appointed an expert to look into the 'economic viability of the plan. Pakistan however mentioned that it will not allow free trade and investment with India without any progress on Kashmir.

However, the irrelevance of LoC has been demonstrated in the recent destruction of earthquake, which left both sides of people devastated and shattered. Both sides of the divided state became united in grief. Pakistan unfortunately turned down the Indian offer of joint relief and rescue operations. Kalpana Sharma remarks that although official delegates had gone there to offer help but there is a need of civil society’s response to show Kashmiri people that rest of India care for them. She says, this natural disaster may or may not further the peace process between India and Pakistan, but it can create a stronger bond between the people in other parts of India and Kashmiri people.\textsuperscript{45}

4.7 Conclusion

There is now a lot of flexibility in the attitudes of the various role players on the Kashmir issue. India and Pakistan have moved more effectively in the direction of bilateral normalization in the post-Kargil years despite of many obstacles. There has been a strategic ‘revision’ of objectives in the bilateral relations between two countries. In India pacifist strategy has been adopted in foreign policy making which

\textsuperscript{44} "Committee To Gas Pipeline Project", \textit{The Hindu}, October 5, 2005.
recommends generosity towards Pakistan in the interest of an increase in the regional and global status of India. This strategy is backed by an economic take-off of the country along with people to people contact.\textsuperscript{46}

C. Raja Mohan observes that India has now made its break with the past in its foreign policy and is looking forward to cooperation with the West.\textsuperscript{47} Similarly Pakistan also had to change its strategy in the wake of post 9/11 pressure and domestic compulsions of economic growth.

However the consistency in the peace process is still in doubts by some observers as change of government in India has not affected the peace process but change of government in Pakistan will not affect the peace process is questionable. As Michael Quinlan observes Kashmir remains the prime source of danger in Indo-Pak relations. The earlier collision between ‘Kashmir first’ against ‘Kashmir last’ has been finessed, but both countries still have to come up with solution which is acceptable to Kashmiri people also.\textsuperscript{48} Any solution of the Kashmir issue and the advancement of the peace process is only possible if the aspirations of the Kashmiri people is taken into account. The next chapter will focus on the role of Jammu and Kashmir people in the peace process.

\textsuperscript{47} Raja Mohan, C.(2003), Crossing the Rubicon: The Shaping of India’s New Foreign Policy , New Delhi: Viking, p.77.