

South Asia

Critical exchange and open, objective inquiry to mitigate strategic risks

Stimson's South Asia program works to mitigate strategic risks and pave the way for a more stable and secure region by investing in critical exchange and open, objective inquiry. Our process is one of measured, incremental change rather than a grand sweeping vision. We produce policy analysis and academic research on regional strategic trends and geopolitical dynamics in order to inform both policy debates and scholarly work. We believe this dispassionate, reasoned approach is vital to generating high-quality strategic thinking that will advance regional and global stability.

REDUCING NUCLEAR DANGER

Nowhere is the risk of strategic instability and nuclear exchange greater than in South Asia. The region is a critical space home to a fifth of humanity, driven by dynamic economic growth, and contested by great powers and regional adversaries. India and Pakistan are nuclear-armed neighbors who have fought several wars over the past seven decades and continue to risk potentially catastrophic escalation during recurring crises. Even more concerning, chances of miscalculation appear to be growing along with both sides' tolerance for risk, strengthened arsenals, doctrinal shifts, and more frequent confrontation. Regional dynamics are likewise in flux with developments including intensifying nationalism and assertiveness throughout Asia, a diminishing U.S. presence in Afghanistan, and the rising influence of China as a competitor to India and collaborator with Pakistan. If war breaks out on the Subcontinent, the consequences could be devastating not just for the region but for U.S. interests in global development and prosperity, a balance of power in the Indo-Pacific, and the prevention of the spread or use of nuclear weapons.

A stable South Asia is in all of our interests. Such a region could support and sustain the international order, Asian development and prosperity, and U.S. grand strategy. Should South Asia

PROJECTS

Strategic Learning

Online courses on strategic competition with a focus on Southern Asia

Visiting Fellowships

Expanding knowledge of security issues in the subcontinent

South Asian Voices

Online policy platform for strategic analysis featuring emerging scholars and practitioners

More →

LEADERSHIP

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succumb to arms races, crises, and war, the region could instead play a destabilizing role well beyond the Subcontinent. Recent research has found that the human, environmental, and economic impact of a potential South Asian nuclear conflict would be especially devastating for the globe.

BUILDING THE NEXT GENERATION OF EXPERTS

The program focuses its efforts on partnering with the next generation of South Asian analysts and policymakers to build better tools for regional stewardship and enduring relationships for deliberative engagement. We seek to foster space for respectful dialogue and debate for all those who seek it be they rising scholars, contemporary experts, or government officials from New Delhi, Islamabad, Washington DC, and Beijing. We create this space through our flagship online strategic analysis platform, South Asian Voices (SAV), our Strategic Learning online courses on security and deterrence, our Visiting Fellowship program, policy roundtables, academic workshops, simulation exercises, and our track-two engagements.

Our program's work is distinct and uniquely valuable because of its academic rigor, historical depth, and our substantive investments in the future. Few other organizations have invested as much for as long as Stimson has in understanding strategic dynamics in South Asia and building relationships with those who have shaped them and will continue to for years to come. Our approach balances programmatic initiatives that connect directly to scholars and policymakers with academic and policy research that breaks new ground and ensures our work remains relevant. Recently, this has included broadening our aperture to comprehend the impact of China's rise, developments in Afghanistan, and the growing role of populism and nationalism on South Asian security dynamics, an approach that has allowed us to anticipate and respond to emerging challenges. We are also well served by working in tandem with our colleagues across Stimson's regional programs and its strategic and U.S. defense programs, incorporating their insights and perspectives on issues across Asia to inform our approach to supporting strategic stability in South Asia.

Contact

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THE STIMSON CENTER promotes international security, shared prosperity & justice through applied research and independent analysis, deep engagement, and policy innovation. More at www.stimson.org.