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Resolution  
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Learnt from OSCE and ASEAN for South Asia

### **ABSTRACT**

This study has been principally undertaken to explore the ways and means to prevent conflicts from escalating into violent armed struggle. The research is driven from the belief that it is the moral obligation of every human being to protect the life and dignity of every single soul on the planet. For aeons, we are honed and skilled to act only after a disaster has ravaged villages or cities; we act only after hundreds and thousands of people are driven from the cosiness of their homes; we act only after a multitude of people get separated from their near and dear ones; we act only after the tender bodies of millions of children are tormented by powerful shells or other millions are rendered homeless and without food; we act only after myriads of human lives are compelled to live a life of distress and utter gloom; and we act only after the humanity is shamed by gross violations of human's right to live by agents of hate. These are the consequences of a conflict when it becomes unmanageable.

We hear about prevention in our day-to- day life: a doctor prevents a patient from taking certain food if that is the cause of some illness; a mother prevents her child from doing a certain act which could be harmful; a teacher prevents his/her disciple from any wrong deeds; and a father prevents his son from bad company. Prevention seems to be the buzzword in life's every stage. And of course everybody must have heard the famous

cliché, “prevention is better than cure.” As humans, we are aware of the importance of prevention in our life and why this word is reiterated time and again.

Prevention of wars acquired prominence after the First World War when the international community joined hands to preclude future wars. Inception of the League of Nations was an effort in this direction although it failed to prevent the most deadly war in human history less than two decades later. Again in 1945, the comity of nations emphasized the need to refurbish the idea of prevention and thus, it became one of the main promises by the United Nations (UN). However, prevention has not acquired as much strength as originally envisioned at the time of UN’s inception. Often, it is considered a dirty word by states that equate it with intervention in internal matter or activities undermining state’s sovereignty. Actions taken for the prevention of violent conflicts goes against the principal of non-intervention, as states often blame the UN or other international actors.

Nonetheless this study recognizes the problems encountered in prevention efforts. While undertaking prevention activities it is important to tread a balanced path so that it does not impinge upon the state’s right over sovereignty. Therefore, this research seeks to explore the feasibility of a conflict prevention mechanism in South Asia that, to a great extent, allays the fear of violation of principal of non-intervention. External intervention evokes state’s patriotic or jingoistic fervours but a regional collaborative effort would prove to be forthcoming for states facing internal turmoil. Such an approach would also help in managing the interstate conflict situations between neighbours.