

## Indo-Pak talks: Do they offer any hope?



HARUN UR RASHID

man Navtej Sarna told reporters: "There is a commitment ...there is determination to take this process forward and make progress in whichever field we can."

It seems that the diplomatic jargon could not hide the fact that no real progress had been made on the core issue of the talks relating to the Kashmir dispute. The media reported that the division between the two remained as before as to how to handle the Kashmir territorial dispute, a principal cause of fracture in

dence-building measures" with Pakistan before the Kashmir dispute is discussed. The reason they claim is that trust and confidence must be built up not only for the government but also among the people as well. Kashmir is an emotive issue for people in India and no solution can be arrived at unless people support the efforts of the government in reaching a compromise on this issue.

Pakistan, on the other hand, believes that the core Kashmir issue must be grappled first before other

### BOTTOM LINE

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their relations during the 57-year history since the British left.

Some say the British left a poisoned chalice for both countries when Lord Radcliffe, while demarcating the international boundary between India and Pakistan, kept open a corridor to Kashmir from India's territory through Gurudaspur. It is through this territorial opening that India could dispatch its troops to Kashmir in 1947.

### Differences that divide them

There seems to be a conceptual difference between the two on how to proceed on the normalisation of relations. Both countries look at the resolution of bilateral issues from a totally different perspective.

India wants first a series of "confi-

issues can move forward. Trust and confidence can only be built if India demonstrates its *bona fide* intention to resolve the Kashmir dispute. And that can only occur if the core issue is discussed and a positive movement on this issue will inevitably lead to make progress on other bilateral issues.

Second, India's concerns about the cross-border infiltration of Islamic militants and about training camps in the Pakistani-administered zone of Kashmir must be addressed by Pakistan. India accuses Pakistan of arming and training guerrillas in the territory. Pakistan denies very strongly the allegation, although it acknowledges that it lends diplomatic support to what it calls the Kashmiris' rightful struggle for self-determination.

### Possible options on Kashmir

It is correct to assume that the Kashmir dispute cannot be resolved within days. Observers agree that confidence-building measures must take place between the two countries in order to eliminate friction and tension between them. Confidence-building measures may involve agreement in economic, cultural, and social areas. Progress on these issues is likely to contribute to a climate that could in the long run help leaders to take difficult decisions on Kashmir.

Eventually both the countries have to come to a compromise on Kashmir. Some suggest that the existing Line of Control on Kashmir, established in 1972, could be the international border with a few adjustments. The other two options, such as the self-determination by all Kashmiris or an independent Kashmir, may have to be abandoned at this point of time.

There is another daring option. Both India and Pakistan could jointly control and oversee a democratically-elected administration of the Kashmir territory. There is an instance in which two countries have joint sovereignty over a territory, such as in Andorra, a small country of about 453 square kilometers with a maximum length of 30 km and breadth of 20 km, sandwiched between Spain and France on the Eastern Pyrenees. Both France and Spain oversee the administration of Andorra, elected by its people.

### Conclusion

It is good to see that both countries met at a Ministerial level in New Delhi and both sides have an upbeat assessment of the cordial meeting. Furthermore President Musharraf and Prime Minister Singh are expected to meet at the UN and are likely to hold talks on the sidelines of UN General Assembly in New York later this month. The resolution of the Kashmir dispute will be slow but it does not matter, if the two countries are engaged in a constructive dialogue. As Churchill once said that "jaw-jaw is always better than to war-war."

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## The future of values



KOICHIRO MATSURA

diversity of human cultures and their shared sense of belonging to a single human community. The challenge today is to ensure that the ethical effort is largely directed towards the global community and that this new ethical orientation is based on the idea of dialogue between cultures. Such a dialogue should start from the premise that cultures must be respected but that values can be evaluated jointly. In this way, it is possible to envisage the future shape of values in terms of new syntheses, stemming from hybridization or the encounter of ancient and

neous a time when the emergence of knowledge societies, which are tending to transform the dream of lifelong education for all into a viable project, seems to herald a new mechanism for shaping long-term values, which will be created rather than reproduced and transmitted rather than received.

We may also wonder about the consequences of possible changes in religious and spiritual values and the rise of new political values. Whereas representative democracy seems in crisis in many countries, associative democracy is developing

We must also be careful to avoid the twin dangers of the erosion of cultural diversity and the growth of inequality. For the great asymmetry that leaves three quarters of humanity deprived of access to knowledge and subjects millions of human beings to the inequality born of extreme poverty looms menacingly over the future of values.

In an age marked by globalisation and the rise of the new technologies, the preservation of cultural diversity will be a key challenge. To illustrate the point, 6,000 languages are spoken today and this figure could be halved between now and the end of the 21st century. The same is true of the cultural and intangible heritage, which we have a duty to promote and preserve as a common good of humanity. In view of the erosion of diversity, we need to develop an ethic of responsibility so as to ensure that all cultures enjoy the conditions necessary to their sustained existence.

The loss of meaning is perhaps no more than an illusion. What we should rather be talking about are shifts in meaning and the creation of new meanings. Let us wager on the future: what if the radical reform to which we aspire were to come about through knowledge and the spread of knowledge? For knowledge is essentially creation, renewal and exchange. Obviously the knowledge societies taking shape will not lack values, quite the opposite.

present-day pluralities.

But does this scenario not carry with it the risk that values may be reduced to a speculative game? Given the decline in patriarchal structures, are we moving towards a feminization of values? Will this lead to the emergence of new values whose transmission will call for multidisciplinary education responsive to the plurality of cultures? This is what is at stake in the dialogue of civilizations and cultures, which we should encourage if we wish to avoid seeing communities turn in upon themselves, which is so often a source of misunderstanding and conflict.

rapidly. What are the values inherent in these new networks of affinity, alliance and communication? Given the decline in patriarchal structures, are we moving towards a feminization of values? Will this lead to the emergence of new values whose transmission will call for multidisciplinary education responsive to the plurality of cultures? This is what is at stake in the dialogue of civilizations and cultures, which we should encourage if we wish to avoid seeing communities turn in upon themselves, which is so often a source of misunderstanding and conflict.

Koichiro Matsura is Director-General of UNESCO

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