



JULY/SEPTEMBER 2015

# CRITERION

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**Twin Challenges  
for the European  
Union**

M Saeed Khalid

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**The Indus River  
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**Zheng He—the  
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**Tracing the Islamic State's DNA**  
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**Countering Regional Extremism  
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Volume 10, Number 3

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# THE INDUS RIVER BASIN AND CLIMATE CHANGE

*Shafqat Kakakhel\**

## OVERVIEW

The impacts of climate change will lead to a net reduction in the water resources of the Indus Basin shared by India and Pakistan. Diminished water supply will adversely affect food production and hydropower generation, undermining efforts by India and Pakistan to achieve food and energy security, socio-economic growth and poverty eradication. Whilst water-related challenges might provoke recurring tension in Indo-Pakistan relations, they also offer considerable potential for cooperatively addressing them.

This essay refers to the negative effects of a higher temperature and climate volatility on the Indus Basin and argues in favor of concerted efforts by India and Pakistan to initiate wide-ranging cooperation in ameliorating the looming water crisis in the Subcontinent.

## PARTITIONING OF A SHARED WATER RESOURCE

The Indus Basin (IRB) consists of six major rivers- the Jhelum, Chenab, Ravi, Beas, Sutlej and the Indus itself- and covers an area of 1.12 square kilometers (km<sup>2</sup>) of which 8% lies in China, 6 % in Afghanistan, 47% in Pakistan and 39% in India. Pakistan draws 63% of the Basin's water; India's share is 36%. Some 300 million people depend on the IRB.

The IRB rivers pass through northern India and Jammu and Kashmir before entering Pakistan and eventually emptying into the Arabian Sea near Karachi in Southern Pakistan.

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\* The author is a former Ambassador. He served as UN Assistant Secretary General and Deputy Executive Director of the UN Environment Programme (1998-2007)

