

Pakistan is considered by many to be the world's most dangerous nation, due to its weak infrastructure, radical Islamic factions, nuclear arsenal and ongoing conflict with neighboring India. Recent revelations of the extent of A.Q. Khan's proliferation network add urgency to efforts by Ploughshares Fund grantees to build stability and reduce nuclear dangers in South Asia.

Pervez Hoodbhoy, Ploughshares Hero

"Nuclear secrets will keep leaking as long as the bomb has value as a currency of power and prestige. Humanity's best chance of survival lies in creating taboos against nuclear weapons, and to work rapidly toward their global elimination."



For a decade before his country's first nuclear tests in 1998, Pakistani physicist Pervez Hoodbhoy was one of the lone voices speaking out about the dangers of nuclear weapons, and against leaders "who think that greatness comes from the power to commit mass murder." Alarmed by the lack of understanding throughout South Asia about nuclear weapons, Hoodbhoy and colleague Zia Mian produced *Pakistan and India Under the Nuclear Shadow*, and *Crossing The Lines: Kashmir, India and Pakistan*, the first Pakistani documentary films explaining the risks of having nuclear weapons and the need to settle the Kashmir dispute.

One of the most eminent Pakistani theoretical physicists of his generation, Hoodbhoy has worked tirelessly to refute the notion that the ability to produce nuclear weapons is a reflection of a country's scientific prowess. He blames the weakness of Pakistan's education system, in particular the paucity

of scientific teaching, for the public's misplaced pride in its nuclear status. With Ploughshares Fund support, he launched a weekly television program on popular science, aimed at Pakistani youth. "Historically, every society where science has flourished has necessarily submitted to the power of reason and has been radically transformed," he says.

"What makes Pervez truly exceptional," says a Pakistani colleague, "is that through all this time he has been among our most prominent, courageous and forceful public intellectuals. He has helped shape our national debates on the need for democracy, on the crisis of education, on the role of Islam, on the dangers of nuclear weapons and the importance of peace with India. He has shown that it is possible to stand up, speak up and to be heard."