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## SHORT COMMUNICATION

### THE PROBLEM OF CRISES MANAGEMENT

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#### ABSTRACT

Egypt and China faced the same kinds of international crises, but their respective responses and the subsequent results were different. China successfully managed the crisis, while Egypt failed to do so and paid a heavy price as a result. Hong Kong, an island off the coast of China, was leased to Britain for 99 years according to the terms of a treaty drawn up in 1898. China wanted to regain the island, but it never took any steps towards achieving this goal on a unilateral level. It engaged rather in peaceful negotiations with Britain. After the completion of the 99-year lease, the United Kingdom, according to the agreement, restored all of Hong Kong to China on July 1, 1997. In this way the problem was settled peacefully.

#### INTRODUCTION

Egypt and China faced the same kinds of international crises, but their respective responses and the subsequent results were different. China successfully managed the crisis, while Egypt failed to do so and paid a heavy price as a result. Hong Kong, an island off the coast of China, was leased to Britain for 99 years according to the terms of a treaty drawn up in 1898. China wanted to regain the island, but it never took any steps towards achieving this goal on a unilateral level. It engaged rather in peaceful negotiations with Britain. After the completion of the 99-year lease, the United Kingdom, according to the agreement, restored all of Hong Kong to China on July 1, 1997. In this way the problem was settled peacefully. The story of the Suez Canal of Egypt is quite different. The Suez Canal Company was created in 1858 to build and operate the Suez Canal. The relevant land was leased to it for 99 years from the time of the opening of the canal in 1869. After the 1952 coup in which King Farouk was overthrown, Gamal Abdel Nasser ruled as president of Egypt from 1956 to 1970. After some time as president, he announced the nationalization of the canal on July 26, 1956. But the 99-year lease granted to the Suez Canal Company still had twelve years to run. This provoked the week-long Suez Crisis. In retaliation, the UK, France, and Israel joined forces to invade Egypt and defeated the Egyptian forces.

Later in the 1967 Six-Day War, Israel launched a massive air assault that crippled the Egyptian air capability. With air superiority it was able to control the Sinai peninsula within three days and then it captured Jerusalem's Old City and gained control of the strategic Golan Heights on the Syrian border. Both China and Egypt were faced with the problem of land lease to other countries. China was able to manage the crisis wisely, whereas Egypt was unable to do so. As a result, Israel captured large areas of Palestine which had earlier not been under its control. Whereas Egypt had adopted the strategy of violent confrontation and then failed in its endeavour, China adopted a peaceful strategy and emerged victorious. Life is full of crises—both for individuals and for nations. One who understands the art of crisis management is bound to be successful, while one who is unversed in this art is doomed to failure. The result of successful crisis management is peace, whereas failure in crisis management leads to war and violence. All cases of war are nothing but instances of failure to manage crises. Conversely, all incidences of peace being maintained are the result of the successful management of crises by the relevant parties. Living in peace requires all concerned to learn the art of crisis management. On this score, there are no viable alternatives—neither for individuals nor for nations. Crisis management calls for patience and wise planning. One who possesses these qualities will certainly be able to manage any crisis, however grave it might be. When anyone manages a crisis, he has generally to pay the price of losing some right of his in the process. But this loss is quite temporary in nature and of lesser importance.

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The normalcy that returns after crisis management makes it entirely possible to regain what one had earlier lost—and often much more than what one previously had in hand. In the present situation, any nation that is engaged in violence clearly demonstrates its incapacity to manage crises. Nations in this position need to reconsider their priorities and strive to develop a method of crisis management. If they continue with their violent policies, they will only increase their losses. Violence—for anyone—is like getting into a quagmire, and the earlier one comes out of it, the better. One such example is the Vietnam War (1955-1975) in which the US was engaged for about twenty years. It ultimately had to acknowledge that its actions were not yielding the desired result, so it decided to unilaterally retreat from the battlefield. The US decision was a good example of the well-known idiom, ‘Better late than never’. Failure in crisis management leads to violence and war. In comparison, being successful in managing a crisis leads to peace. Crisis management requires patience. If a person proves to be patient in times of crises, his mind will function normally and very soon it will find a peaceful solution.

On the contrary, if at the time of crisis a person loses his equanimity, his mind will not work efficiently, and will lead him to opt for the path of confrontation.

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