

## India's Relations with the USA

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THE UNITED STATES AND INDIA

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# THE UNITED STATES AND INDIA

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**India has become an important country for US foreign policy, as evidenced by recent time and energy spent by the US President and Secretary of State. India's size, its increased economic interdependence with the United States, its political stability, its democratic form of government, and its geographical placement all make it a priority for foreign policy.**

India is being treated as an equal and independent state, unlike many of the smaller states with less global influence. The United States sells military hardware on different terms than to most other states, like neighboring Pakistan, and President Bush has bent his position on India's adherence to the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty. The US allows India to purchase military hardware from other countries without imposing conditions, like it would on client states.

The new India which has embraced globalization is a far cry from the India of Nehru.

When US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice visited India in March last year, she said: "This is my first step as Secretary of State in Asia. The President has personally put a lot of time and energy into the relationship. The US has determined that this is going to be a very important relationship going forward and we are going to put whatever time we need into it." The aim was to take US-India ties "to another level". According to her, the Bush Administration was sworn to assisting "India become a major world power in the twenty-first century."

Rarely in the past hundred years has a US president sent a signal of this dimension. It means that the US will help India realize the global aspiration that its size, geography and its post-1991 economic reform agenda

have made into a national obsession. The core judgement is that a strong, democratic and influential India is an asset for the US in the region and the world.

At the annual Asia Security Summit, known as the Shangri-La Dialogue, in Singapore on June 3, US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said: "Our relationship with India has grown from an uneasy coexistence during the Cold War to a true partnership, based on our common values and common interests today."<sup>1</sup> He continues, "Over the past five or six years, the relationship between the US and India, from a military-to-military standpoint, has steadily improved. And, it is multifaceted at this stage. It involves exercise. It involves working together on problems of common interest. And we

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certainly expect to see that our areas of common interest will continue to bring us together, from a military-to-military standpoint, in the months and years to come."<sup>2</sup>

Over the past few years, India and the United States have been getting on better than ever. Joint exercises have been conducted between the United States and Indian forces near Agra, and the United States has also indicated it will supply modern military equipment to India. The US Ambassador to India, David C. Mulford, said in early April, 2005 that the Bush Administration wants

to advance Indo-US strategic cooperation and has indicated that, as part of the "Indo-US Strategic Partnership" deal, New Delhi would be made a party to "expanded dialogue on missile defense." India, for its part, has decided to participate in joint naval exercises with the NATO forces in Alaska. India has something to hope for; it is aiming to be a major economic force and a key global power.

The global stature of India today as an emerging power is a result of its recent economic growth, its nuclear tests and capability, and its search for a

greater role in the international system. The Lowy Institute August 2005 survey, comparing India and China, says a “democratic India that grows at 6 percent a year should be congratulated for having succeeded better than a brutal anti-democratic China which grows at 10 percent a year.”<sup>3</sup>

Many Indians believe that India’s regional pre-eminence—in size, centrality, defense capability, substantial economic potential, and political stability—is a positive factor that would help consolidate future India–US relations.<sup>4</sup>

The United States wishes to gain free access to the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, which is possible only with Indian collaboration. The Indian Navy can be a handy instrument for policing the sea lanes all the way from Saudi Arabia to Japan. America, therefore, feels that it is in its own interest to convert India into a powerful regional force, which suits India perfectly, as their interests are converging and supportive of each other. The latter is, therefore, making desperate attempts to seek a close military and economic relationship with the United States to recover from the setback it received as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, her Cold War ally. This was evident from two episodes in 2001.

First, as soon as the Bush Administration declared it was developing a National Missile Defense, New Delhi rushed to be the first, anywhere in the world, to welcome its stand. Second, following the 9/11 attack, when the US prepared to attack Afghanistan, the Vajpayee government beat Pakistan to the draw in offering Indian military bases and facilities to the US. Though grateful, Washington declined since the offer would have been impractical, and Pakistan, being willing, was much more important an actor in neighbouring Afghanistan.

It is good to learn about the past. In the 1950s the United States recruited Pakistan as an ally in its Cold War with the Soviet Union. But it also became a major aid donor to India. Indians remember how US arms militarised South Asian politics, but they forget or, mostly do not know of, the massive US assistance in modernising the Indian education system and triggering the green revolution in agriculture. In 1980, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan compelled the United States to revitalise its failing relations with Pakistan. But even while bolstering and using Pakistan to fight its war against the Russians, the United States did not ignore India.

Washington declared itself ready to export some weapons systems to India and offered to ease Indian access to some kinds of high-tech equipment, especially computers.

So now, as US forces operate out of Pakistani bases, the Americans ensure that New Delhi is kept happy by allowing Indian Navy offshore patrol vessels to escort American ships through the Strait of Malacca. Also, while the US has approved sales of F-16 aircraft to Pakistan, it also offered F-18 planes and state-of-the-art military industrial manufacturing know-how to India. The interesting point for India is that it will be making these aircraft under license and, unlike Pakistan, will not be dependent

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on Washington for spare parts. The United States, as a truly great power, wants to be seen as being friendly to all South Asian countries, not just India or Pakistan.

According to Nicholas Burns, US under-secretary of state for political affairs: "Growing US-India cooperation does not come at Pakistan's expense. It's very important, I think, to say again that we have this unique relationship with Pakistan, which is vital to our country in the war on terrorism."<sup>5</sup>

He continued: "We have another unique and vital relationship with India. And, as Secretary Rice has said many times before, there's no reason to have a hyphenated strategic framework for South Asia. Both

countries are important. And there are issues where US policy intersects, and there are issues where we can have individual relationships with both countries."<sup>6</sup>

This bold move by the US is widely regarded as part of the attempt to foster India as a counterweight to China.

America's tilt towards India was first witnessed during the Administration

of the first George Bush in December 1990, with the visit of a sizeable American defense delegation. It was led by Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security, Henry Rowen, who held talks with his Indian counterpart. This was followed in August 1991 by the visit of an Indian delegation to the United States, led by General Sunil Francis Rodrigues, the Indian chief of staff. The prospect of closer military cooperation between India and America received a further boost in October 1991, when Admiral Charles Larson, commander-in-chief of the US Pacific Command, visited India. Again, in January 1992, discussion in Delhi between Lt. General John Crons, commanding general of the US army in the Pacific, and Admiral Frank Kelso, chief of naval operations, and senior Indian military officers cleared the ground for a long-term “forces to forces” level relationship. In these exchanges, negotiations on a range of security areas, where both sides could cooperate for mutual benefit, were discussed and proposed.

To a significant degree, the strength of the relationship between India and the United States can be traced to the vigour of the relationship at the unofficial level. The migration of Indians to the United States, where many have become prominent in scientific, business and academic circles, has played an especially important role in the development of the relationship. These migrants retain close links with India. Many more receive their advanced education in the US and then return to India. Such links are of considerable value in the development of India’s more sophisticated technologies.<sup>7</sup>

The Indian community in the US took the lead in the creation of a Friends of India Group in the US Senate. This is a significant political event since it has become a powerful pressure group. Prominent politicians in the group include Republican Senator John Cornyn from Texas and Democrat Senator Hillary Clinton from New York.

At the official level, some influential Indian–Americans who are currently serving the Bush Administration are helpful in further strengthening the relationship. The number of Indians serving the current US administration in various capacities has steadily grown over the past year.<sup>8</sup> In other words, the message is that the Bush Administration has sought to engage India on the whole range of issues that currently confront the international community. No matter what the issue, whether it is counter-terrorism, national defense, international commerce or preventing HIV/AIDS,

the President has looked to India as a partner. India needs US support to become a key global power, and its closer diplomatic and military cooperation with the US is, one hopes, going to serve the national security interests of both countries.

The most topical area of this cooperation is in military-to-military relations, and these offer an impressive illustration of the way in which Indo-US ties are moving from the discussion stage to active cooperation. For example, near Agra, Indian paratroopers and American special operations forces participated in their largest-ever joint army and air exercises since India's independence. The specific goal of the exercise was to conduct joint parachute training and mutual familiarisation with small arms. Even though this joint exercise is an important milestone, it is only an indicator of the impressive growth in military cooperation between India and the United States. The US and Indian Navies have also conducted exercises, and US Navy ships have made several port visits to India. These indicate that Indian and US military forces are now actively developing the capability to work together effectively. Such cooperative activity between military organisations is a normal aspect of relations between friendly countries.

The US Defense Policy Group was also revived in December 2002. It provides the framework for the planning and coordination of American military relationships. Within that framework, other bodies, such as the Executive Steering Groups for the Army, Navy and Air Force and functional working groups, have discussed technological, research and development cooperation, sales and licensing issues and peacekeeping operations. The defense supply relationship between Indian and American authorities has been notable in that it involves the private sector as well as government.

Clearly, the events of 9/11 changed the dynamics of US-India defense relations. This was reflected in an interview with *The Hindu* on May 3, 2003 by the former US Deputy Secretary of State, Richard Armitage, who once again emphasised the growing bilateral defense relationship, saying that India had "been very helpful in assisting with logistics and flights, and that what was significant was that this relationship was now astronomically different from what it had been a year ago." He further said, "We love the idea of being able to call on occasion on Indian ports, naval ships.... We hope it will be good for US-India relations."

Regarding Indian military acquisitions from Russia, the US attitude is

that India is a free country and as such it is free to acquire defense systems from any country. India has maintained a pattern of dual supply: the bulk of the aircraft come from Russia, but the cutting-edge component is supplied from the West. Old Soviet equipment from Russia is still value-for-money in India. India continues to develop its nuclear arms programme with foreign assistance, mainly from Russia. It relies on foreign assistance for key missile technologies, where it still lacks engineering or production expertise. India also continues to modernise its armed forces through advanced conventional weapons, mostly from Russia. New Delhi received its first two MiG-21-93 fighter aircraft, and Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd will now begin the licensed upgrading of 123 more aircraft.

Russia is the main supplier of technology and equipment. India concluded an \$800 million contract with Russia for 310 T-905 main battle tanks, as well as a smaller contract for KA-31 helicopters. New Delhi is also negotiating with Russia for nuclear submarines and an aircraft carrier, having also signed a \$270 million contract with Israel for the Barak-1 missile defense systems. In addition, Russia has proposed selling the long-range S300V surface-to-air missile system to New Delhi. The offer was reportedly renewed during

President Vladimir Putin's visit to India in December 2002. This defensive shield is claimed to be capable of detecting and destroying aerial targets, including missiles from a long distance in all weather conditions, to protect vital installations.

The United States no longer views its relationship with India primarily through the prism of its relations with other countries in the region. Given the improvement in US-Russian relations, the US now appears to have no objections to Russia being India's largest supplier of military hardware. In other words, the United States, finally, is acknowledging the legitimacy of India's pursuit of an independent foreign policy; while there will be close

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India is interested in buying the Arrow Weapon System from Israel, which is being developed jointly by Israel and the US to intercept short-range and medium-range ballistic missiles. India considers itself an ideal candidate for the Arrow system, given the possibility of missile threats from both China and Pakistan. A missile defense system could help prevent either country from blackmailing India on the nuclear issue. Since Arrow is defensive in nature, Indian officials claim, it would be unlikely to change the strategic balance in the region.

One obvious function of the system would be to defend against Pakistan's Ghauri and Shaheen missiles, which can be fitted with nuclear warheads. Although the Arrow is primarily a defensive system, it is also powerful enough to propel a 500-kilogram payload about 300 kilometres. Many South Asia analysts believe a decision to sell the Arrow to New Delhi would prompt Pakistan to boost its offensive capability to counter India's defensive shield, or begin seeking ways to get its own version of missile defense.

India disputes the contention that the sale has anything to do with proliferation, repeating that the system is defensive, not offensive. This episode once more highlights the difficult path the US faces as it attempts to deepen its relationship with India without upsetting Pakistan.

According to the *Indian Express*, the US is offering India high-tech defense and space cooperation in terms of satellites and launch vehicles, Patriot and Arrow missiles, access to civilian nuclear technology and a greater role in global institutions. India's aim is to generate 25 to 30 per cent of its huge energy needs from a nuclear source.

Paul Kelly, a senior journalist for *The Australian*, was quoted in *The Weekend Australian* on May 21-22, 2005, saying that "The US no longer narrowly defines India within the terms of its rivalry with Pakistan, and Bush accepts the reality of India as a nuclear power."

In a joint statement issued by the US and India on May 19, 2005, during the visit of Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran to Washington, the two sides announced their desire "to promote democratic values and human rights globally through the United Nations, the Community of Democracies and other international forums." Winston Lord, who accompanied Henry

Kissinger on his 1971 trip to China, said: “We paid greater attention to China for geopolitical reasons...despite the fact that China has a ruthless system and India was a democracy. But there is a limit to our relations with China because we share only interests, not values. The fundamental reason for India and the US coming together is our shared values.” (*Outlook*, May 17, 2004).<sup>9</sup>

As US interests in India grow, the value addition would be a bonus. Bush’s thinking is shaped by the contrast between India’s democratic values and China’s authoritarianism. The US’s underlying strategic view is that India is a second Asian giant—capitalist, multicultural, secular and democratic—which will exert a gravitational pull that must limit China’s aspiration to global hegemony. This is a recently-conceived US position for the long-term, and it does not assume that India can overtake China.

India has huge military capacity, is a nuclear power, and is committed to democracy, but to date its record on non-proliferation is poor. Although India has “weaponised” its nuclear capability, the US has reconciled itself to India’s nuclear-weapons status coupled with its relatively strict nuclear export controls. Besides, India is a “strategic partner,” whom

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Washington wants to “help become a world power.”

In June last year, India and the US signed a 10-year agreement to strengthen defense ties between the two countries. The landmark agreement will help facilitate joint weapons production, cooperation on missile defense, and the transfer of technology. The US is also trying to push its defense wares into the lucrative Indian market. The decision by India’s national carrier, Air India, to place an order exclusively with the Boeing company has gone down well in Washington’s corridors of power. A marketing and media blitz is currently under way in an effort to convince New Delhi to opt for American F-18 aircraft for the Indian Air Force. It is noteworthy that India has been offered the F-18—which the US hasn’t sold even to its NATO allies. That’s not all. The US is offering India “partnership” in manufacturing these weapons. And, most important of all, the US is

offering India a greater role in global institutions, while India is trying to get a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

The United States has struck a historic deal with India under which India will be permitted to acquire civilian nuclear technology internationally while retaining its nuclear aims. Though India will remain outside the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), US officials say that the bilateral accord concluded by US President George W. Bush and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on July 19 last year will “bring India close to treaty standards.” The agreement, if approved by the US Congress, would

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mark a historical turning point, as it would end a major source of friction between the two countries—the ban on American nuclear technology sales to India.

Under the US–Indian accord, India will be permitted to buy nuclear reactor fuel and components from the US and other suppliers. But, in return, it will have to allow international inspections and safeguards of its civilian nuclear programme, and to refrain from any further nuclear weapons testing and transfer of arms technology to other countries.

The accord attracted immediate fire from some arms-control experts who said that India should not be given access to the civilian technology until it signed the NPT. Critics such as David Albright, a physicist and former UN weapons inspector, have begun attacking India’s nuclear non-proliferation record.

Senator Joe Biden, Democrat member on the Foreign Relations Committee, argued:

The administration must show Congress it will make us more secure by bringing India into closer compliance with international non-proliferation norms, that it will not assist India’s nuclear weapons program in violation of the NPT, and that it will not cause other countries to question

their commitment to non-proliferation because of a perceived double standard.<sup>10</sup>

The Bush Administration, however, is defending the accord. According to Nicholas Burns, the Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs:

Obviously, it's the wish of the United States that all countries will join the NPT. India has not made a decision to do that. So, we deal with the situation where a partner of ours, a friendly country, a very large country with significant energy needs, is willing now to commit itself to undertake all of the quite-invasive measures to safeguard its facilities. That is a benefit, not just for the United States; it's a benefit for the non-proliferation community.<sup>11</sup>

Selig Harrison, senior scholar at the Woodrow Wilson Center and director of the Asia Program, had drafted an open letter to the US Congress urging that it ratify the decision by the executive. Arguing that India was an ideal counterbalance to China, Harrison said, "Failure to implement [the White House's decision] would be a body blow to the development of a strong relationship with India, [which is] so important to achieving US goals in Asia and beyond."

**In return for America's bending the rules of nuclear trade, India will put more civilian nuclear reactors under international safeguards, and stiffen its anti-proliferation resolve.**

Condoleezza Rice joined the fray, stressing in a *Washington Post* piece the positive business spin-offs from the deal: "Our agreement," she wrote, "is good for American jobs, because it opens the door to civilian nuclear trade. India plans to import eight nuclear reactors by 2012. If US companies win just two of those reactor contracts, it will mean thousands of new jobs for American workers."

While India's nukes have broken no laws, in practice it got its start in the weapons business, rather as North Korea and Iran did, by misusing technologies and materials provided for civilian purposes. This could be regarded as cheating. Rule-bending for India is bound to encourage some

other countries to rethink their nuclear options too. But less damage might have been done if the non-proliferation gains had been real ones. In particular, India should have been pressed to stop making fissile material as a condition of any bargain. Pakistan, already signalling interest, could have joined such a moratorium.

Meanwhile, in return for America's bending the rules of nuclear trade, India will put more civilian nuclear reactors under international safeguards, and stiffen its anti-proliferation resolve.

India has two great attractions. One is stability. India has proven mechanisms for the peaceful transfer of power and the ability to withstand terrible internal conflicts—in Kashmir and the northeast, for example—without danger to its integrity. Another attraction is demography. India will remain younger and dynamic well into the middle of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. So, for many reasons, a close partnership between India and America seems both desirable and inevitable.

President Bush is dealing with the world as it is, and wants democratic, friendly, law-abiding India to be treated as an exception by the US Congress. The Bush Administration is trying to convince Congress to endorse this historic deal. However, Congress can veto Bush's nuclear agreement with India.

India's political elite and some strategic experts debate how far India should enter the US embrace. They point out that the interests of the US and India differ on foreign policy issues. For instance, India has a major stake in a multi-polar world, which is balanced and orderly, not dominated by only one major state. The US would like the opposite.

One Indian critic, strategic analyst Praful Bidwai, said: "Today's India is driven by chauvinist nationalism. It seeks recognition as a great power—but is callous towards its people, a majority of them poor and victims of centuries of injustice and discrimination." (*Frontline*, July 2-15, 2005). India's present policy, he continues, "is unbalanced, excessively focussed on the US."

India thinks it can manage this US embrace on its own terms. It knows that China and the world will have to take India more seriously, and India will have to give China assurances it is not joining any US "containment of China" strategy. India is not being asked to become a US ally in the way that Japan or Australia are allied, since that would be impossible anyway.

India's Prime Minister has declared that India's new role in the world will be defined by how it manages globalization. That is a far cry from Nehru. And it dictates a diplomacy to underwrite entrepreneurship, markets and technology, with all that implies for a more positive view of the US.

## NOTES

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2. *Ibid.*
3. Mark Thirlwell, *The changing geography of international trade: China, India and world trade* (Sydney: Lowy Institute for International Policy, August 2005).
4. See *India Today*, August 22, 2005.
5. For more details see Sharif Shuja, "Behind Washington's nuclear deal with India," *News Weekly*, August 27, 2005, p.7.
6. *Ibid.*
7. Kalam, who was in charge of the Agni rocket programme (now President of India), and five other scientists, spent some time studying at NASA. An example of the significance of this type of interchange may be seen in the report of the US National Science Foundation, *Indian Scientific Strengths: Selected Opportunities for Indo-US Cooperation* (Washington DC, 1987). The report advocated closer links in a number of important areas in science and technology. Its members included a number of US Indians prominent in scientific and business circles.
8. Some of these key appointees are: Karan K Bhatia, Deputy Under Secretary for Industry and Security; Neil Patel, Assistant to Vice-President Dick Cheney for Special Projects; Gopal Khanna, Chief Information Officer at the Peace Corps; Amit Sachdev, Associate Commissioner for Legislative Affairs. For details, see Ashish Kumar Sen, "All the President's men and women," *Sunday Times of India*, 27 July 2003, p.3.
9. Cited in *Outlook*, May 17, 2004.
10. Sharif Shuja, "Could US-India nuclear deal undermine security?" *News Weekly*, May 13, 2006, p. 17.
11. *Ibid.* Also see "America and India: George Bush's passage to India," *The Economist*, Vol. 378, No. 8466, February 25, 2006, pp. 11-12.

## Center for a New American Security

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India, the United States and the Global Commons

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WORKING PAPER

**U.S.-India Initiative Series**  
*India, the United States and the Global Commons*

By C. Raja Mohan



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## About the U.S.-India Initiative Series

This paper is one of a series commissioned in conjunction with a major Center for a New American Security (CNAS) study on the future of the U.S.-India relationship. The study, co-chaired by former Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage and former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs R. Nicholas Burns, and directed by CNAS Senior Fellow Richard Fontaine, has produced a comprehensive blueprint for the next phase of the U.S.-India strategic relationship. The full text of the final report can be found at [www.cnas.org](http://www.cnas.org).

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## **U.S.-India Initiative Series**

*India, the United States and the Global Commons*

By C. Raja Mohan

### About the Author

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Since the inauguration of Barack Obama in January 2009, supporters of strategic cooperation between India and the United States have expressed frustration at the absence of a “big idea” that could impart new momentum to the positive relationship developed between the two countries during the presidency of George W. Bush. Critics of the Obama administration, in both Delhi and Washington, have pointed repeatedly to Bush’s strategic warmth toward India and its apparent absence under his successor. In addition, they argue that Obama has tended to privilege China over India when dealing with global issues and Islamabad over Delhi on regional issues involving the subcontinent. Senior administration officials challenge these arguments, noting, for example, that Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was Obama’s first state guest at the White House in November 2009. They also point to Obama’s decision to move ahead with implementation of the controversial Indo-U.S. civil nuclear initiative unveiled by Bush in 2005, despite considerable reservations in the American non-proliferation community and from elements within the Democratic Party’s foreign policy establishment.

Others in Washington argue that the initial approaches of the Obama administration toward China and Pakistan have not accomplished their aims – and that, as a result, New Delhi has emerged as a relatively more attractive partner for Washington in both East and Southwest Asia. Administration supporters point to the first round of the strategic dialogue held in Washington

during early June 2010, which brought the Indian and U.S. governments together and laid the framework for substantive engagement in the coming years. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, who regularly affirms the administration’s commitment to the partnership, led the strategic dialogue on the American side. And in an effort to demonstrate his enthusiasm for the U.S. relationship with India, President Obama broke protocol by visiting the State Department, where the dialogue was taking place. While there, he announced a visit to India in November 2010. Two months later, U.S. Under Secretary of State William Burns articulated a comprehensive vision for the Indo-U.S. partnership: “Never has there been a moment when India and America mattered more to one another,” he said. “And never has there been a moment when partnership between India and America mattered more to the rest of the globe. As two of the world’s leading democracies, we can help build a new global commons – an international system in which other democracies can flourish, human dignity is advanced, poverty is reduced, trade is expanded, our environment is preserved, violent extremists are marginalized, the spread of weapons of mass destruction is curbed, and new frontiers in science and technology are explored. That is the moment, and the promise, that lies before us.”<sup>1</sup>

Although the Obama administration has fended off the perception of a lack of interest in India, questions remain about how the administration proposes to strengthen the Indo-U.S. relationship. As noted earlier, much attention has centered on the need for a “big idea” similar to the one that animated the relationship during President Bush’s second term. Senior Obama administration officials aver that the relationship is free of major problems and argue that a single big idea is unnecessary.<sup>2</sup> As U.S. Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Michèle Flournoy argued, the “U.S.-India relationship is not built on, and cannot be sustained on, grand gestures or brief moments of

crisis.” She continued, “This bond is grounded in common democratic values and converging interests that make India and [the] U.S. natural partners. The U.S. and India have an overarching shared interest in promoting global stability and security.”<sup>3</sup>

Still, agreement on a big idea would help sustain public support in both countries for the Indo-U.S. partnership. Moreover, it would rejuvenate the bilateral ties that distinguished Bush’s second term. A mutually acceptable framework would also prevent the national security bureaucracy in Washington from reverting to its long-held view of India as neither an ally nor an adversary of the United States. In India, too, without pressure to improve relations with the United States, the enthusiasm for engaging Washington that Prime Minister Singh has been able to generate will steadily dissipate.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, the Obama administration is preoccupied with two wars – in Afghanistan and Iraq – and a severe economic crisis. Meanwhile, Delhi seems distracted, despite the successful return of the Singh government to power in 2009, and the ruling Congress Party appears divided over its political priorities. These two large democracies, which have never been allies or close partners in the international arena, may need an ambitious agenda to spur them toward greater cooperation.

Strategic cooperation in the global commons could be the much-needed framework for setting the next stage in Indo-U.S. relations. Defining this framework should be at the top of the agenda for President Obama’s upcoming visit to India. Unlike the civil nuclear initiative, which involved changes to both U.S. domestic non-proliferation law and the guidelines of the 46-nation Nuclear Suppliers Group, a bilateral initiative on the global commons would not require immediate action by either the U.S. Congress or the international community, which could prove difficult to achieve. Such an initiative would strengthen the international order and overcome the perception in sections of the U.S. foreign policy establishment that the civilian nuclear

deal has undermined the global non-proliferation regime.

This paper begins with a brief overview of the unfolding debate on the global commons in the United States and some of the recent challenges to American primacy. Next it will examine the emergence of a new awareness in India of the importance of the global commons, along with its increasing rejection of the “third worldism” that for decades put Delhi at odds with Washington in multilateral forums. It then discusses the recent evolution in Indo-U.S. maritime cooperation and concludes with several recommendations that could facilitate future cooperation on the global commons.

### **Fading U.S. Command of the Commons**

The oceans, air, outer space, and cyberspace are widely acknowledged as the four major “global commons” that are outside the control of any one or more states, but that are vital for the smooth conduct of national and international life. Ensuring order in the commons has always been a main function of the hegemonic powers in the international system, a function that two Anglo-Saxon powers – Great Britain and the United States – have performed with considerable aplomb for more than two centuries. There is a growing recognition, however, that American primacy in the commons and the ability of the United States to maintain order within them are coming under increasing stress. Addressing instability in the global commons, it has been argued in Washington, should be at the top of America’s list of national security priorities. In addition, the United States must find strong partners to help manage the global commons, given the challenges posed by both rising powers and non-state actors.<sup>5</sup>

The criticality of the commons in international relations has risen in direct proportion to the globalization of national economies in the last few centuries. As capitalism dawned in Europe, it began to connect dispersed economic communities first in

Europe and then in the world at large. The first age of globalization saw the emergence of the world's seas as a global common. The oceans, which were not under the sovereignty of any one nation, linked geographically dispersed zones of natural resources, industrial production centers and markets for consumption. As the great American navalist Alfred Thayer Mahan put it, the sea represents a "wide common, over which men may pass in all directions." For Mahan, the sea lines of communications constituted the most important element in a country's strategy, whether economic, political or military. He argued that the essence of sea power lies in the control of vital sea-lanes and geographic features, such as islands and coastal seaports, from which warships could protect or threaten seaborne traffic in goods and people.<sup>6</sup> Not surprisingly, the great powers of the 19th and 20th centuries competed vigorously for maritime dominance. For more than two hundred years, Britain and then the United States maintained their dominance over the seas.

A recent report on the global commons published by the Center for a New American Security treats air and space as separate commons.<sup>7</sup> The former emerged as a common good in the mid-20th century, and continues to be exploited for both its civilian and military uses. As rapid technological advances shrank geographical distances, regulating and managing the air domain became necessary. The United States, as the world's dominant power and leader in aviation technologies after World War II, led the way in creating the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and establishing the standards for usage of the air commons. As outer space became accessible in the late 1950s, the United States was again at the forefront of drafting the rules to govern its civilian and military uses. In defining a regime for outer space, the United States had to work with or around the Soviet Union, which possessed matching capabilities in space technologies. With the worlds of computers and

communications now merging into a single cyberspace on which significant parts of its economy and national security depend, the United States has begun to debate the importance of establishing a new international regime to govern its use.

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*The globalization of China's and India's economies, with their emphasis on external trade, has dramatically increased the role of the seas in international commerce and global economic stability.*

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The latest phase of globalization has produced growing international reliance on assets in cyberspace and outer space for many aspects of modern life. Meanwhile the globalization of China's and India's economies, with their emphasis on external trade, has dramatically increased the role of the seas in international commerce and global economic stability.

Despite their rising importance, the commons have never looked as vulnerable as they do today. Whether it is terrorists targeting civilian air traffic, pirates threatening vital sea-lanes, or cyber militias attacking computer networks, the capacity of small but well-organized groups to disrupt vital common spaces has increased significantly. These threats are not limited to non-state actors. Rising powers and regional actors that fear the United States and its power have adopted asymmetric strategies to probe American vulnerabilities in the global commons. These include China's and Iran's anti-access strategies in waters near each country, China's attempts

to develop anti-satellite weapons, and Beijing and Moscow's investments in cyber warfare.

These developments have raised questions about the ability of the United States to remain the principal arbiter of the global commons. For nearly seven decades, American leadership in maritime, air, space and cyber technologies has allowed the United States to keep the commons open for international commercial use and to lead the regimes governing these spaces. U.S. command of the commons has also been an essential underpinning of American military hegemony in the international system.<sup>8</sup> The big question now is: How might the unfolding redistribution of power in the international system affect both the United States' command of the commons and its military hegemony? Rising powers and spreading military capabilities will chip away at American hegemony, which in turn will reduce the United States' ability to maintain order in the commons. Therefore, if the emerging multipolar world is the main threat to the stability of the global commons, the answer to the question above must be deeper U.S. engagement with rising powers and pivotal actors. Such engagement will involve strengthening old alliances and building new partnerships, as well as using both carrots and sticks to convince adversarial powers to act responsibly in the management of the commons.<sup>9</sup>

As the United States explores the development of a new strategy toward the commons, where does India fit in? Policymakers in Washington and Delhi are debating the answer to this fundamental question. Some in the United States have begun to see India as a natural partner in securing the commons. Making the case for a stronger defense partnership with India, Undersecretary Flournoy recently noted, "we will look at ways in which, together, we can better secure the global commons by expanding our already robust cooperation, in air, space, cyberspace, and maritime initiatives."<sup>10</sup> A few weeks earlier, Indian Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao remarked, "the United States and India have an

interest in protecting the global commons – maritime, cyber, and space domains. The free flow of information and trade across these global commons is vital for both our economies. Our naval forces have been working with each other in ensuring the safety and security of shipping lanes of communication, including in the Gulf of Aden. We need also to create appropriate norms for cyberspace to ensure that the freedom and anonymity provided by these pathways are not misused. Our space agencies have had fruitful cooperation in the past, and there is immense potential for the future."<sup>11</sup> These statements are at best a preliminary recognition of the possibilities for Indo-U.S. cooperation in the commons. Realizing such cooperation will require significant shifts in attitudes and policies in both Delhi and Washington.

### **Growing Capabilities, Lagging Policies**

As a result of its growing technological and industrial capabilities, India is poised to make a significant contribution to managing the global commons. Thanks to an ambitious strategy, the Indian Navy is already among the top-five navies in the world.<sup>12</sup> At a time when Western powers are downsizing their navies, India (along with China) is growing as a major maritime power. India's naval influence in the Indian Ocean is already significant and is likely to increase incrementally in the Western Pacific. Its space program, too, is impressive. From building and launching commercial satellites to sending lunar probes, the Indian space program spans the full spectrum of civilian space activities. In recent years, India has begun to invest in military uses of outer space, including the development of advanced air defense missiles, the rudiments of missile defense and the development of satellites for military reconnaissance and communication.<sup>13</sup>

In the cyber domain, India has carved out a niche not merely as a destination for the outsourcing of back-office work but also as a center for advanced research in information technology and

communications research. Although India lags behind China and Russia in the development of cyber warfare capabilities, it has begun to devote greater attention to this increasingly significant issue.<sup>14</sup> Despite India's widely acknowledged potential to influence the global commons, some U.S. policymakers question whether India is ready to give up its non-aligned status and take a leadership role in securing these common spaces.

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*As India's power grows increasingly consequential for the international system, the tension between its rising power capabilities and its self-image as a weak, third-world state is playing itself out.*

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As India's power grows increasingly consequential for the international system, the tension between its rising power capabilities and its self-image as a weak, third-world state is playing itself out. This tension was in full view during the exhaustive debate on the Indo-U.S. civilian nuclear initiative and, more broadly, on the meaning and nature of India's strategic partnership with the United States. During this debate, both conservatives and liberals in India's political class expressed opposition to the creation of a stronger relationship with the United States. Insisting that India maintain its third-world focus, elements within its foreign and security establishments voiced skepticism that the United States would agree to make India a partner in the management of the nuclear order, let alone

the global order. These reservations illuminate the difficulties surrounding the civilian nuclear pact in Delhi, which many in the West considered a sweetheart deal for India.

During 2005–2008, considerable political resistance emerged within India regarding the notion of expanded defense cooperation with the United States, especially in the domain of multilateral military operations outside the framework of the United Nations. At great personal and political risk, however, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh pushed forward with his plan to reform India's foreign and security policies. As Premier Singh seeks to consolidate the structural changes in Indian foreign policy engineered during his first term, a debate has developed within the Indian strategic community about how India should think about its global responsibilities and how it should redefine its positions on a range of multilateral issues. Discussing the rise of China and India, National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon recently questioned whether the two nations are "willing and capable of contributing to global public goods in terms of security, growth and stability." He asked rhetorically, "Asia has proved that she can do the economics. Can she also do the politics that come with power?"<sup>15</sup> Speaking at the Shangri-La Dialogue on Asian security a few weeks later, Menon expanded on his thinking:

Managing the security of the global commons – outer space, the oceans, cyberspace, and global transport and communication networks – today there is hardly any aspect of our lives that is not touched by outer space or by information technology. As this intensifies, we have seen a steady technological shift in favor of the offence over defence in both these domains. There are major issues regarding the placement of weapons in space, and of weapons designed to attack space-based assets. Military uses of space-based assets for intelligence, reconnaissance and communications are a reality, where we are at a point where

rules of the road are required as soon as possible... To us in India, it appears that only collective effort can meet such common challenges, which require new global partnerships involving those powers with the capacity to address these issues. In each of these areas new paradigms are necessary to cope with the changes wrought by technology, and by shifts in the balance of power. The world order defined by World War II or Cold War victors no longer suffices.<sup>16</sup>

### Maritime Engagement

Despite the absence of an agreed plan during the Bush years to protect the global commons, India and the United States engaged in significant cooperation in the security sphere, especially between their two navies. This deepening maritime engagement could provide the basis for a broad-based India-U.S. partnership in managing the global commons. The Indian Navy was among the first to recognize the implications of India's shift to a more international focus in the early 1990s: it moved quickly to break out of the military isolationism of the non-aligned era and began maritime engagement with major powers, regional actors and the smaller states of the Indian Ocean littoral. Also in the early 1990s, the United States initiated a program of military exchanges with India. During the administration of Bill Clinton, despite interest in Washington for greater naval cooperation, the military relationship between India and the United States remained tentative and was overshadowed by non-proliferation concerns in the United States. Viewing India through a geopolitical lens, the Bush administration was determined to rapidly expand military cooperation with Delhi. India reciprocated with offers to lend military support to the United States in the conduct of military operations in Afghanistan after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

Given the primacy of geographic considerations, Washington chose Pakistan as its primary partner in Afghanistan instead of India. Still determined to expand military cooperation in other areas, the

United States and India looked to the maritime domain. In an effort to support Operation Enduring Freedom, India began escorting high-value naval assets through the Malacca Straits, despite reservations in Delhi and among some littoral states. The massive tsunami that struck at the end of 2004 opened the door for unprecedented Indo-U.S. cooperation as well as multilateral efforts with Australia and Japan. India's decision to cooperate with the United States and its allies outside a United Nations mandate and on short notice encouraged Washington to explore a broader-based framework for defense cooperation in June 2005.<sup>17</sup> These efforts culminated in the drafting of a maritime security framework in 2006 during Bush's trip to India.<sup>18</sup>

India's expanding engagement with the U.S. Navy also contributed to the evolution of Indian maritime thinking about the Indian Ocean. From its knee-jerk opposition in the 1970s and 1980s to any foreign military presence in the Indian Ocean, India began talking about engaging all the major actors in the littoral, both foreign and local. Recognizing the long-term interests of India as a trading nation dependent on the seas, the Indian Navy started moving away from its traditional emphasis on extending state sovereignty and toward keeping the maritime commons open. India published its official document outlining India's maritime strategy – "Freedom to Use the Seas" – in 2007. In many ways, this strategy reflects the ideas that guided the British Raj, with their emphasis on providing public goods and discarding the ideological baggage associated with being a weak, third-world state. With its stepped-up efforts beginning in late 2008 to protect the sea-lanes of communication in the Gulf of Aden that were being threatened by pirates, the Indian Navy emphasized the need to protect the global maritime commons through cooperation with other nations, both regional and extra-regional.<sup>19</sup> The Navy has also begun to emphasize the importance of assisting the smaller states in the Indian Ocean and the Pacific in protecting the

maritime commons. As India's naval chief told an international gathering in 2009, "Our capability enhancement and capacity building initiatives with Sri Lanka, [the] Seychelles, Maldives and Mauritius have adequately enabled them to deal with many of their security concerns on their own. I am convinced that, as India grows in economic and military stature, it would have to take upon itself the role of further equipping its neighbors in ways that would not only enhance their own security but contribute positively to regional stability as well."<sup>20</sup> Although India's political leaders hesitated in supporting membership in the Proliferation Security Initiative, the Navy recognized the significance of policing the sea-lanes against illicit trafficking in materials related to weapons of mass destruction. As a result, many of the annual Malabar maritime exercises with the U.S. Navy have involved interdiction and search and seizure functions associated with the Proliferation Security Initiative.

The evolution of Indian thinking has coincided with the affirmation of a new maritime strategy in the United States emphasizing collaboration and cooperation with all major actors in managing the world's oceans. At the same time, some in Washington have argued that the rise of China requires the strengthening of American cooperation with other major powers, especially Asia's democracies.<sup>21</sup> A comprehensive view of India's evolution since the early 1990s suggests that this globalizing country has begun to reacquire many Anglo-Saxon virtues, including entrepreneurial capitalism, a passion for international trade, an enduring maritime orientation and a commitment to securing the commons.<sup>22</sup> This makes India a natural partner for the United States in the future management of the global commons.

### Prospects for Future Cooperation

Indo-U.S. cooperation in managing the global commons will depend on a number of factors. One constraint has been concerns in Washington about non-proliferation. The possibilities for extending

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Indo-U.S. maritime cooperation to other domains, such as space, have run into a variety of obstacles, including export controls and the American perception of India's place in the various non-proliferation regimes. The logic of President Bush's decision to lift U.S. restrictions on civilian nuclear cooperation with India as part of building a new relationship with Delhi should logically lead to the lifting of U.S. export controls on high-technology transfers to India and the promotion of India's full and equal membership in global non-proliferation regimes. Yet there has been considerable reluctance in Washington, especially within the non-proliferation community, to treat India as a full partner in the management of the international order. That the Nuclear Suppliers Group could embrace Iceland, a financially broke European state, as its forty-sixth member in 2009 but wants to place additional restrictions on India, which is well on its way to becoming one of the world's top economies, points to the twisted logic of the non-proliferation theology. Ending India's anomalous position in the

global non-proliferation system should be one of Obama's top priorities during his upcoming visit.<sup>23</sup> The full integration of India into the non-proliferation system would lay the groundwork for future cooperation in the global commons. In preparation for Obama's visit, Delhi and Washington have agreed to explore possibilities for new understandings on non-proliferation and export controls as well as on the global commons. They have established small bilateral working groups on both the subjects in anticipation of the president's visit. The following is a list of recommendations on issues relating to global commons.

### Recommendations

Although India and the United States already enjoy significant maritime cooperation, framing the issues in terms of the Asian and global maritime commons would provide a new basis for deepening cooperation. As vulnerable maritime commons in the Asian littoral come under threat from China's expansive territorial claims and exclusionary interpretations of its exclusive economic zones (EEZs), the need for greater Indo-U.S. naval and maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean and Western Pacific has grown urgent. Strengthening India's naval capabilities in the South China Sea and the Persian Gulf is also in the interest of the United States. Although the range of weapons systems that Delhi has begun to acquire from Washington has expanded in recent years, the two sides still need to focus on boosting India's maritime power projection capabilities as part of a new framework for Indo-U.S. burden-sharing in the Asian and global maritime commons. Washington should consider transferring special platforms such as carriers and nuclear-powered submarines, or at least the skills associated with their use, to India. It should also consider assisting India in the development of expeditionary forces and their rapid deployment. Beyond naval military cooperation, U.S. political and diplomatic support will help reinforce India's own fledgling naval diplomacy in the Western Indian Ocean, the Persian Gulf, South China Sea and the

South Pacific. For their part, Delhi's political classes and the foreign policy establishment should join the Indian Navy in articulating India's political commitment to keeping open the Asian maritime commons. They should also support multilateral endeavors such as the Proliferation Security Initiative, define the principles for participation in coalition operations, remove obstacles to stronger security cooperation with the United States, come out explicitly in favor of freedom of navigation and modify their positions on expanding territorial sovereignty over the oceans.

In contrast to the ocean, space, and cyberspace commons, management of the air commons has not been widely debated. Although both the United States and India have experienced major terrorist attacks from the air, they have devoted little discussion to managing the global aviation regimes. The United States remains the world's largest user of the air commons, but the dramatic expansion of the civil aviation sector in India will make that country a large stakeholder. Meanwhile, continuing innovations by terrorists, the increasing capacity of non-state actors to operate small air forces,<sup>24</sup> and the growing range and lethality of air-to-air, surface-to-air missiles and surface-to-surface missiles pose new threats to civil aviation. Indo-U.S. cooperation in the air commons could take many forms. One would be to deepen bilateral cooperation to strengthen India's air civilian and military infrastructure. This would include agreements to transfer best practices on security and safety to India's rapidly expanding civil aviation industry. While there is much interest in the United States about the Indian Air Force's acquisition of 126 Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft, the two sides should be discussing more intensive American participation in India's comprehensive program to modernize its military aviation. The two sides could also enhance air security across the Indian Ocean by assisting smaller states in the region in developing their capacities and improving awareness of the region's air spaces.

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The space commons offer the most consequential possibilities for greater Indo-U.S. cooperation.<sup>25</sup> Yet the two sides have been unable to exploit these possibilities because of arguments over non-proliferation, fears about competition from India's commercial launch vehicles, and deep divisions in both countries about the relationship of space to national security strategy. India was one of the first countries to welcome Bush's controversial initiative on missile defense in May 2001, and for a period during the Bush years, India and the United States sought to cooperate on missile defense.<sup>26</sup> India's liberal left reacted by seeking the government's reaffirmation of its opposition to space weapons. Nevertheless, by the late 2000s India had begun to test weapons systems relating to missile defense. Beyond its own partisan bickering on missile defense, the United States and its security establishment have been unclear on how far to proceed with India on cooperation in military space technologies. President Obama's upcoming visit presents a prime opportunity for both sides

to unveil a new framework for expanding civilian space cooperation, removing U.S. restrictions on civilian space technology transfers to India, promoting full Indian membership of the Missile Technology Control Regime, beginning a fresh dialogue on the possibilities for cooperation on military uses of space, exploring the prospects for cooperation in modernizing the rules for military and civilian uses of outer space and working together to keep it accessible to all nations.

As the least understood of all the commons, cyberspace demands a substantive conversation between Washington and Delhi. The link between the information technology and knowledge sectors of the two economies continues to grow, and they have every incentive to explore cooperation in protecting cyberspace from threats emanating from state and non-state actors. If Washington is looking for a like-minded partner to stabilize and secure cyberspace, Delhi is a natural choice. Potential cooperation could involve all dimensions of the unfolding challenge, including corporate security, national security and law enforcement. The two sides could consider building on the current European convention on cybercrime, creating a framework for cooperation against cyber terrorism, deepening bilateral cooperation on dealing with military cyber threats from well-organized state actors and devising the first rudimentary arms control regime for the cyber commons.

In all of these areas, the role of China looms large over the prospects for India-U.S. cooperation in the global commons. In both India and the United States, deep divisions have surfaced between those who think that balancing China has become an urgent imperative and those who argue that there is no alternative to engagement. With regard to the commons, there is no denying that China is at the core of many U.S. concerns, given its anti-access strategies in the Western Pacific, its development of space warfare capabilities and its extensive capabilities in cyber warfare.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, some

observers argue that Washington needs Beijing's help in managing the commons. Some would argue that the authoritarian nature of China's regime represents a major threat to the global commons; others would insist that stability in the commons must be pursued without regard to how the major powers are governed. Washington and Delhi, then, need to reach a functional understanding on how to think about China when contemplating efforts to cooperate in the global commons. The best outcome would include greater Indo-U.S. cooperation in the commons and an environment in which non-democratic powers such as China can be persuaded to follow agreed-upon norms for managing the seas, air, outer space and cyberspace.

### **Conclusion**

President Obama's visit to India represents an extraordinary opportunity to build political will in both Washington and Delhi for a comprehensive partnership in managing the global commons, an area that is becoming central to international security. Such an effort would encourage the two countries to work together on a range of issues relating to the global commons. It could very well launch a new era of cooperation on global and multilateral issues, even as it opens the door for a more intensive bilateral engagement in the high-technology and defense sectors. In Washington, cooperation on the global commons would bridge Bush's emphasis on balance of power politics and Obama's preference for multilateralism and global governance. In Delhi, it has the potential to connect India's traditional universalism with its new responsibilities as a rising power and further enhance its relationship with the United States.

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INDO-US RELATIONS RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

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## INDO-US RELATIONS RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

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### **Background**

At a time when anti-Americanism has spread across the globe, a recent poll shows that more people in India have a positive view of the United States than in any other nation surveyed. The poll, conducted by the Pew Global Attitudes Project, raised, however, a larger question: How long would it be before the courtship between India and the United States would lead to a strategic partnership? Despite a congruence of vital national interests, and a shared political goal to build a long-term strategic relationship, the United States was yet to forge a true partnership with India. However, there have been important shifts in U.S. thinking, largely on account of India's rising geopolitical importance, its abundant market opportunities, and its role in ensuring a power equilibrium in Asia. The United States and India have discussed cooperation on missile defense, nuclear energy, space and high technology earlier. Furthermore, the two has also opened a quiet dialogue on India's largest neighbor, China, whose rise is likely to pose the single biggest challenge to world security in the years to come.<sup>1</sup>

The Bush administration began looking increasingly towards India as

a core ally as it sought to engineer what could be a major diplomatic shift away from power alignments forged after World War Two. Old standby Britain, increasingly important Japan and, according to some of the officials familiar with administration's thinking on geopolitics, Australia, have all joined India in the group of countries Washington believes shares its values and goals. "You might call this emerging set of alliances the 'four by four' strategy (which is) built around four great powers - the United States, Great Britain, Japan and India," wrote Thomas Donnelly, of the American Enterprise Institute (AEI)- a think-tank with close ties to the administration, on the AEI website. Nuclear power India, a growing economic force on China's border and also familiarly dubbed the world's biggest democracy, was the relative newcomer to the group. Often an adversary, as a Soviet sympathizer and leader of the non-aligned movement during the Cold War, it now enjoyed dramatically improved ties under President George W Bush. Presidential aides said the United States was committed to helping India to, not just prosper but also, rise as a regional power. One senior official has said, privately, that the administration also intends to back India for a

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<sup>1</sup> Arvind Virmani, "Poised for the jump can Bush transform the terms of the India-US engagement?," *The Indian Express*, 15 July 2005

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permanent seat on the UN Security Council.<sup>2</sup>

US President Nixon transformed relations with China with his breakthrough trip to Beijing in the 1970's. This led, after a decade or so, to a transformation of China's role in Asia. President Reagan transformed US relations with the USSR in the 1980's, contributing to the disintegration of the Soviet empire. Would President Bush transform the US's relationship with India, leading to a transformation of India's role in Asia, was the crucial question uppermost in the minds of the International community. A change in objective conditions suggested that this was likely. President Bush envisaged a much bigger role for India in global affairs than his predecessors. This resulted in the initiative -The Next Steps in Strategic & Technological Partnership (NSSTP) -in 2005. The process was, however, sidetracked by 9/11 as the American focus shifted to Afghanistan and Iraq, and Pakistan made itself indispensable to the US.<sup>3</sup>

Washington sent across word that President George W. Bush had ordered an extra length of red carpet for Dr Manmohan Singh during his visit in July 2005, the kind of reception given only to a few heads of government. Key functionaries of the Bush Administration also told New Delhi that the Prime Minister's visit could mark a watershed in relations between India and the United States. There were influential people in Dr Manmohan Singh's government who

were also looking forward to the visit. They believed that the world situation had changed over the years, and that the time had come for India to give up its old mindset, look far into the future and evolve a new relationship with the world's most powerful country. Often, in the past, the love-hate relationship between the two largest democracies witnessed hesitations and prevented them from coming closer. Often, adversarial feelings, embedded in mutual distrust, ruled the relationship. Often, a step forward had led to two steps backwards.

As the Left parties' chipped away at efforts to improve relations with the United States, they had a powerful ally in Washington - the American bureaucracy committed to old thinking on non-proliferation and nuclear cooperation with India. With the nuclear question once again becoming the touchstone for measuring the transformation of Indo-US relations, on the eve of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Washington, the resistance to change appeared as strong in the American capital as it was here. The Left in India and the non-proliferation bureaucracy in Washington shared a deep aversion to India's acquisition of nuclear weapons. But, unlike the non-proliferation champions in Washington, President George Bush conveyed a different political message. In his frequent encounters with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, including one at the Gleneagles summit, Bush reportedly conveyed his empathy for India's attempts to acquire civilian reactors from the international market, in order to boost its nuclear electric power programme. India had been working hard to persuade the US to drop its sanctions and restrictions on the Nuclear Suppliers Group so that the member nations would be able to

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<sup>2</sup> "United States looks to India as new global ally," Editorial, *Daily Times*, 8 December 2005

<sup>3</sup> H.K. Dua "Opinion: Mission to Washington" *The Tribune*, 6 July 2005.

sell, not just nuclear fuel, but also, at least six nuclear power reactors required by India to answer its burgeoning energy needs. The Tarapur plant was down to its last stock of fuel from Russia, and Moscow had expressed its inability to continue the supply on account of the restrictions imposed by the Nuclear Suppliers Group on India. It was imperative that American withdrew its support for the sanctions so as to give teeth to its promise of civilian nuclear cooperation with India.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Strategic Agreement of July 2005**

On July 18, 2005, India and the US signed a landmark strategic agreement that had far reaching consequences. There were two important facets to this agreement. First, the belated acceptance of India as a "responsible state with advanced nuclear technology" amounted to tacit US recognition of India's status as a de facto nuclear weapons power outside the Non Proliferation Treaty. Second, the US offered to cooperate with India on civilian nuclear energy issues. As per the agreement, the US would work to achieve full civilian nuclear energy cooperation with India as it realised India's goals of promoting nuclear power and achieving energy security. It would seek agreement from the Congress to adjust US laws and policies. The US would also work with friends and allies to adjust international regimes to enable full civilian nuclear energy cooperation and trade with India, including, but not limited to, expeditious consideration of fuel supplies for

safeguarded nuclear reactors at Tarapur.<sup>5</sup>

#### **Defense Agreement of July 2005**

Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran in the run-up to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to Washington emphatically denied that the defense framework agreement signed in June 2005, between India and the United States, was a military alliance. Suggesting that there were some "misunderstanding" about the defense framework, Mr. Saran said it set out the "parameters" within which the two countries could potentially cooperate with each other, if it was in their interest to do so. Mr. Saran also added that it would not have any adverse impact on India's substantial defense ties with Russia and other countries. U.S-India defense pact, apart from other things, allowed New Delhi to join the multilateral Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). The PSI is a global plan aimed at stopping the shipment of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their delivery systems, and related materials, worldwide.

The Pentagon also approved the lease of two P-3C reconnaissance aircrafts for India and notified the US Congress of a \$133 million military sale to provide logistical support for the deal that included training devices, test equipment and spare parts. Announcing the deal, the Pentagon's Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) said the proposed sale would help "improve the security of an important ally and strengthen the US-India strategic partnership". The P-3C aircrafts, built by Lockheed Martin,

<sup>4</sup> Brahma Chellaney "India can be America's best friend" *International Herald Tribune*, 1 July 2005

<sup>5</sup> Gen V. P. Malik (ret'd) and Brig Gurmeet Kanwal (ret'd) "N-deal with the US" *The Tribune*, 28 November 2005

would replace the Navy's Soviet IL-38 May aircrafts which are "quickly reaching the end of their operational service life". This modernisation would enhance the capabilities of the Navy, support its regional influence, and meet its legitimate needs of self-defence, said the DSCA, <sup>6</sup>. It said that India needed the advanced aircraft for land-based maritime patrol, and reconnaissance, to protect its economic exclusion zone and to guard against submarines and surface warfare ships.<sup>7</sup>

India and the United States also agreed to further strengthen bilateral defense cooperation and emphasised the importance of service-to-service ties at the meeting of the Defense Policy Group (DPG) in Washington in September 2005. The three-day meeting of the DPG, held in an extremely frank, friendly and cooperative atmosphere, was co-chaired by the Indian Defense Secretary Shekhar Dutt and the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy - Eric Edelman. The two sides exchanged views on the international strategic and security situation as well as on the further development of bilateral defense cooperation, as envisaged under the Indo-US Defense Framework agreement, inked in June 2005. "Both countries view their bilateral defense cooperation as an important facet of the India-US global partnership, reflected in the India-US Joint Statement of July 18, 2005," read a statement issued at the end of the

seventh round of talks.<sup>8</sup> A 12-day joint exercise of Indo-US Navies, called 'SALVEX', began at Kochi on 13 September, 2005 with the commencement of the harbour phase of exercise. As part of this phase, training and professional discussions between the two navies were held. The exercise, which focused on diving and salvage operations, continued till September 23, 2005.<sup>9</sup>

In a step up of service-to-service engagement, India and the US conducted the biggest-ever army level exercises near Ranikhet, in Uttaranchal, in January as American officials indicated that Washington was working to open doors to high-technology transfers. A company force of the US army also conducted joint exercises with a thrust towards anti-insurgency operations in the mountainous terrain near Choubhatia. American officials said that, in the coming year, armed forces of the two countries would participate in "more complex, patterned" war games. "US Pacific Command wants to expand its military-level interaction with India over a broad front to enable the two armed forces to share experience in doctrines and higher formation-level exercises", said officials. Officials said that, though Indo-US defense trade stood at USD 287 million, they expected a big jump in arms sales through major deals with the Navy, the Special Forces and the Air Force.<sup>10</sup>

### **Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty**

India and the US also signed an agreement to help each other

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<sup>6</sup> DSDA is the US Defense Department's nodal agency for foreign military sales.

<sup>7</sup> S. Rajagopalan "Pentagon hints at big defence deal with India" *Hindustan Times*, 16 November 2005

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<sup>8</sup> Editorial "India, US to strengthen defense co-operation" *Hindustan Times*, 24 November 2005

<sup>9</sup> Editorial, *Daily Times*, 13 September 2005

<sup>10</sup> Editorial "India, US to conduct biggest ever military exercise" *Deccan Herald*, 10 December 2005

investigate offences related to terrorism, narcotics, trafficking, and other organized crimes in October 2005. The protocol of exchange for the Instrument of Ratification concerning the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty was signed by Union Home Secretary V K Duggal and US Ambassador to India David C Mulford. Speaking after the signing of the treaty, Mr. Mulford termed it as "a very, very important step forward" in bilateral relations between the two countries. He said that relations between India and the US touched virtually every area of human activity, and the US would like to develop relations further. The Union Home Secretary described the signing of the Protocol as yet another step in "our continuing strong friendship." Mr. Duggal said India was the 16<sup>th</sup> country with which the US had signed such a treaty. The treaty was ratified by India soon thereafter.

#### **Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Science and Technology**

After 15 years of negotiation, India and the United States finally signed an umbrella agreement on cooperation in the field of science and technology in October 2005. The pact was signed by Union Science and Technology Minister Kapil Sibal and U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. In a press release from Washington, where the agreement was signed, the Ministry of Science and Technology said that cooperation would be based on shared responsibilities and equitable contributions.<sup>11</sup>

India also gave assurance to the United States that it would make all-out efforts to curb money laundering and stamp out financing of terrorist activities while it laid down a

roadmap for major reforms in the financial sector. At the conclusion of a joint press conference with the U.S. Treasury Secretary, John Snow, pertaining to the Indo-U.S. Financial and Economic Forum meeting, Finance Minister P. Chidambaram said: "I have told Secretary [John Snow] that we are fully committed to checking money laundering as well as stamping out financing of terrorist activities. An anti-money laundering legislation is in place. There has to be an inspection, and a report, which will happen shortly," He also reiterated the intention of the two countries to implement the recommendation of the Financial Action Task Force. The panel was set up to prevent abuse of the financial system and both the U.S. and India agreed to work together to identify and freeze the assets of terrorist groups.<sup>12</sup>

#### **International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) energy project**

India's inclusion as a full partner in the ambitious multinational 'International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor' (ITER) energy project was an acknowledgement of being a responsible nuclear state with advanced nuclear technology. The decision was taken by six partner countries -US, European Union, Russia, China, Japan and South Korea. "The decision recognizes that India can significantly contribute to such endeavours and also is recognition that India is a country with advanced nuclear technology, including in the field of fusion research," said a spokesman for the External Affairs Ministry. ITER is the experimental

<sup>12</sup> Editorial "India, US push for wider trade ties" *The Hindu*, 10 November 2005

<sup>11</sup> Editorial, *The Hindu*, 19 October 2005

step between the latest studies of plasma physics and future electricity – producing fusion power plants. The main ITER facility will be built in Cadarache in France by 2016 and all partners will participate in its construction, development and research.<sup>13</sup>

### **Bush visit to India and the Nuclear agreement of March 2006**

The Indo-US relationship proceeded at a furious pace in President Bush's second term. It started with Condoleezza Rice's visit to New Delhi in March 2005, when she expressed the American desire to help India achieve major world power status and stressed the need for an energy dialogue. This was followed by the new framework for the US-India defense relationship agreement signed on June 28 2005, the completion of the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP), and the finalization of the George Bush-Manmohan Singh joint agreement on July 18 2005. The joint pact included the nuclear deal that is now the focus of controversy in both countries. This was followed by India's surprise vote in the IAEA where, along with western nations, it envisaged that Iran would be referred to the Security Council if it did not satisfactorily account for its suspect nuclear activities.

The US Administration was determined to implement the July 2005 civilian nuclear deal it had entered into with India. US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice made it clear, once again, that the US was committed to helping India with advanced technology and equipment to produce sufficient nuclear energy for its fast growing economy. She obviously

wanted to tell the skeptics in the US that India's search for nuclear energy, which is cheaper and cleaner, deserved all-out American support as India has had a clean track record so far, as nuclear non-proliferation is concerned, despite not being a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. What Dr Rice said in Washington, while interacting with journalists, was also aimed at convincing the detractors of the Indo-US nuclear agreement, in India, that there was nothing sinister about the deal.<sup>14</sup>

India and the United States remained engaged in intensive negotiations to try and clinch a civilian nuclear deal, even as U.S. President George.W.Bush landed in New Delhi on March 1<sup>st</sup>. It was the fifth visit by an American President to India. Interestingly, during a stop over in Kabul, Mr. Bush said that officials had been talking to the Indians even from his special aircraft, and these discussions would continue in New Delhi. Reiterating that it was a difficult issue for both governments, the President said that the two sides would continue to have a dialogue and work towards an agreement.<sup>15</sup> President Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh were involved in lengthy discussions, shortly after the arrival of President Bush. The meetings revolved around the common values that bind India and the United States together: the commitment to democracy, to the institutions of freedom -- free press, freedom of religion, independent judiciary, and the like -- and the important message that the United States and India had to stand together as advocates for these institutions, and subsequently provide the world with a

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<sup>13</sup> Editorial "India becomes partner in nuclear reactor project" *Daily Times*, 8 December 2005

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<sup>14</sup> Editorial, "Indo-US deal on track" *The Tribune*, 9 January 2006

<sup>15</sup> Editorial, *The Hindu*, 20 March 2006

living example of the strength of such institutions. The discussion also included issues like the War on Terror, trade issues- especially the impending entry of Indian mangoes in to American markets, the Doha round conclusions and the agriculture knowledge initiative.<sup>16</sup> The special emphasis, though, lay on energy issues. The discussion largely concentrated around India's need for energy, its plans to dramatically enhance its ability to provide secure energy to its people, and its desire to do so in a way that avoided proliferation risks and did not create environmental problems. The American President talked about his advanced energy initiative and his hope that technologies arising from initiative could be shared with India and other countries. The meeting of the two leaders with the CEO forum, soon after, once again reemphasised to them that energy issues were the crucial cog in the wheel of relations between the two countries. President Bush's visit to India also included visits to an American funded agricultural institute and the business school in Hyderabad. He cleverly avoided any visits to American outsourcing multi national companies, a topic of hot debate and controversy back in the US.<sup>17</sup>

Under the historic nuclear agreement signed on March 2, 2006, India has agreed to classify 14 of its 22 nuclear facilities as civilian, and put these under the permanent supervision of the IAEA. This should, then end a 30-

year long moratorium on the sale of nuclear fuel and reactor components by the US to India. The export of nuclear material, reactors, and their major components from the US, would require a Section 123 amendment of the Atomic Energy Act. Technically, India is a non- nuclear weapon state and does not have the full-scope of safeguards. Under the terms of the Atomic Energy Act, Congress has to approve an agreement for cooperation and needs to pass a joint resolution of approval. The Administration, alternatively, may seek to amend certain portions of the Atomic Energy Act, in particular Sections 128 and 129, both of which includes non proliferation criteria.<sup>18</sup>

The nuclear deal, though, accords acceptance to the military and the security component of the Indian nuclear program, by the sole superpower and torchbearer of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, the US. The Indo-US deal also makes India's nuclear weapons program acceptable, legitimate and non-threatening to the existing nuclear order unlike those of Iraq, North Korea and Iran. The nuclear deal envisages an alliance, albeit informal, between the US and India deriving from a real convergence of mutual security interests. The nuclear deal also seeks to enhance India's nuclear security via nuclear arms control. By agreeing to separate its large civilian and small military nuclear programs, India has acknowledged its commitment to minimum nuclear deterrence, which provides for its nuclear security interests vis-à-vis

<sup>16</sup> Briefing to the American press by National Security Advisor Steve Hadley on March 2, 2006 in the White House

<sup>17</sup> Briefing To the American Press by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice on March 4, 2006 in the White House

<sup>18</sup> Ajey Lele "Nuclear Indulgence to India: Will US Congress Relent?" [www.ipcs.org](http://www.ipcs.org), Article no. 1975, 22 March 2006,

China and Pakistan. India has readily agreed to continue its voluntary moratorium on nuclear testing and agreed to participate in future negotiations on the FMCT. India has also committed to prevent the spread of nuclear technologies by strict export control laws, which are already in place.<sup>19</sup>

### **Space Launch Agreement in the Offing**

India and United States are also poised to take their strategic relationship a notch higher. They will soon sign a crucial space launch agreement to allow India to launch US-made satellites, not just from US, but from other countries that use American components in their satellites. The understanding will help the country's premier space body, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), boost its earnings. It will also help the once estranged democracies get into a tighter strategic partnership. Some last-minute refinements in the agreement, relating to the pre-launch treatment of US satellites on Indian rockets are being worked out. But, these are procedural issues which both sides expect to be sorted out at the next meeting of the space working group. India has already accepted two US payloads for the 'Chandrayaan' mission. Many such joint endeavours are now expected, and together with these, a closer exchange of strategic space technologies.<sup>20</sup>

### **Conclusion**

One of the major objectives of the United States in entering into the Indo-US nuclear cooperation

agreement is to bring about an early freezing of the Indian weapon-usable nuclear materials stock at the minimum possible level. India, in turn, obviously wants to retain all the accumulated inventory of such materials, as well as the facilities to produce the additional material we consider essential for a minimum credible deterrence, in compliance with IAEA safeguards. Obviously, each country wants to maneuver the separation plan to suit its specific objective. Despite the façade that the deal is progressing well, it is clear that most of the originally perceived differences between the two sides are very much present even now. It appears that the US side feels that certain facilities, especially reactors, which India has proposed to retain in the strategic group, really belong to the civilian list. In addition, it is clear that the US considers India's time schedule for bringing these facilities in phases into the civilian list as too stretched out, and that India should indeed place them under safeguards at a more rapid pace.

The nuclear deal, though, will improve India's global standing. India's deal with the US for transfer of nuclear technology will help it in a big way. As non-NPT states, or non-nuclear weapons states with nuclear weapons, India, Pakistan and Israel - a strange trio, indeed - have much to defend to the rest of the world. They have no choice but to stick together whenever questions of comprehensive safeguards come up. There was even an occasion when Pakistan changed its vote to join India and Israel. When the Arab world gangs up every year to call upon states to accept comprehensive safeguards, essentially to focus attention on Israel, it has to contend with Indian diplomatic skills as Israel hides behind us. These

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<sup>19</sup> Manish Dabhade "Indo-US Nuclear Deal: New Realism" [www.ipcs.org](http://www.ipcs.org), Article no. 1958, 7 March 2006,

<sup>20</sup> Editorial, "US join hands in space," *The Times of India*, 2 August 2005.

strange maneuvers could stop if the India-US nuclear deal is approved by the US Congress, and the Nuclear Suppliers Group, and comes to fruition. India will then cross over from the group of nuclear mavericks to join the designated nuclear weapon states in its new capacity as a responsible state with advanced nuclear technology.

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WORKING PAPER

**U.S.-India Initiative Series**  
*The United States and India 10 Years Out*

By Teresita C. Schaffer



**Center for a  
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## About the U.S.-India Initiative Series

This paper is one of a series commissioned in conjunction with a major Center for a New American Security (CNAS) study on the future of the U.S.-India relationship. The study, co-chaired by former Deputy Secretary of State Richard L. Armitage and former Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs R. Nicholas Burns, and directed by CNAS Senior Fellow Richard Fontaine, has produced a comprehensive blueprint for the next phase of the U.S.-India strategic relationship. The full text of the final report can be found at [www.cnas.org](http://www.cnas.org).

OCTOBER 2010

## **U.S.-India Initiative Series**

### *The United States and India 10 Years Out*

By Teresita C. Schaffer

#### About the Author

**Ambassador Teresita C. Schaffer** is director of the South Asia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.



**I**ndia and the United States have transformed their relationship in the past 20 years.

Looking ahead a decade or more, this trend is likely to continue. The two countries can expect strong economic ties and a lively security relationship, including increased defense trade and especially stronger cooperation in the Indian Ocean. Economic issues will remain important drivers of Indian foreign policy. Cooperation on the global scene will have ups and downs, but the two countries will gradually find more areas where they can work together. As India's international trade encompasses more sophisticated and knowledge-based products, India will pursue economic interests that do not necessarily dovetail with those of the developing countries as a group. India-Pakistan relations are likely to remain brittle. India will continue to see China as its major strategic challenge.

Over the next decade, India will become more comfortable with a higher international profile – but slowly, and with considerable nervousness about the risks involved in departing from its comfort zone focused on the nonaligned movement. The “wild cards” most likely to produce real discontinuities in U.S.-India ties relate to the domestic coherence and international behavior of Pakistan and China, to international conflict involving Iran and to changes in the global distribution of power over the next decade. In addition, externally driven changes in climate or technology could limit India's economic growth and in the process make India a much more inward-oriented country.

Looking behind this broad-brush projection, it is instructive to take apart the elements of continuity and change, and to see what lessons these hold for policymakers.

### **Growing Economies, Expanding Linkages**

India's economic growth after 1990 was one of the most important factors in transforming U.S.-India relations. This economic growth had two consequences, both of which are likely to continue through the next decade: It led to an increasingly large and vibrant U.S.-India economic relationship, and it put economic success – trade, investment and securing energy supplies – at the heart of India's foreign policy and strategic calculus.

Projections for India's economy over the next five years consistently foresee growth rates of upwards of 8 percent, possibly higher. Even if India's economic expansion falls somewhat short of these levels, one can expect economics to remain one of the drivers of U.S.-India relations, and a very positive one. In the next decade, trade will continue to grow as a share of India's economy. The United States will remain one of India's top three trading partners, and probably the largest when one includes services and information technology trade as well as goods. India's economic growth will make it an increasingly important partner for the United States, though its share of U.S. trade will not be as impressive (about 1.4 percent of U.S. trade in 2009; even dramatic growth will leave it well short of the top tier). The geography and composition of India's trade will be increasingly diverse. India has already begun implementing free-trade areas with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Korea, and will negotiate one with Japan. With each new trade opening, the next one will become slightly easier, and India will approach the next multilateral trade negotiation with more flexibility and a greater expectation that it can benefit from global trade liberalization. A free-trade agreement with the United States is conceivable toward the end of this period, but only if the U.S. economy picks up

enough to counteract the politics of getting such an agreement enacted by the U.S. Congress.

Investment flows will continue to increase, both into and out of India. As a result, Indian companies will become increasingly active participants in the U.S. economy. In particular, the close personal and corporate linkages that bind the leading information technology firms in both countries will continue. Trade and investment are private activities. They can be intensified through government policies that sustain India's own economic growth, but fundamentally they will carry on regardless of the ups and downs in government-to-government ties. They will also help stabilize the rest of the relationship.

### Security and the Indian Ocean

By the same token, India's growing recognition that its economy is not only a critical domestic priority but also a determinant of its national power will reinforce ties with the United States – not only in the economic sphere but also in the security area. One of the established pillars of U.S.-India ties is a common interest in Indian Ocean security. For India, this is critical not only for the safety of the immediate neighborhood but also for the security of its most important economic supply routes. This common concern will reinforce the importance of naval cooperation and more generally of security ties.

India and U.S. security perspectives on East Asia will remain closely aligned. Ten years hence, India will be more fully integrated into Asia than it is now. India's leadership will continue to see China as their primary strategic challenge. Its foreign policy will seek friendly engagement with China, and this will lead to instances where India draws closer to China on certain global issues (as happened, for example, at the climate change meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark). But India's leaders are acutely conscious that an assertive China will challenge India's security and economic interests. India will compensate through growing economic and political ties with Japan, Korea and the ASEAN

countries, which will also make it more of a player on the larger Asian scene. This approach has strong parallels with the way the United States looks at China. It will also, however, make India especially sensitive to any suggestion that the United States is giving preference to China in its approach to Asian security and institutions.

### India's Emerging Global Role: Opportunities – and Friction

India's policy with respect to global governance is not likely to change much. It will pay considerable deference to the United Nations – except when India's specific interests are engaged (e.g. Kashmir). India will be active in the G-20, especially on financial issues. It is likely to join the U.N. Security Council (UNSC) in a non-permanent seat in January 2011. After this term ends, it will continue to try to enhance its leadership role, including seeking a permanent UNSC seat. Each step up the leadership ladder will bring some level of anxiety about the price India will pay for offending its international friends by taking a stand on international issues. India will become more comfortable with this exposure, but for much if not all of the next decade, this ambivalence will exert a drag on India's willingness to work with the United States on the global stage.

A final area of continuity lies in India's foreign policy philosophy. The concept of "strategic autonomy" – the idea that India must not allow any other country excessive influence over its foreign policy, and that it seeks a global role balancing major power centers – will remain a matter of strong consensus among India's political and policy elites. Even those most committed to international economic integration and to partnership with the United States are also strongly attached to Indian exceptionalism. Examples of the latter include both broad policy issues (such as India's interests in Iran) and India's discomfort with defense sales provisions that the United States considers routine procedural matters (e.g. the question of end-use monitoring of military purchases). This means that there will continue to be a prickly quality to U.S.-India relations beyond the bilateral realm.

### What Could Change?

Four potential discontinuities in particular bear watching. They involve Pakistan and Afghanistan; U.S. or Israeli military action in Iran; a more assertive China; and perceptions that U.S. international standing is weakening significantly.

In principle, a breakthrough in India-Pakistan peace talks could provide a tremendously positive boost for U.S. relations with both countries. This is a long shot, however. The government in Pakistan is unlikely to be strong enough to sustain a real breakthrough in the next five years.

Somewhat more likely, and much more dangerous, is a security crisis in the subcontinent. This could result from either further erosion of Pakistan government authority or a more assertive Pakistani policy. It could also be a by-product of a messy U.S. departure from Afghanistan, something India would regard as a serious security problem. Any of these scenarios could include increased militant activity in Kashmir or violence elsewhere in India. Especially if India were convinced that the Pakistan army and Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) were behind a spike in militant activity, this would put the Indian government under strong pressure to retaliate and raise the risk of India-Pakistan war.

In such circumstances in the past, U.S. diplomacy has focused on crisis management. Each crisis is unique, however, so there is no reason to assume that the old crisis-management playbook can simply be dusted off. A crisis between India and Pakistan could all too easily become a crisis between the United States and both countries. Both countries will be looking for U.S. sympathy; both will be quick to claim that the United States is hypocritically ignoring their security concerns. If the United States is to have a significant influence on India's policy in a future crisis, it will need to make an investment now in working closely with India on terrorism issues, including those that involve people working from Pakistan against India.

Second, U.S. or Israeli military action against Iran's nuclear capacity could spark popular disturbances against the United States or problems for U.S. military access throughout the Persian Gulf and in Pakistan, and that explosion would echo in India. This could involve violent demonstrations by India's Muslim population and possibly wider Hindu-Muslim violence. Internationally, China and Russia would probably position themselves as supporters of the Muslim world. India would in all likelihood distance itself from the United States. Even if India is able to reduce its dependence on Persian Gulf oil (currently over half its oil imports), India would position itself closer to the Persian Gulf countries in an effort to mitigate the domestic political fallout. It would move closer to Russia and China in the process.

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*U.S. or Israeli military action against Iran's nuclear capacity could spark popular disturbances against the United States or problems for U.S. military access throughout the Persian Gulf and in Pakistan, and that explosion would echo in India.*

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Third, at this writing a more assertive China seems like a strong possibility. Since mid-2009, China has been challenging India on a number of fronts: reasserting its claim to the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh, contesting development loans for that state in the Asian Development Bank, insisting on

stamping visas for Indian residents of Kashmir on a blank sheet of paper instead of in their passports, announcing that it is moving ahead with civilian nuclear supply for Pakistan and ramping up significantly its military cooperation with Sri Lanka. China's statement that it plans to participate in anti-piracy operations in the Indian Ocean could represent the beginning of a long-term Chinese presence there, a major security worry for India.

How a more direct challenge from China affects U.S.-India relations depends on how confident India feels that the United States will back it up. The "China connection" has always been an unspoken foundation of U.S.-India relations. Both countries want to engage China and neither wants to treat it as an enemy, but both see it as a potentially dangerous strategic competitor. If New Delhi sees Washington as responding to China's forward thrusts with quiet firmness, Chinese assertiveness could result in closer and more candid strategic coordination between India and the United States. On the other hand, if the United States is seen as enhancing China's international stature or giving it special standing in the management of world problems – the Indian shorthand for this is "creating a G-2" – India will work hard to put more substance into its relations with Japan and Russia, to create other balancing relationships in Asia.

A fourth discontinuity has to do with India's perceptions of U.S. power. India's security leaders built up their relations with the United States at the height of the "unipolar moment." India never liked the idea of unipolarity, but was willing to work with the only remaining superpower to propel India into the global role it coveted.

Some loss of relative U.S. power is virtually inevitable, given China's and India's rapid economic growth and the expansion in both countries' international role. Indeed, the United States is already managing this process with some grace, for example by taking the lead in reallocating voting shares in

the international financial institutions (benefiting India and especially China). In Indian policy circles, U.S. economic strength and innovative capacity are viewed as durable sources of U.S. international power, and the prevailing expectation is that these will keep the U.S. in a powerful position for at least the next decade.

However, a major U.S. international reverse would raise serious questions in India about the durability and value of its American connection. Examples might include defeat in Afghanistan or, perhaps even more sharply, a circumstance in which China appeared to be gaining a dominant role in Asia at the expense of the United States. Under these circumstances, India would probably preserve the bilateral relationship with the United States – the economic ties, the Indian Ocean security connection – while working hard to create a partnership with China and Russia on the Asian scene and in global institutions. This would be a tough formula to implement. Chinese and Russian interests are not very well aligned, and China's especially do not conform well with India's. However, in a circumstance of perceived U.S. decline, India's propensity to try to balance global power centers would almost certainly drive policy.

These discontinuities grow out of concerns that have been part of India's foreign policy from its earliest years: the determination not to be undercut by Pakistan-based security threats and the drive to balance powerful countries on the global and Asian scene. Other potential changes might arise from exogenous causes. One example might be the long-term effects of climate change, such as extreme drought or flooding that could give rise to major changes in food production or to massive flows of people across India's eastern borders. Another externally generated "wild card" might be disruptive technology development, perhaps in the electronic or energy field, that significantly undercuts India's advantages in the most dynamic areas of its growth. Either of these contingencies could

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*Since about 1990, India has both opened to the world and engaged more deeply with the United States. Continuation of these trends will make India's domestic preoccupations and its philosophical commitment to strategic autonomy easier to reconcile with a strong relationship with the United States.*

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seriously hamper India's economic growth, leading the government to turn away from international engagement with the United States in its preoccupation with domestic problems.

Three themes stand out in this discussion of the strategic surprises U.S. policymakers could face in India in the next decade. The first is the importance of how the United States now deals with India's concerns about Pakistan, and about Pakistan-based terrorism. This is an area where India and the United States are very likely to have serious policy differences. This is the time for the United States to make clear that it takes India's security concerns seriously – despite the painful issues that confront both countries in Pakistan and Afghanistan. The second theme is China's quest for a dominant role in Asia. U.S. policy has begun to treat India as a player on the Asia-wide scene.

This will be increasingly important – but at times also increasingly difficult, especially given India's ambivalence about how much of a region-wide character it wants to impart to its partnership with the United States.

The third theme is the tension between India's international and domestic focus. This runs deep in India. As already noted, there is almost universal agreement on the importance of “strategic autonomy” in India's foreign policy, and Indians and Americans share a belief in their own exceptionalism. Since about 1990, India has both opened to the world and engaged more deeply with the United States. Continuation of these trends will make India's domestic preoccupations and its philosophical commitment to strategic autonomy easier to reconcile with a strong relationship with the United States. The externally driven contingencies addressed here would push India in the other direction – toward a more inward-looking policy, which would almost inevitably reduce its interaction with the United States. This would not bring the relationship back to the level of the 1950s and 1960s: The economic development that has taken place in the interim practically rules that out. But it would put the two countries on a different and slower trajectory.



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## Council on Foreign Relations

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Report Part Title: U.S.-India Relations: A Reformulation for the Future

Report Title: Working With a Rising India

Report Subtitle: A Joint Venture for the New Century

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# U.S.-India Relations: A Reformulation for the Future

Democratic and Republican U.S. administrations from President George H.W. Bush forward have sought to improve relations with India. Washington has a strong interest in better relations with New Delhi for many reasons—the pursuit of mutual goals, complex global issues, the economic power India is becoming, and the strategic convergence on Asia. Beyond the government-to-government level, business and trade ties have grown substantially over the past fifteen years, arguably the single-biggest bilateral change and one uniquely important to strengthening ties across the board. The growing Indian American community, now numbering around three million, has kept India visible on the political and business agenda in the United States and has risen to ever-higher levels of accomplishment at the top of virtually every field.

But India is not yet top-of-mind for most Americans. According to a 2014 Chicago Council on Global Affairs public opinion survey, on a scale of one to one hundred, with the highest number a “warm, favorable feeling,” Americans viewed India as a fifty-three.<sup>22</sup> That compares favorably with China (forty-four), but unfavorably with close allies like Canada (seventy), the United Kingdom (seventy-four), or Germany (sixty-five)—illustrating the problem that although India might be important for the future of the United States, Americans are not yet thinking about India with as much affection as they are about more established relationships. Further, a 2015 Chicago Council on Global Affairs public opinion survey revealed that just 34 percent of Americans felt “a great deal” or “a fair amount” of confidence in India’s ability to “deal responsibly with world problems,” although a 63 percent majority wanted to see India play a larger role in the world.<sup>23</sup>

In addition, people-to-people exchange between the United States and India is extremely asymmetric, with migration flows moving from India to the United States for work or education and much less in the other direction. This tracks closely with recent Pew Research Center

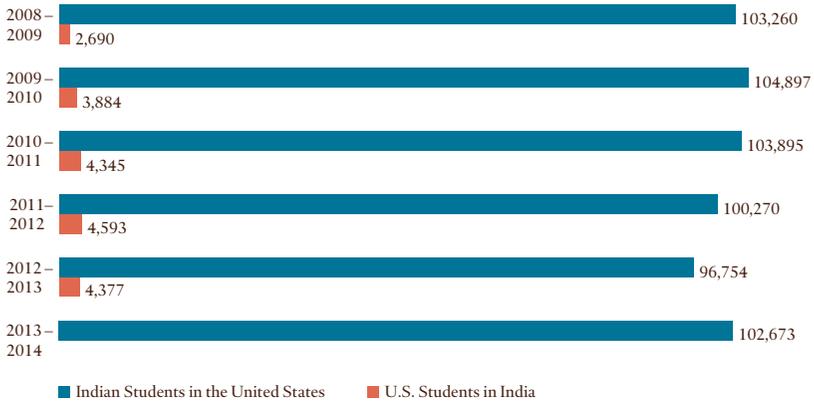
public opinion findings: the United States enjoys a 70 percent favorability rating in India.<sup>24</sup> Annual surveys of foreign students in the United States consistently show large numbers of Indian citizens coming to the United States for higher education, hovering around one hundred thousand (figure 6).

Heading in the other direction, American students simply do not venture in large numbers to study in India (figures 6 and 7). In part, the asymmetry in these flows of students lies in the fact that India's population is nearly four times larger than that of the United States. But Americans in general have not seen India as a top ten destination for learning or economic opportunity. (Note that tiny Costa Rica attracts nearly twice the number of American students as India.) This will likely change over time, but it is worth noting as a marker of the relative place India currently occupies in the American imagination compared with other countries.

In the business world, attention to India has blossomed from almost nothing to a healthy interest. India's economic growth created opportunities within India, for Indian citizens and Indian companies, and for American corporations and investors as well. In the process, India's growth created new American constituents invested in India's success. The U.S.-India Business Council, for example, grew from an anemic sixty-some members in the late 1990s to more than two hundred by 2008, and around 330 today. U.S.-India bilateral trade has crossed \$100 billion in goods and services—a fivefold increase from \$19 billion in 2000. But to put it in a global context, that \$100 billion is only around one-sixth of U.S.-China trade. This contrast, though potentially disheartening, points to the opportunity ahead.

During and immediately after World War II, the United States was India's major defense infrastructure builder because the British were unable to address the problem. But suspicion and a chimerical desire for self-reliance in defense production led then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to sever the American connection. Until the early twenty-first century, U.S.-India strategic and defense ties were marked by mutual hostility and suspicion. Over the past fifteen years, ties have gone from limited interaction and no significant technology-procurement relationship to one of extensive exercises, around \$13 billion in defense equipment sales, regular civil-military consultation, and an ambitious vision for coproduction and codevelopment of advanced defense equipment.

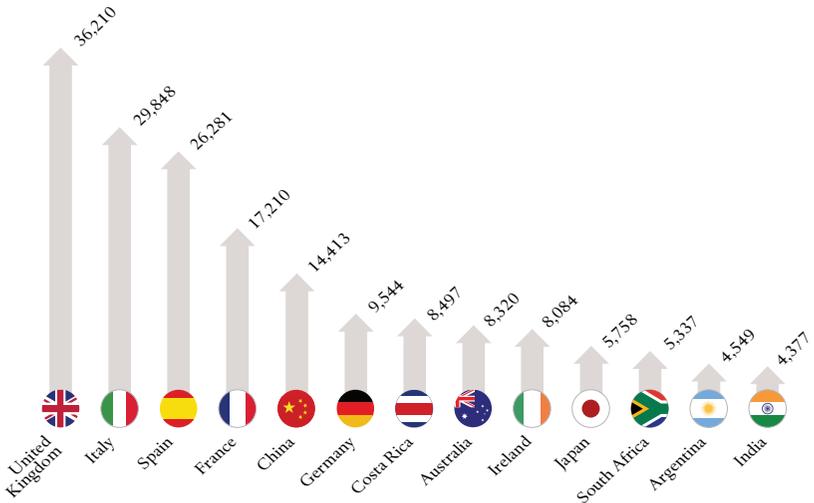
FIGURE 6. STUDY ABROAD FIGURES FOR U.S. STUDENTS IN INDIA AND INDIAN STUDENTS IN THE UNITED STATES



Note: Comparable data for U.S. students studying in India is not yet available for 2013–2014.

Source: Institute of International Education (2008–2014), “Top 25 Places of Origin of International Students, 2008/09–2013/14,” Open Doors Report on International Education Exchange.

FIGURE 7. LEADING DESTINATIONS OF U.S. STUDY ABROAD STUDENTS, 2012–2013



Source: Institute of International Education, 2014, “Top 25 Destinations of U.S. Study Abroad Students, 2011/12–2012/13,” Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange.

New consultations with India on homeland security preparedness began in 2011, enhancing the counterterrorism consultation already in place; now, consultations on cybersecurity and strategic space matters occur as well.

The U.S.-India relationship today covers a far wider range of areas than at any time in the past. U.S. Ambassador to India Richard R. Verma noted in early June that the U.S. embassy in New Delhi is currently tracking seventy-seven initiatives resulting from the January 2015 Obama-Modi summit.<sup>25</sup> Bilateral initiatives centered on technology collaboration in particular, such as clean energy, health research, and civilian space collaboration, have advanced quickly and without problems.

Despite such progress, India is not yet among the closest U.S. partners for immediate consultation on global crises, a role still occupied by members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and U.S. allies in Asia, such as Japan and Australia. To put it simply, India is not a frontline global partner, not among the top five countries Washington policy officials would call immediately to coordinate on any urgent global issue. India and the United States have not yet collaborated together on any crisis in the United Nations, for example, and on some of the most challenging questions in the Middle East and with Russia, India has been silent. Moreover, U.S. and Indian interests are not fully aligned on these tough questions.

In addition, difficulties in U.S.-India relations during 2013 and 2014 offer the lesson that despite advances, ties between the two countries have not yet attained a solid footing to ward off crises. From a U.S. perspective, it is not entirely clear how strong a relationship India's policymakers would like to see with the United States—at least in the terms Americans are accustomed to when thinking about close strategic partners. Washington, for example, looks to its closest partners for endorsement—or at least not overt rejection—of American policy positions. This expectation has resulted in disappointment in Washington when Indian officials appear to embrace positions that Americans see as impossible to understand, such as during Russia's invasion of Ukraine. In India, on the other hand, a strong sense of policy independence creates a context of *à la cart*ism for New Delhi's relationships.

## *A CHANGING WORLD, NEW OPPORTUNITIES*

As noted, clear bipartisan consensus exists in the United States about the importance and desirability of a deeper relationship with India, which the Task Force believes offers one of the most significant opportunities to advance a combination of U.S. interests in the coming decades. But India's size, its class-of-its-own sense of self, and its fierce independence all make for a bilateral relationship—both today and tomorrow—that little resembles American ties with other countries. India does not sign on to formal alliances and does not seek one with the United States. To capture this opportunity for increased cooperation, while acknowledging the inherent limits to partnership with India, the Task Force recommends that U.S. policymakers explicitly emphasize a joint-venture model for U.S.-India relations, focused on a slate of shared pursuits on which interests converge—and with clear mechanisms for coordinating and managing known and expected disagreements. The strategic convergence between Washington and New Delhi, including on the Asia Pacific, should not be construed as directed at any other country, and is not an alliance against China. Just as joint ventures in business bring together parties to advance a shared objective without subordinating their many other interests, so should India and the United States pursue their shared ambitions without assuming that each will see eye to eye with the other on every matter. Reframing ties in this way will better explain how convergence on the need for open sea lanes, for example, may not presume agreement on climate change, and how convergence on the Asia Pacific may not presuppose like-mindedness on the Middle East. Such a conceptual recalibration, concentrating on a series of specific collaborations rather than a diffuse appeal to bonhomie that creates disappointments of its own, allows more opportunity for success and should help insulate against disillusionment. Reframing ties with this flexible model will also create conceptual space for inevitable disagreements without calling into question the basis of the partnership or unintentionally “infecting” other issues. It will also facilitate better management of disagreements because the expectation will be that divergences inherently exist and, therefore, must be managed.

A direct note about alliances is in order. The United States has built strong and durable alliances with North American, European, and

Asian partners, and tends to see alliances as the highest, most desirable form of partnership. This is not the direction that U.S.-India relations are headed; India has clearly indicated it does not seek the obligations that come with alliances, viewing that as an unacceptable constraint on its freedom of action. That said, the world is not static. Should international politics shift further—if the structural realignment under way should progress further—and should a future India, a “leading power,” elect to seek a more alliance-like relationship with the United States, the Task Force would endorse that ambition. The limits to the relationship at present are placed by India and its sensitivity to the inherent inequality any alliance with a superpower presupposes. Thus, our recommendations proceed from that reality.

To shift the bilateral relationship toward a framework focused on joint ventures, Washington should, as a matter of practice, do the following:

- Invest more time and attention in developing the habits of cooperation that support stronger ties. Consultations should go beyond the institutionalized and highly scripted formal dialogues and expand to include informal, routinized, pick-up-the-phone consultation that American officials regularly employ with the closest U.S. partners. Senior officials, at the principals and deputies levels in Washington, should make a regular and frequent habit of speaking with Indian counterparts—not on the eve of an emergency vote, or to arm-twist on a matter previously decided in consultation with other partners—but as a matter of sustained, weekly or biweekly international consultation toward policy formulation.
- Consider designating, with the imprimatur of the White House, a specific senior official (subcabinet-level or higher) for whole-of-government authority on India policy, someone charged with responsibility for advancing long-term U.S. interests with India, no matter what myriad other short-term crises elsewhere compete for policy-makers’ time and attention. In previous administrations, the deputy secretary of state or the undersecretary for political affairs has played this role.
- Build protective insulation around the inevitable disagreements that will continue to arise by creating predictability: flagging problems early on; providing routinized high-level channels of redress and discussion; and allowing for better coordination and management

of those differences, including how to discuss problems publicly (or not), in shared or coordinated language.

Similarly, to make this joint-venture model work, New Delhi will need to be prepared to

- commit internal resources to policy formulation in advance—not at the last minute—to better facilitate active, detailed consultation on issues in depth and with multiple U.S. officials involved; and to
- adopt a more flexible approach to diplomatic protocol and hierarchy, given that the rank structure of Indian ministries does not correspond equally with the much larger and more differentiated U.S. systems.

Although a joint-venture model will not prevent disagreements, it should, at the very least, better protect successful initiatives from negativity arising from policy disagreements elsewhere, because neither side will expect support from the other on every matter. The focus instead becomes furthering the successes of defined joint ventures while working to minimize, or at least contain, the inevitable disagreements.

The next question becomes how to prioritize among the ever-expanding areas of collaboration to accomplish more together on matters of greatest significance.

Module Detail	
Subject Name	Political Science
Paper Name	Foreign Policy of India
Module Name/Title	4. India-America Relations
Module Id	4
Pre-requisites	
Objectives	This module will apprise the students about the nature of India-America relations. The various phases of their relations have been discussed in detail in this module. Important questions and suggested readings have also been listed in the end of the module.
Keywords	India-America Relations, Misperceptions and Contradictions, Phase of Firm Dissent, Sino-Indian War, American Concern, Nuclear Disarmament, War Against Terrorism, 123 Agreement.
Structure of Module / Syllabus of a module (Define Topic / Sub-topic of module)	

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## Module – 4

### India-America Relations

#### Structure of the Module

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1. Introduction
2. Objectives
3. Various Stages of Relations
  - 3.1. Beginning with Misperceptions and Contradictions
  - 3.2. Cooperation and Firm Dissent
  - 3.3. Changing Equations and Contradictions
  - 3.4. Change and Cooperation
  - 3.5. Cooperation and Sharp Differences
  - 3.6. Close Cooperation and Multi-faced Interaction
4. Conclusion
5. Important Questions
6. Suggested Readings

#### 1. Introduction

India and United State of America are the two powerhouses of democracy but with a huge contrary strategic and economic power status in world politics. But no one can deny the importance of close relationship between the two in this changed post-cold war period. Economic and technological issues have moved to the forefront of international relations. All these developments consequently brought about a change in the forces shaping world politics and international relationship. How both these countries can remain mock spectator in their relationships in this fast changing scenario? The two countries have much in common historically and socially. When India was celebrating its independence after Second World War, Unites State of America was emerging as Super power with military and economic capabilities. A close relationship was expected between the two being the largest democracies of world. But their relationship started with rather slight note, and hence facing ups and down since then. Various factors such as India's perception towards Western world or American 'small nation big power' syndrome is the main reason behind it. In Cold War period, due to ideological reason, these ties could not grow up in desired way. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, bilateral ties had become important after the incident of 9/11. After the atomic deal of 2007, this relationship of India and USA is showing positive gesture. Both the countries are collaborating

politically, economically and strategically since then. The changed regime in India under Narendra Modi is also showing great maturity in dealing with Obama's administration on variety of issues.

## **2. Objectives**

Through this module an effort will be made to apprise the students about the true nature of India-America relationship. It is a well known fact that a country's foreign policy does not evolve all of a sudden rather it is a product of numerous factors and forces. Bilateral ties between India and United State of America are no exception to this phenomenon. Therefore it becomes imperative to understand and evaluate the historical perspective about the origin of their relationship. Besides, this is also important to know about the issues of convergences and divergences in these years. By doing so, one can analyze the real nature of India-USA ties. This will not only prove beneficial for the students, but for foreign policy makers and strategists also.

## **3. Various Stages of Relations**

India and United State of America have much in common being the democratic country. Diverse demographic composition, commonality in form of legacies of British rule and national movement for independent and democratic beliefs have provided the platform for common understanding. But it could not happen, and remained to be unexplored for most of the time. But in recent times, this relationship has shown some flexibility and common understanding. In order to make an objective analysis of all these initiatives, it is better to start with brief acknowledgement of their relationship from the early past to till date. For the sake of clarity we can divide India-USA relations into the following phases:- (i) Beginning with Misperception and Contradictions (1947-1954); (ii) Cooperation and Firm Dissent (1955-1971); (iii) Changing Equations and Contradictions (1972-1979); (iv) Change and Cooperation (1980-1991); (v) Cooperation and Sharp Differences (1992-1999) and ((vi) Close Cooperation and Multi-faced Interaction (2000 onwards)

### **3.1 Beginning with Misperception and Contradictions**

After the Second World War, United State of America had emerged as the Super Power in World Politics. Its economic and military power surpassed all the

competitors at that time. The U.S. policy makers had started to calculate their strategic interests around the World. Whereas India as a newly Independent state, was giving utmost attention to nation-building on the one hand, and busy to tackle the issues of colonialism and imperialism on the other. The basic objectives i.e., national security; economic development and world order proved to be the core issues around which India's foreign policy revolved. These initiatives had created some type of misperceptions in the mind of US policy makers. They devalued India's strength at this initial period. India- US relations suffered a great deal of set-backs in this background. Various issues have created the contradictions between India-US relationships.

In the decade of fifty, Cold War had started to influence the international politics. US had established bilateral and multi-lateral security and economic arrangements with the countries of Western Europe and Asia. The US policy makers' one point common programme was based on the containment of communist ideology in the world. It created a situation of rivalry or competition with communist ideology based Soviet Union. The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and Marshall Plan, in fact, the two instruments were created to minimise Soviet influence in this area. On the other hand India openly affirmed its faith in the policy of Non-Alignment, and started to think about pan-Asiatic society. Two Asian conferences were held with the direct Indian initiatives. It created the serious strategic concern in mind of US foreign policy makers'. The consolidation of Soviet power combined with this pan-Asiatic tendency had created a number of doubts between the two countries and hampered their initial relations.

India's policy towards China was also responsible for bad beginning. America had not granted recognition to Mao's leadership after China's revolution, instead it stood strongly in favour of Cheng-Kai-Shake's government. India had not only recognised 'People's Republic of China', but also supported its stake as a member of UNO. It created some strain in the mind of US leadership and hampered their bilateral ties.

The Korean conflict also played an important role in hampering the India-US relations. India did not take part in UN military action against North Korea. The former remained neutral in this offence and demanded regional settlement of this problem. Indian leadership wanted a permanent solution of this problem; they were

of the view that it could not be attained without the active participation of Soviet Union and China. All these approaches annoyed US strategic think tank.

America's Pakistan policy had always proved to be a main hurdle in consolidation of relations between former and India from the beginning. Military alliance and aid to Pakistan rattled the relationship between the two. The matter of Kashmir, disarmament, Japan and Hind-China were the key issues that influenced the beginning of India-USA relationship.

### **3.2. Cooperation and Firm Dissent**

This second period of India and US ties brought the cooperation and voices of dissent simultaneously. But one can say that leaderships of both India and US had shown some maturity and understanding on various issues at this time. The first phase of this period reflected some type of common understanding in their relations. But the next phase was totally different in all respects. Hence, it is better to understand it in this way.

India-America relations started to improve after 1955. The main reasons behind this transformation were herewith:

Soviet leadership under Khrushchev had adopted the policy of 'Peaceful Co-existence by which they wanted to spread their relationship towards the third world countries. Soviet Union had provided huge money as economic aid to these countries. U.S.A. also wanted these countries in its side in this regional grouping. The latter also opened its treasures to mitigate Soviet influence. That's why; America took behavioral turn in policy making towards India.

China's offensive act against India in 1962 had changed strategic scenario in South Asia. Any type of vacuum in this region could not suit to American foreign policy. The latter could not leave this area to another regional power to attain stronghold. It became a necessity to US to re-look its policy towards India. USA had not only provided economic aid but also heavy weapons during and after that war.

Top leadership of India and USA were having very cordial relations at that time. Personal likings and warm relations of Nehru and President Kennedy had also played the key role in the betterment of US-India relations. In Sino-Indian conflict, America had provided Military assistant without any delay. Besides, President

Kennedy also managed the Pakistan leadership to withdraw army from Indian boarder and shift them to China's boarder.

This relationship had brought about a drastic change in South Asian Politics, but it was for a short period of time. After the assassination of Kennedy, his successor President Jonson, took India with cold shoulder. The next phase of India-America relationship was full of contradictions and distrust.

The Indo-Pak war of 1965, once again gave a new direction to emerging relationship between India and USA. The 'Tashkent Treaty' put latter in a situation of mere spectator. US leadership felt a situation of isolation in strategically important area of South Asia. India's role in the freedom of Bangladesh added fuel in fire in ongoing strategic scenario.

In this phase, China has started to emerge as a regional power. It created a win-win situation for US policy makers'. They saw China as a new ally in ongoing cold-war against Soviet Union. Further, stronger relations with China had consolidated US position in Asian Continent strategically. This emerging scenario had no space for India. With the active role of Pakistan, America was improving its relations with China in this phase. It created some type of strategic triangle among them. Besides, another triangular grouping was also emerging in the shape of Peking-Tokyo-Washington collaboration. Both these triangles had direct bearing on India's position in regional spectrum.

The Indian Ocean had emerged as a new battle field between two Super Powers of Cold War Period. U.S.A. established its military base camp at Diego Garcia and also positioned its naval sub-marine 'Polaris A-3' here. The Soviet Union also entered in this strategic field. India responded firmly and opposed this type of hostile activities at every International platform. This triggered rupture in bilateral India-US relations. India and USA had also adopted diverse ways on the issue of Non-proliferation-treaty. India denied signing it due to its non-universal nature and wants a behavioural solution of its reservations regarding this treaty. Regional politics had also influenced the bilateral ties between India and America. The former was always remained the great advocate of Arab countries, on the other side the latter firmly stood behind Israel. In Southeast Asia also USA remained

involved in Vietnam War for a long time; India took clear stance of integration of both North and South Vietnam. US strategist took it seriously.

India and USSR had signed the historical friendship and cooperation treaty in 1971. It brought the former very close to communist World. It created suspicion in the mind of US policy makers. The issue of Bangladesh has also been a cause of concern between the two. Pakistani' government and army had ignored the local people grievances in East Pakistan. They used force to mitigate these demand. A huge quantity of people crossed the border to take asylum in India. It created a political and economic burden for India. America alleged India's role behind this problem. When the war broke out, USA deployed naval Warheads in the Bay of Bengal. In UNO also, America took anti-India stance and want to use its force against India. But due to Soviet Veto power, any type of UN sanction or offensive activities could not took place. All these issues created a vacuum in bilateral relations.

### **3.3. Changing Equations and Contradictions**

Various activities were going on international platform during this period. India had emerged an important power in South Asia after 'Shimla Agreement' and Indo-Soviet treaty. USA transformed its policy towards China and improved its ties. President Nixon declared American policy towards Asia in which a better relationship with all main stake holders in this continent was the key feature. All these changing Parameters had direct ramification on India and American bilateral ties.

The latter provide financial aid by enacting P.L.-480 rule of economic policy to India. Foreign secretary Henry Kissinger visited India and a joint commission was formed for better cooperation in the field of economic, trade, science, technological, educational and cultural spheres. But the picture was not as bright as it looks like; there were also the many issues of contrary approach. President Nixon's views regarding India in 'Shanghai Declaration' had triggered a serious dissent in Indian point of view. Besides, Military aid to Pakistan, the issue of Diego Garcia and increasing intervention in Indian ocean, India's Atomic Nuclear test of 'Pokhran' and in retaliation American denial of fuel export for 'Tarapur

Thermal Power' were the key impediments in the way of better bilateral ties in both countries.

### **3.4. Change and Cooperation**

Fourth period of India-US ties witnessed showed some bright picture. They created the proper environment for concrete dialogue, formalised the institution of interaction and settled of secondary issues. Direct investment and joint industrial hub, transfer of technology in both defence production and industrial development were the other highlights of this changed face of bilateral India-US ties.

Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan had changed the strategic spectrum in this entire region. US policy had also changed its gear and tried to improve its relations with other adjoining countries. Although their utmost attention was towards China and Pakistan, yet they couldn't ignore India for strategic balance. On the other side India also wanted to show some distance from USSR and ultimately desired some space in political arena. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi felt some type of isolation from Soviet leadership in previous non-congress government; hence she tried to settle India's position as non-alignment. She was not only wanted to change its position in third world countries but also in western world. That's why she changed her approach and made some distance from USSR.

Economic needs also influenced this change. India started economic modernisation in the early decade of eighties. It required a huge financial aids, technology and trade initiatives. All these conditions made India to open channel towards US. The sudden emergence of Rajiv Gandhi in Indian Politics was the important change in this direction. He belonged to post independent generation and had scientific temper. To bring India into 21<sup>st</sup> century, he supported the use of latest technology and modernisation in every aspect of life. He was a firm supporter of better ties with USA. This outlook of Indian leaderships opened the way of close bilateral ties with USA.

The Emergence of Gorbachev had changed the international spectrum. His doctrine of 'Glasnost and Perestroika' paved the way to the end of cold war. The changed relations of two Super Powers and recall of Soviet army from Afghanistan had decreased the cold war tension in political sphere. It was the direct bearing on international politics. India got a sight of relief as it could follow more objective

based policy. Sudden change in international politics also compelled USA to change its stance towards India. US foreign policy had been revolving around the containment of the spread of communist ideology during Second World War period. Soviet intervention in Afghanistan made situation more critical in its perception. USA was eager to contain this ideology in Asia in general and South Asia in particular. That's why; it tried hard to bring out India from Soviet camp. China also came to forefront with its economic and strategic capabilities in world's politics. It made the US policy makers to rethink in South Asian politics. They tried to bring both India and Pakistan in same basket to balance China's emergence.

India's leadership started the economic and political transformation at domestic as well as external forefront with the decade of eighty. It was impossible for country like America to ignore the prospects that India was providing. Various documents notified by White house concluded these arguments. Both the countries formulated comprehensive policies to explore these possibilities. Top leadership of both countries visited each other. From Indian side, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, and Defence Minister KC Pant were the main dignitaries to visit there and Vice president George Bush and two foreign secretaries were on the reciprocal visitors list. Besides, military level cooperation, transfer of technology, export of F-18 fighter planes and balance of trade in favour of India reflects the Indian emergence in US foreign policy.

Some irritants were also there working as hurdle; the American policy towards Kashmir, supply of warheads to Pakistan, Bhopal gas tragedy, militancy in Punjab, the issue related to intellectual property rights and Gulf war were the main issues where a contrary approach prevailed.

### **3.5. Cooperation and Sharp Differences**

This phase of Indo-US ties was influenced by changing international dynamics. With the sudden demise of USSR and end of cold war period, economic issues became more important than political one. Globalisation has made the traditional issues and their means irrelevant. All the countries have transformed their outlook at foreign policy front. India also had restructured its policy in this changed scenario in which there was only one superpower. India and U.S.A. have come

closer in this post cold war period due to variety of reasons. Changed international milieu, and the victory of Democratic Party in US presidential elections, opening of Indian economy and need of technology and FDI and Multi-National Companies' pressure were the main deterrents to decide the future course of action in bilateral ties.

President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Narshima Rao were busy in economic transformation at domestic levels. These internal dynamics had prepared the platform for more comprehensive and close ties between India and United State of America. But this prospective scenario could not be utilised by the both countries. Sharp differences came to forefront in their bilateral ties. Political leaderships showed some type of immaturity in handling the arising situation.

The issue of Kashmir has always been remaining a core impediment in Indo-US relations. US leadership had shown improper gesture time to time. President Clinton's comparison of Kashmir with Bosania and Somalia had exaggerated the suspicion between the two countries. The remarks of Deputy Secretary of State John Mallet and Raphel about Kashmir made the situation more critical for Indian point of view. This was a great setback for continuity in bilateral ties. Nuclear Disarmament had also proved an issue of contention in these days between India and American Administration. Indian denial to sign C.T.B.T. and N.P.T. for indefinite time had raised the eyebrows of US policy makers' towards India. US role on the terrorism was also not acceptable to India, as the former adopted the dual parameters to negate this problem. US policy regarding cross boarder terrorism in Kashmir and Bombay-bomb-blast had shown indifferent attitude, while on same line it declared Libya as a terrorist country. This scenario gave a dent on cordial ties.

India conducted five atomic tests in Phokran on 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of May1998. It made the situation more critical at international level. US administration imposed sections against India. The main affected areas were; foreign aid, defence related export, space industry, atomic energy, missile programme, computer, research and development, ban on the collaboration with Indian companies, financial aid from US bank and export of atomic fuel. This situation created havoc in bilateral relations of India and America.

### **3.6 Close Cooperation and Multi-faced Interaction**

The beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century had brought a laurel in Indo-US relationship. Fresh beginning in bilateral ties was started with the Bill Clinton's visit to India in March, 2000. President Bill Clinton's visit to India in March 2000, witnessed the changed attitude and approach of America towards India. The document released by both countries on this occasion, indicated the approaches adopted in '21<sup>st</sup> century' to enhance bilateral benefits. USA called India as a natural ally that relies on common values of 'Peace, Cooperation, Freedom and Democracy'. In the reciprocal visit of Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpaie in September 2000, both the countries had speeded up the ongoing process of improved ties. Both the leaders conveyed the desire of better understanding between the two largest democracies.

The 9/11 terrorist attack on World Trade Centre had shocked entire world. The only super power of the world felt wounded of this complicated problem first time. This made America to rethink about its strategy towards terrorism. It consolidated the India's position regarding terrorism. India already declared that no one can differentiate terrorism on the bases of cast, religion or nationality. It should be tackled at every step. India was among the first countries to declare its full support in the fight against terrorism. This positive gesture went on with reciprocal visits. From Indian side foreign Ministr Jaswant Singh, NSA Berjash Mishra, Defense Minister Georg Fernadis, Home Minister Lal Krishan Aadwani and Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpaie visited immediately after this terrorist misdeed. From the American side foreign Secretary Collin Pawael (three times), Defense secretary Rames Field and Deputy foreign secretary Armitex visited India in this dire situation.

The question arises what are the compulsions of US administration to take back track so early in the shadow of 'Pokhran-II and economic sanctions imposed by USA. The main factors of this U-turn are; the danger of terrorist organisation Al-Qaeda, Nuclearisation of South Asia, India's emergence as Computer Software power and failure of economic sanctions against India. That's why US policy makers had changed their stance and tried to look for better understanding. The results of this change tell the whole story.

In this period of bilateral ties both sides shown common understanding on various issues. The 9/11 terrorist attack on world trade centre had shocked entire world. It brought all the victim countries together in the fight against international terrorism. Only super power of the world felt the wounded of this complicated problem first time. This made America to rethink about its strategy towards terrorism. India was among the first countries to declare its full support in the fight against terrorism. In Afghanistan war against 'Taliban' India had provided all tactical and intelligence information to U.S.A.

Peaceful uses of atomic energy deal between India and United State of America had uplifted the bilateral ties at very high. During the visit of President Bush to India in the March 2006, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh released joint statement on this issue. And finally on 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2007, both the countries finalized the famous '123' agreement. This treaty had not only strengthened the Indo-US ties, but also made India very comfortable to mitigate emerging energy demands. During Obama regime, the bilateral relation had shown some stagnation in the beginning. But with the visit of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in 2009, the relationship come back on right track and shown continuity. In his second term, President Obama visited India twice and tried to balance the relations in right direction. In the Modi Government, India- US ties had shown greater improvements of all the time. Prime Minister, Narendra Modi's visit to US in 2014 proved fruitful in bilateral ties. Reciprocal visit of President Barak Obama on Republic Day ceremony got a great success in improving ongoing relations. Various deals and treaties were signed in the economic, scientific, defense and atomic energy sectors.

But this does not mean that everything is going in desired way. In International politics, national interests has the prime importance, rest the things are secondary. Some issues have presented a situation of contradictions; it is up to leadership to mitigate these in proper way.

The New irritants came in to the forefront were outsourcing policy of Obama administration, Afghan policy, importance given to Pakistan and China and human rights and issues of environment. These are the emerging issues that demand the more comprehensive handling from both the countries.

#### **4. Conclusion**

India's foreign policy towards United State of America has been the by-product of specific historical background in which contribution of various leaderships, diplomats, military officers and Indian Diaspora have been outstanding. This historical backdrop to a great extent has influenced the growth of various principles and theories of India's foreign policy towards USA. That is why in the post-independence era three basic objectives i.e., national security; economic development and world order proved to be the core issues around which India's foreign policy revolved. After the analysis of history of bilateral ties between India and United State of America, one can draw the conclusion that the main problem is related with the role of India at World stage. US policy makers had never provided due space as India desired. American 'small nation big power' syndrome is the main reason behind it. In this globalized world, one thing is certain that no one can overlooked India due to its population, big market, software power and its commitment towards democratic beliefs. India-US ties are the need of the hour for a better society in the world.



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