



AN UNNATURAL PARTNERSHIP? THE FUTURE OF U.S.-INDIA STRATEGIC COOPERATION

Sumit Ganguly
M. Chris Mason



The United States Army War College

The United States Army War College educates and develops leaders for service at the strategic level while advancing knowledge in the global application of Landpower.

The purpose of the United States Army War College is to produce graduates who are skilled critical thinkers and complex problem solvers. Concurrently, it is our duty to the U.S. Army to also act as a “think factory” for commanders and civilian leaders at the strategic level worldwide and routinely engage in discourse and debate concerning the role of ground forces in achieving national security objectives.



The Strategic Studies Institute publishes national security and strategic research and analysis to influence policy debate and bridge the gap between military and academia.



The Center for Strategic Leadership contributes to the education of world class senior leaders, develops expert knowledge, and provides solutions to strategic Army issues affecting the national security community.



The Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute provides subject matter expertise, technical review, and writing expertise to agencies that develop stability operations concepts and doctrines.

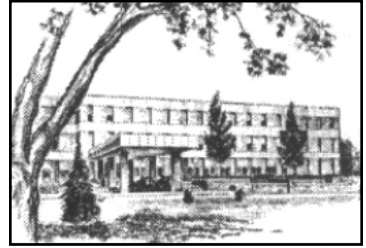


The School of Strategic Landpower develops strategic leaders by providing a strong foundation of wisdom grounded in mastery of the profession of arms, and by serving as a crucible for educating future leaders in the analysis, evaluation, and refinement of professional expertise in war, strategy, operations, national security, resource management, and responsible command.



The U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center acquires, conserves, and exhibits historical materials for use to support the U.S. Army, educate an international audience, and honor Soldiers—past and present.

STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE



The Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) is part of the U.S. Army War College and is the strategic-level study agent for issues related to national security and military strategy with emphasis on geostrategic analysis.

The mission of SSI is to use independent analysis to conduct strategic studies that develop policy recommendations on:

- Strategy, planning, and policy for joint and combined employment of military forces;
- Regional strategic appraisals;
- The nature of land warfare;
- Matters affecting the Army's future;
- The concepts, philosophy, and theory of strategy; and,
- Other issues of importance to the leadership of the Army.

Studies produced by civilian and military analysts concern topics having strategic implications for the Army, the Department of Defense, and the larger national security community.

In addition to its studies, SSI publishes special reports on topics of special or immediate interest. These include edited proceedings of conferences and topically oriented roundtables, expanded trip reports, and quick-reaction responses to senior Army leaders.

The Institute provides a valuable analytical capability within the Army to address strategic and other issues in support of Army participation in national security policy formulation.

**Strategic Studies Institute
and
U.S. Army War College Press**

**AN UNNATURAL PARTNERSHIP?
THE FUTURE OF U.S.-INDIA STRATEGIC
COOPERATION**

**Sumit Ganguly
M. Chris Mason**

May 2019

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Department of the Army, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. Government. Authors of Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) and U.S. Army War College (USAWC) Press publications enjoy full academic freedom, provided they do not disclose classified information, jeopardize operations security, or misrepresent official U.S. policy. Such academic freedom empowers them to offer new and sometimes controversial perspectives in the interest of furthering debate on key issues. This report is cleared for public release; distribution is unlimited.

This publication is subject to Title 17, United States Code, Sections 101 and 105. It is in the public domain and may not be copyrighted.

Comments pertaining to this report are invited and should be forwarded to: Director, Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, U.S. Army War College, 47 Ashburn Drive, Carlisle, PA 17013-5238.

All Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) and U.S. Army War College (USAWC) Press publications may be downloaded free of charge from the SSI website. Hard copies of certain reports may also be obtained through the U.S. Government Bookstore's website at <https://bookstore.gpo.gov>. SSI publications may be quoted or reprinted in part or in full with permission and appropriate credit given to the U.S. Army Strategic Studies Institute and U.S. Army War College Press, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA. Contact SSI by visiting our website at the following address: <https://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/>.

The Strategic Studies Institute (SSI) is the U.S. Army's institute for geostrategic and national research and analysis. SSI supports the U.S. Army War College (USAWC) curricula, provides direct analysis for Army and Department of Defense leadership, and serves as a bridge to the wider strategic community. SSI studies are published by the USAWC Press and distributed to key strategic leaders in the Army and Department of Defense, the military educational system, Congress, the media, other think tanks and defense institutes, and major colleges and universities.

ISBN 1-58487-1410

FOREWORD

During much of the Cold War, the United States and India were at odds. India, almost immediately after obtaining its independence from the United Kingdom, adopted a foreign policy based upon nonalignment. This policy, at least in principle, was designed to give the country autonomy in the realm of foreign affairs. U.S. policymakers, focused on the containment of the Soviet Union, looked askance at India's unwillingness to adopt an unequivocal stance against global communism during the Cold War. At one point, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles characterized nonalignment as "immoral."

U.S.-India relations took an adverse turn quite early in the Cold War following the U.S. decision in 1954 to forge a military alliance with India's nettlesome neighbor, Pakistan. Ostensibly, Pakistan entered this pact because of its staunch commitment to the American anti-communist enterprise. However, for all practical purposes, Pakistan pursued this accord to obtain American military assistance to balance Indian capabilities.

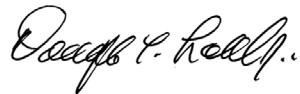
Apart from a fleeting moment of military cooperation in the wake of the Sino-Indian border war of 1962, the United States and India found little reason to pursue any viable military contacts. By the early 1970s, as the United States initiated diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China (PRC), India drifted into the Soviet strategic orbit. In an attempt to counter the military prowess of the PRC, India increasingly came to depend on the Soviet Union for security assistance. The situation was hardly propitious for fostering any form of military link with the United States.

It would not be until the collapse of the Soviet Union and the accompanying end to the Cold War that any form of military cooperation with the United States would prove possible. Yet, India's pursuit of a nuclear weapons program outside the scope of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty placed it at odds with the United States and sharply limited the prospects for defense cooperation. Ironically, the diplomatic aftermath of the Indian nuclear tests significantly contributed to an Indo-U.S. rapprochement. Specifically, it resulted in an extended diplomatic dialogue and, eventually, a mutual understanding of each other's security concerns. Subsequently, the United States made a dramatic concession to India in the form of the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement of 2008. Under the terms of the agreement, the United States lifted a raft of sanctions that it had imposed on India as a consequence of its nuclear tests in 1998.

Since that time, the two sides have made fitful progress on defense cooperation. In considerable part, starting especially from the time of the second Obama administration, the growth and increasing assertiveness of Chinese military power has driven the topic of U.S.-India defense cooperation. Despite a shared concern, however, a number of impediments continue to hobble this strategic partnership. At a global level, India remains uncertain about the extent to which it should align itself with the United States as it seeks a balance of power with the PRC. At a regional level, India remains wary about the historical legacy of the U.S.-Pakistan relationship and frets about its possible future. Finally, at a national level, segments of India's attentive public harbor doubts about the reliability of the United States as a strategic partner. Furthermore, differing organizational, military, and bureaucratic

structures continue to impede the growth of this relationship.

This monograph attempts to outline the history of strategic cooperation, its current state, its existing hurdles, and the possible pathways for enhancing the U.S.-India relationship.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Douglas C. Lovelace, Jr." in a cursive script.

DOUGLAS C. LOVELACE, JR.
Director
Strategic Studies Institute and
U.S. Army War College Press

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

SUMIT GANGULY is a distinguished professor of political science and holds the Rabindranath Tagore Chair in Indian cultures and civilizations at Indiana University, Bloomington, IN. Professor Ganguly previously taught at James Madison College of Michigan State University; Hunter College and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York; and the University of Texas. He has been a fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington, DC; a visiting fellow at the Center for International Security and Cooperation and at the Center on Democracy, Development and the Rule of Law at Stanford University in Stanford, CA; a guest scholar at the Center for Cooperative Monitoring in Albuquerque, NM; and a visiting scholar at the German Institute for International and Area Studies in Hamburg, Germany. He was also the Asia Chair at Sciences Po in Paris, France; the Ngee Ann Chair in international politics at the Rajaratnam School for International Studies at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore; a distinguished visiting fellow at the Institute for Defense Studies and Analysis in New Delhi, India; and a visiting professor at the Buffett Institute, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL. In the 2017-2018 academic year, he was a visiting professor at the Strategic Studies Institute of the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle, PA. He spent the summer of 2018 as an Alexander von Humboldt Fellow at the University of Heidelberg, Germany. Professor Ganguly is a senior fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute, a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He is an associate editor of *International Security* and

serves on the editorial boards of several publications: *Asian Security Current History*, *Journal of Democracy*, *Foreign Policy Analysis*, *The India Review*, *The Nonproliferation Review*, *Pacific Affairs*, and *Security Studies*. In the spring of 2018, he launched a new, biannual, refereed, open-access journal, *Indian Politics and Policy*, for the Policy Studies Organization. He is also an associate editor of *Security Studies*. A specialist on the contemporary politics of South Asia, he has authored, co-authored, edited, or co-edited 20 books on the region. His most recent books are: *Oxford India Short Introductions: Indian Foreign Policy* (Oxford University Press, 2015); *Deadly Impasse: Indo-Pakistani Relations at the Dawn of a New Century* (Cambridge University Press, 2016 with William R. Thompson); *Ascending India and Its State Capacity* (Yale University Press, 2017); and, the co-editor (with Nicolas Blarel and Manjeet Pardesi) of *The Oxford Handbook of India's National Security* (Oxford University Press, 2018). He is currently working on a book that focuses on the origins and evolution of India's defense policy for Columbia University Press.

M. CHRIS MASON joined the faculty at the Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, as a professor of national security affairs in June 2014. He has worked in and on South Asia and Afghanistan for the past 20 years. He retired from the Foreign Service in 2005, and worked as the South Asia desk officer for the Marine Corps' Center for Advanced Operational Culture and Language in Quantico, VA. He has deployed to and traveled across Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, and Nepal frequently since December 2001, and served as the political officer on the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Paktika in 2005. From 1981 to 1986, he served as a regular U.S. Navy officer on active duty. Dr. Mason

holds a bachelor's degree with honors from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA; a master's degree in military studies from the Marine Corps University in Quantico, VA; and a Ph.D. in South Asian history from The George Washington University in Washington, DC.

SUMMARY

Across Democratic and Republican administrations, the United States has confronted the rise and growing assertiveness of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in Asia. Faced with the PRC's role in Asia and beyond, the United States needs a viable strategic partner to balance the power of the PRC. Given India's own misgivings about the PRC, it should serve as a natural partner. However, historical, cultural, and structural factors have inhibited the process of strategic cooperation. This monograph identifies the principal hurdles to cooperation and seeks to identify possible pathways toward a possible U.S.-India partnership.

AN UNNATURAL PARTNERSHIP? THE FUTURE OF U.S.-INDIA STRATEGIC COOPERATION

INTRODUCTION

To many American observers assessing the political, military, and economic status quo in South Asia today, India stands out as an obvious security partner for the United States. From a U.S. perspective, India's geographical position bordering China and Pakistan and astride one of the busiest and most critical maritime shipping routes on earth, its democratic political values, its title as the world's largest democracy, and our self-evidently shared concerns about India's neighbors all seem to make increased security cooperation a natural step for both countries. America's great military power and strategic reach, the Washington calculus goes, combined with India's geostrategic position and vast economic potential appear to be the two sides of a solid, strategic marriage of convenience. After all, both countries depend largely on maritime trade for economic growth; both share concerns about Chinese intentions and hegemonic, long-term, global investments in strategic, raw materials; and both are deeply troubled by an unstable state exporter of terrorism with nuclear weapons on India's contentious western borders. See figure 1.

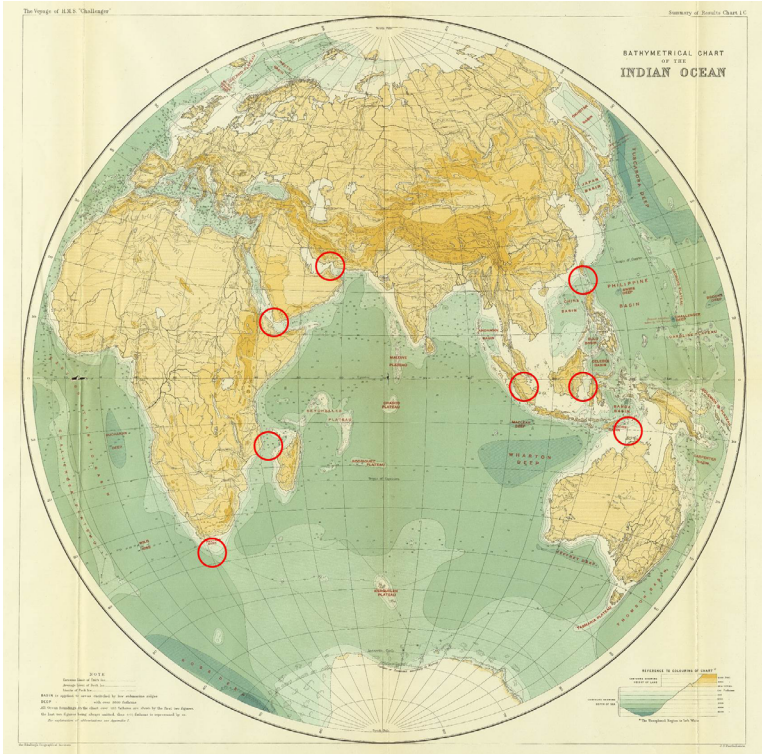


Figure 1. Critical Strategic Choke Points in the Indian Ocean Region¹

Indeed, viewed from the U.S. cultural perspective of a country bordered by vast oceans and benign neighbors, India appears to be almost completely surrounded by potential enemies, and thus in need of powerful friends. China's carefully planned and growing assertiveness in the region, in particular, suggests that New Delhi would welcome a strategic ally, or at least a partner, to counterbalance China's rising economic and military power and its seemingly boundless appetite for strategic resources. Pakistan's unstable political foundations, its forward-deployed

nuclear weapons, and its support for international terrorist organizations like Lashkar-i-Taiba make it a clear and present danger to both countries. Indeed, for many American political and military leaders, this perception of a confluence of shared interests has become almost an article of faith. Why would not India welcome a greater strategic partnership with the United States?

However, it is not nearly so simple, nor as obvious, from an Indian perspective. There are many issues and concerns in India weighing against such a strategic partnership, at least as the United States generally conceives one, and there are some complex obstacles in the path toward greater cooperation. Questions about trust, reliability, and motivations are deeply rooted, and perceptions that the United States eventually comes to dominate and even bully its strategic partners are real in New Delhi and beyond. National pride, the persistent legacy of nonalignment, and concerns about the second- and third-order consequences of such an augmented alliance generate wariness among India's political class. Moreover, the optics are deteriorating; the percentage of Indians who view the United States favorably has dropped from 70 percent in 2015 to 49 percent today, and the percentage who say they have confidence in the U.S. President has fallen from 74 percent in 2015 to 40 percent today, creating a strong popular headwind against deeper ties.²

Some of the brief global, strategic assessments made in Washington are certainly true at an objective level. Pakistan is, of course, a country of great concern to both India and the United States. China's growing power does make political and military leaders in both New Delhi and Washington uneasy about its global intentions. China's island-building project in the

South China Sea, in particular, is seen as a vexatious *fait accompli* by New Delhi and Washington. However, the paradigms through which these concerns are viewed from both capitals are quite different, and the approaches to responding to the challenges that these concerns present do not necessarily have any coincident space. Some common political assessments mentioned above, such as the U.S. assumption that because it is surrounded by potential adversaries, India would naturally seek strategic allies, are less pertinent. The heritage of nonalignment still runs deep in India, beyond a circle of strategists, academics, and military planners. In any event, the political realities underpinning these concerns in New Delhi are far more complicated than Washington's assumptions suggest. While it is likely that both capitals do agree that some sort of increased strategic cooperation, at least in some fields, would benefit both countries, such an elevated partnership would likely take a form quite different from most traditional American defense partnerships. Nevertheless, for a broad spectrum of reasons, India has reservations about any deeper strategic partnership with the United States, and concerns about the nature of such cooperation, which may ultimately prove insurmountable.

The purpose of this monograph is to outline these differing perceptions, assess the assumptions and expectations of both countries, examine the obstacles in the path of greater cooperation, and suggest some confidence-building steps which both sides could take to move the bilateral security relationship forward. First, the authors summarize briefly the current state of play of the bilateral relationship within the context of the past full year. We then lay out what each side would want from the other in a strategic partnership,

both in terms of material cooperation as well as the desired limits and boundaries of the relationship. We then discuss the impediments to further cooperation in some detail, with the intention of assisting analysts, academics, and policymakers on both sides to understand each other better as well as exploring several Indian concerns and reservations. This monograph is not intended to be a comprehensive analysis of New Delhi's strategic position, but, rather, a primer for U.S. military personnel preparing to engage with India in particular on the reservations their interlocutors may hold. In official contacts, the language of diplomacy and the politeness of Indian Government officials tend to mask the more difficult realities behind cordial greetings and formulaic memoranda. This monograph provides an assessment of those areas of possible cooperation that have the greatest potential for an enhanced, strategic partnership in the future. We will then offer tactical-level recommendations for confidence-building and relatively easy steps for reducing some of the impediments which are now obstructing a meaningful deepening of the strategic relationship, followed by brief conclusions and final observations.

THE CURRENT STATE OF THE PARTNERSHIP

Under President Barack Obama

The Obama administration inherited a mixed hand from the George W. Bush administration, which dramatically improved relations with India. At the same time, however, the Bush administration was completely taken in by ardent professions to cooperate in the war on terrorism by Pakistan, which from 2001 to 2008 successfully played its favorite "double

game” with a deeply credulous White House. The deceit began in late November 2001, when Pakistan accepted the offer from President Bush for a face-saving exodus for the dozens of Pakistani military officers and Inter-Services Intelligence agents who were advising the Taliban trapped in the Kunduz pocket in northern Afghanistan. This exodus involved not only Pakistani personnel but also hundreds of senior Taliban and al-Qaeda figures in blacked-out Pakistani cargo aircraft. The exodus was later dubbed “Operation EVIL AIRLIFT” by appalled American personnel on the hills outside the city.³ Despite a steadily increasing body of evidence that Pakistan was gleefully double-crossing a naïve American administration—receiving billions of dollars in U.S. military aid and actively supporting and arming the Taliban and other terrorist groups—the Bush administration was never one to be distracted from its beliefs by facts.⁴ Working-level military and intelligence personnel repeatedly saw their reports of hard proof of Pakistani support to terrorists pushed back or downplayed by upper levels of the Bush administration. Monograph author M. Chris Mason saw this repeated multiple times while at the U.S. Department of State prior to 2006. U.S. personnel on the ground in Pakistan cynically dubbed the ubiquitous Pakistani ploy of “arresting” a senior Taliban official 24 hours before the arrival of a high-level U.S. visit to Islamabad, only to let him go as soon as the official had flown home, Pakistan’s “catch and release program.”⁵

The Bush administration was not only completely taken in by Pakistan’s body of lies, but it also embedded dozens of senior- and mid-level U.S. political appointees into the policy apparatus at the Department of State and elsewhere who accepted Pakistan

as a loyal ally “hook, line, and sinker.”⁶ Colin Powell, George W. Bush’s first Secretary of State, was misled to favor Pakistan over India.⁷ There were plenty of mid-level pro-Pakistan bureaucrats in important positions already, like Robin Raphel, who worked for Cassidy & Associates, a lobbyist for Pakistan, before returning to the Department of State. Raphel had her security clearance revoked during a Federal investigation into evidence of espionage for Pakistan. She was cleared and left government service, but it would be naïve to think Pakistan’s influence on the U.S. bureaucracy ended there.⁸ Generations of U.S. military personnel have been showered with warm and gracious “hospitality” by their Pakistani military counterparts and treated like beloved comrades in arms, something India almost assiduously avoids. Pakistan also actively targets inexperienced U.S. diplomatic and aid personnel on their first tours with a slick propaganda campaign.⁹

Despite the penetration of so many Pakistani apologists into the system, however, in 2006, the Bush administration did achieve one game-changing, even historic, policy success: the so-called “123 Agreement” (The United States-India Nuclear Cooperation Approval and Non-proliferation Enhancement Act). The act, which formally became law in the waning days of the Bush administration, effectively normalized and recognized India as a nuclear power. The signing of the accord on October 10, 2008, by India’s then-External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee and then-U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice capped a 3-year effort to put U.S.-Indian relations on a solid foundation. President George W. Bush became enormously popular in India as a result. Prime Minister

Singh said at the time, “the people of India deeply love you, President Bush.”¹⁰

Nevertheless, despite this popularity, in January 2009, the Obama administration inherited a vast South Asia policy apparatus, which, like a giant supertanker on the high seas, would be slow to turn, even if there were a captain at the helm rapidly spinning the wheel. In fact, pro-Pakistan personnel in various parts of the U.S. Department of State and Department of Defense during the Obama administration collectively had a similar effect on U.S. Government efforts to improve ties and transfer technology to India as the anti-American bureaucrats in various parts of the Indian Government have had on slowing down enhanced security from the Indian side: they could significantly slow it and partially dilute it, but not stop it. Nor was Obama the type of leader to spin the wheel dramatically toward India in his first years in office.

However, the Obama administration was far less prone to the politicization of intelligence than that of his predecessor, and as evidence of Pakistan’s duplicity piled up, the realization grew in the U.S. national policy apparatus that Pakistan was paying lip service to cooperation in the War on Terror while actively promoting and exporting it.¹¹ The Osama bin Laden raid which assassinated the al-Qaeda leader in 2011 was a kind of watershed in U.S. policy in South Asia—a de facto de-hyphenating of India-Pakistan policy—and it marked a tectonic shift away from a Pakistan whose emperor now had few clothes toward an India whose importance against a rising Pakistan-China axis came into sharper focus. After the Osama bin Laden raid in Abbottabad, the scales fell from most American bureaucratic eyes, and the pivot toward India noticeably accelerated. Pakistan’s gamble in hosting

and protecting bin Laden had backfired. Obama now moved more assertively to “spin the wheel of the supertanker,” to turn the ship of state toward India, and to advance U.S.-India strategic cooperation. The Obama administration first reached out to India on important environmental issues, and then named India a major defense partner. India agreed to buy six nuclear reactors from the United States in 2017. The capstone of U.S.-India rapprochement was Obama’s attendance as chief guest at India’s Republic Day celebrations in January 2015, the first U.S. President ever so honored.¹² *The New York Times* described the enhanced relationship as “one of Mr. Obama’s most important foreign policy achievements.”¹³

Equally significant for the U.S.-India strategic relationship, the United States turned away from Pakistan in seemingly irreversible ways. The Pakistan lobby with the U.S. Government was discredited and marginalized. Obama, still hopeful that Pakistan would come to its senses and stop sponsoring terrorists as a matter of state policy, gradually reduced military aid to Pakistan in the last 4 years of his administration by two-thirds, while pressing diplomatically for a change in Pakistani behavior.¹⁴ The stage was set for a new U.S. President.

Uncertainties Under President Donald Trump

The Trump administration inherited a strong hand from the Obama administration as far as the security partnership with India was concerned. Despite continuing disagreements about how best to deal with Pakistan’s ongoing involvement with a variety of terrorist groups, the two sides made significant progress on other fronts. India contracted to purchase a range

of military equipment from the United States. After myriad delays, it signed the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement. Many of these developments came to fruition thanks to the efforts of then-Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter. Though not publicized, it can be inferred that Carter devoted a significant amount of time and effort to courting India because of the many uncertainties associated with the dramatic rise of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in Asia. India, in turn, responded well to these overtures because of its own misgivings about the PRC's interests and goals in South Asia and beyond.

The Trump administration, to its credit, has already sent then-Secretary of Defense James Mattis to India. Even though his visit did not yield any substantive results, it was important from a symbolic standpoint.¹⁵ However, Mattis did urge India to step up its role in Afghanistan with a view toward stabilizing the country. The most important development has involved India's trying neighbor, Pakistan. In January 2018, following a tweet from Trump, the U.S. Government suspended a further US\$2 billion in assistance to Pakistan.¹⁶ The rationale for the U.S. cutoff of remaining aid was straightforward: Pakistan has failed, despite multiple entreaties on the part of the United States, to end its support for terror, especially in Afghanistan.

Pakistan's use of terrorist proxies and the U.S. inability or unwillingness to impose sufficient costs on the country to effect significant change has long been an Indian complaint. Therefore, the Trump administration's decision to take a harder line has been received with much approval in New Delhi. Previous administrations privately—and, on the rare occasion, publicly—upbraided Pakistan. However, in the end, each side chose not to proceed far down this path.

Of course, skeptics in New Delhi continue to express doubts about the U.S. willingness to sustain this new approach as Pakistan withdraws various forms of ongoing cooperation.¹⁷

The Trump administration appears mostly inclined to continue to build upon the ongoing security partnership with India. India, for its part, also appears to be willing to invest modestly in the partnership, and is especially keen on acquiring a range of weapon technologies from the United States. One key uncertainty, however, continues to dog the relationship, which could have significant consequences for its evolution. This involves the potential sale of the complete production line of the U.S. F-16 fighter to India. This transfer of technology could conceivably address India's acute need for a medium multi-role combat aircraft—a matter that, despite multiple rounds of discussions with potential suppliers, remains unresolved. As part of its effort to boost defense sales, the Trump administration would obviously be in favor of India purchasing the entire production line. However, as with all major Indian defense acquisitions, this too has become a fraught issue. A number of Indian armchair strategists have vigorously opposed the possible acquisition of the fighter on the grounds that the United States may withhold critical upgrade technologies, that Pakistan possesses an earlier version of the F-16, and that it is dated and obsolete technology.¹⁸ These objections are likely to become more strident should the Indian Ministry of Defense express further interest in the matter. However, even before that stage arrives, the Trump administration still faces the sloth-like and dilatory procedures that dog India's weapons acquisition process. The U.S.-India strategic partnership would receive a significant boost should India, despite

various objections from members of its defense policy establishment, choose to acquire the F-16 production line. However, the prospects of this outcome remain murky.

One other matter could complicate the U.S.-India strategic partnership. This involves India's recently announced policy of "Make in India" – one that is at odds with the Trump administration's focus on boosting domestic manufacturing.¹⁹ Many view this emphasis on enhancing India's indigenous manufacturing capacity as a throwback to an earlier era in Indian economic policymaking, one that failed to contribute much to the country's economic growth and well-being. How the Trump administration deals with India on this issue could shape, in considerable measure, the future of the strategic partnership.

These hurdles notwithstanding, it is nevertheless unlikely that there will be significant backsliding in the relationship via negative statements. The Trump administration has few illusions about the PRC's rise and how it may impinge on U.S. strategic interests. Simultaneously, India is in no position to cope with the threat from the PRC on its own. Consequently, this common concern alone is likely to ensure that the strategic partnership does not "wither on the vine."

Indeed, an agreement reached in the fall of 2018 demonstrated that the momentum in U.S.-India relations has not stalled. Specifically, after much deliberation, India signed the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement with the United States. This accord is intended to facilitate military interoperability and enable the sharing of operational intelligence. Under its aegis, India has also started discussions with the United States to acquire 22 armed Sea Guardian drones.²⁰

Current State of Political Play in India

During the tenure of the two United Progressive Alliance (UPA) regimes (2004-2009 and 2009-2014), substantial progress was made in U.S.-India relations. The most significant of these, of course, was the signing of the U.S.-India civilian nuclear agreement of 2008. Unfortunately, the UPA regime was unable to pass suitable, enabling legislation that would allow American firms involved in the nuclear industry to invest in India without facing substantial liabilities in the event of a nuclear accident. Consequently, while at the political-diplomatic level, an important irritant in the relationship was effectively removed, and the potential concomitant commercial benefits that might have accrued to the United States, unfortunately, remained unrealized. Not surprisingly, this has proven to be a significant disappointment to the United States.

The other important development that marked the tenure of the UPA regime was the forging of the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative of 2012. Though expressly not a treaty, the initiative was designed to facilitate trade in defense technology and reduce hurdles in the field of weapon technology transfers. Several projects are already underway while others are in the pipeline.

In considerable part, the U.S.-India security relationship did not progress more significantly because of the unease of Indian Minister of Defense A. K. Antony. Antony, whose constituency was in the southern state of Kerala, had serious misgivings about an overly close security relationship with the United States. Indeed, it is remarkable that even reasonable progress was made during his tenure in office.

The current political context is quite different under the National Democratic Alliance regime of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The remaining impediments to improving the relationship are mostly institutional and are not amenable to dramatic changes. On the other hand, India now has a regime that is markedly different for at least two compelling reasons. First, it does not carry the ideological baggage which the Congress-led UPA regimes simply could not shed. Many within the Congress leadership harbored misgivings about the United States based upon historical grievances and slights. Modi could have taken umbrage over the visa that was denied to him in 2005 (because of his possible role in a program that took place in Gujarat in 2002). However, he has obviously chosen to ignore that slight. More to the point, as a regional politician, he is not sandbagged with the weight of past differences which characterized U.S.-India relations at the national level.

Second, Modi and his principal advisers have a worldview that is quite different from that of his predecessors. They have brought into office a more pragmatic approach to international politics that recognizes the importance of material power. This approach has deep roots in the ideology and beliefs of the Bharatiya Janata Party.²¹ This outlook has led Modi to adopt tougher stances toward India's two long-standing adversaries, Pakistan and the PRC. India's more assertive stance toward China can dovetail with a long-term U.S. concern about the rise and aggressiveness of the PRC in Asia.

India is fast becoming a major importer of U.S. military equipment. Despite Modi's professed commitment to a "Make in India" policy, given the state of the Indian defense industry, in all likelihood, it will

continue to rely on the United States as a major supplier for its weapons acquisitions. Obviously, there still remains a need to rely on Russia for some of India's weaponry, not to mention the existence of various constituencies within the Indian security establishment which favor Russia.

This stems from path dependence. The Soviet Union, during much of the Cold War, was India's principal defense supplier. Consequently, a disproportionate segment of India's military hardware remains of Soviet/Russian origin. Given this background, it has proven difficult for the Indian military to wean itself off of its reliance on Russian weaponry. Furthermore, within the defense establishment, there is still a persistent belief that the Russians constitute a more reliable supplier than the United States.

These issues notwithstanding, it is important to underscore that as of 2014, the United States surpassed Russia as India's principal weapons supplier.²² Modi's stated policy of "Make in India" need not bring an end to the arms transfer relationship. Instead, under the aegis of the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative, the two countries can move forward with an actual process of technology transfer. Indeed, in the wake of Mattis's visit to India in September 2017, the possibility of India acquiring the technology to build the F-16, and perhaps the F-18 as well, are under discussion.²³ Of course, given India's legendary glacial weapons acquisition process—one that Modi has not been able to streamline since taking office—it is unclear when a decision might be made on these weapons systems.

Overall, as a result of this constellation of factors, matters are far more propitious than in the past for advancing the U.S.-India security partnership. As long as the National Democratic Alliance regime remains in

office, barring some unforeseen set of circumstances, there is reason to believe that the strategic partnership will continue to head in a positive direction.

WHAT THE UNITED STATES WANTS FROM INDIA

The area of the security partnership that the United States would most like to strengthen – the cooperation and interoperability of conventional military forces – is one of the security sectors which, for a number of reasons, holds the least promise for significant progress. Currently, military-to-military cooperation is planned by a bilateral military cooperation group, and each of the three primary services for both countries (Army, Navy, and Air Force) has an executive steering group. The executive steering group now meets annually to discuss joint training exercises and other forms of military-to-military cooperation. Of the three services, by far the most training exercises have been conducted by the two navies, as these occur out at sea and far from the public eye.

Ground force exercises have been and continue to be, by political necessity, quite small (company level), and the exercises held in India are conducted in remote, rural areas. Although attitudes may be changing slowly, the Indian public is not ready to countenance any significant U.S. military presence in India, even for short training exercises. Furthermore, much of the exercise and training activities that occur revolve around humanitarian relief and disaster readiness drills rather than combat operations. The two air forces have also conducted training exercises, but the primary sticking point with air force cooperation is that the Indian Air Force operates primarily Russian

combat aircraft. While the U.S. Air Force would certainly welcome the opportunity to fly head-to-head in mock engagements with Russian-made aircraft, India cannot reveal and compromise the full capabilities of their aircraft without potentially angering and alienating their Russian suppliers. As a result, in practical terms, the joint Air Force exercises are largely a “getting-to-know-you” and goodwill exercise for the pilots of both countries.

These modest joint training exercises are unlikely to be expanded in scope any time soon because of a larger underlying dichotomy between U.S. and Indian military orientations. The primary obstacle to significantly enhancing military-to-military cooperation lies in the incompatibility of the purposes and missions of the two countries’ armed forces. It could be fairly said that they are almost diametrically opposed: India’s military is designed almost exclusively for the internal defense of India and its borders. The U.S. military, on the other hand, is designed entirely for the projection of military power outside the United States. The strategic mission of India’s military is defensive. Of course, it can take the offensive at the operational and tactical levels of war, but it is not designed or equipped for the projection of power abroad. Although there have been some developments in this regard, which will be discussed later, the Indian armed forces have nearly no power projection capability outside their immediate self-defense needs. The conventional U.S. military is oriented toward operating overseas in support of U.S. foreign policy. While the U.S. Army has strategic mobility issues of its own in the Pacific, it nevertheless has a mission set which requires it. Thus, in discussions of military-to-military cooperation, Indian

strategists often rhetorically ask U.S. visitors, “On what would we cooperate?”

India has been the largest overall contributor to United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions since its independence from Great Britain. However, although these forces have faced (and continue to face) considerable danger and many Indian peacekeepers have been killed on these deployments, they are tasked strictly as observers and security providers, and assiduously avoid combat in keeping with their instructions. It appears for the foreseeable future that India will move slowly and cautiously in any effort to acquire a capability to operate outside of India, much less exercise it, for domestic, political reasons.

The possible exception to this “go-slow” approach to strengthening India’s ability to influence events well beyond its borders may be the Indian Navy. India’s new aircraft carrier, the *INS Vikrant*, initially planned to commence sea trials in 2013, is now scheduled to begin trials in 2019, 10 years after her keel was laid down. She is primarily designed to launch and recover the Russian MiG29K aircraft. The first Arihant-class nuclear powered ballistic missile submarine, the *INS Arihant*, was commissioned in 2016. The second submarine in the class, the *INS Arighat*, was launched in November 2017 and is expected to be commissioned at the end of 2019. Both were developed under the U.S.-sponsored Advanced Technology Vessel program at the cost of US\$2.9 billion, a very significant example of U.S.-India security cooperation in its own right. These three vessels may represent a concerted, long-range effort by the Indian Government to demonstrate a credible nuclear deterrent and develop a regional naval force with which to be reckoned. Beyond this, however, India’s amphibious

capability remains very modest, with no counterpart to the U.S. Marine Corps. India's experience with projecting military power abroad is also very limited and quite dated. Operations in Sri Lanka beginning in 1987 (Operations PAWAN, VARAAT, TRISHUL, and CHECKMATE) are widely viewed as negative actions within Indian circles and as failures that should not be repeated.²⁴ On the other hand, a commando raid onto Male Island in the Maldives Islands (Operation CACTUS) in 1988 was successful in eliminating coup plotters against the government from the People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam. However, few, if any, personnel remain on active duty who participated in these operations. A cross-border raid into Myanmar dubbed a "counterinsurgency operation" in "hot pursuit" took place in June 2015. Little is known about this incursion; however, the target was apparently one or more guerrilla base camps just inside Myanmar territory. Ajai Sahni of the Institute of Conflict Management described it as a minor operation.²⁵ In both cases, the number of forces involved was small, and both involved only special operations forces for a short-duration, raid-type mission.

"Counterinsurgency," seemingly an area with potential for increased military-to-military training and development, is a term that American planners have learned to use cautiously. For domestic, political reasons, the Indian Government is sensitive about the use of the terms "insurgency" and "counterinsurgency" with respect to the several internal, anti-government guerrilla movements active inside India. In any case, the Indian military generally does not believe that counterinsurgency is an area of potential cooperation with the U.S. Army. Indian officers, in general, believe the conflicts inside India are very

specific in nature to the culture and society of India, and that lessons learned from counterinsurgency operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, for example, are not applicable to India's guerrilla movements. The Indian Government consistently portrays these armed groups as "terrorists," "bandits," and "malcontents," and deliberately downplays their significance—again, for domestic, political reasons. The Indian domestic security apparatus and the Indian Army feel that they have the situation well in hand, and representatives of both elements can be sensitive if the subject is raised in an open discussion.

WHAT INDIA WANTS FROM THE UNITED STATES

During the Cold War, the United States and India were mostly at odds, apart from a few moments of fleeting strategic cooperation.²⁶ In considerable part, the U.S. military pact with Pakistan in 1954, coupled with India's policy of nonalignment, kept the two countries apart. Later, following the Sino-Indian border war of 1962, some U.S.-India strategic cooperation did ensue, especially in terms of intelligence collection on the PRC.²⁷ However, this too ended, following the U.S. overture toward the PRC in 1971. Subsequent U.S. support for Pakistan during the East Pakistan crisis led to a further estrangement, especially as India drifted into the Soviet orbit.

Even at the end of the Cold War, the two states could not quickly find common ground. The absence of much economic, diplomatic, or even cultural ballast allowed two issues—nonproliferation and human rights—to perpetuate a troubled relationship. India's opening of its markets in the aftermath of an

unprecedented economic crisis in 1991 did lead to a limited thawing of bilateral relations. However, it was only in the wake of India's nuclear tests that the two parties finally embarked upon a meaningful diplomatic dialogue.²⁸ Though India, for the most part, refused to meet any U.S. demands, both countries developed a better appreciation of each other's concerns and expectations. Nevertheless, U.S. objections to India's nuclear weapons program remained a significant barrier to the development of any strategic ties. At this juncture, then, what does India want of the United States?

One of the principal impediments to enhanced U.S.-India strategic cooperation remains the U.S. role in Pakistan. This has two distinct components. The first, of course, is the historical palimpsest. Despite the passage of time, some within the Indian foreign and security policy establishments harbor significant misgivings about a closer U.S. security relationship because of America's historical closeness to Pakistan's military apparatus. The second, which is related to the first, involves what many in both the Indian foreign and security policy circles deem to be U.S. unwillingness to adopt an unequivocal stance against Pakistan's continuing dalliance with a range of home-grown terrorist organizations. Unless the United States is willing to address this issue directly, it will remain an important hurdle to U.S.-India strategic cooperation.

Another factor that casts a long shadow involves what many in India perceive as the inconstancy of American policymaking, especially toward India's principal, long-term adversary, the PRC. In these individuals' view, U.S. policy has oscillated on a number of occasions, sometimes even within the span of a single administration. Indian concerns about the fickleness of

American policy are not chimerical. However, given the sheer significance of the PRC to the United States, it is unclear how Washington can adequately address this Indian concern.²⁹

Indian elites, for the most part, recognize that the PRC is India's principal, long-term threat. However, they do not have a clear-cut consensus on how best to cope with the challenge. At least three perspectives exist on how best to deal with the PRC. The first leans toward accommodation based on the assumption that India does not have the strategic wherewithal to mount a credible defense. A second argues for a policy of self-help and the mobilization of India's domestic resources to cope with the challenge. Those who advocate for this policy would clearly eschew any reliance on the United States to protect India's security interests. A third position contends that India does need to have a balance of power with the PRC and that it should elicit the assistance of the United States in this endeavor. However, even within this stance, there is disagreement about the extent to which India should firmly place its bets with the United States.

Another barrier to improved U.S.-India strategic ties stems from a peculiar feature of India's political culture; namely, its insistence on "strategic autonomy." This obdurate characteristic has roots in India's history of nonalignment, evidenced by persistent fear of any loss of its sovereign status and its legacy as a postcolonial state. At one level, this concern may well be understandable given the historical experience of the country. However, if India has any expectation of eliciting cooperation from the United States to address its extant security concerns, it will have to overcome its reservations about a putative loss to its strategic autonomy.

Finally, India also hopes that the United States may prove to be more forthcoming on the critical issue of technology transfer. As noted, in the past several years, the United States has emerged as a major weapons supplier to India. Most recently, India initiated the purchase of 22 unarmed Guardian surveillance drones from the United States.³⁰ While these developments are entirely welcome, the question of technology transfer still remains on a case-by-case basis, as it does with virtually every country to which the United States sells weapons. Therefore, technology transfer is at the mercy of mid-level bureaucrats within the State Department's Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, which could block or delay specific technology almost indefinitely. Coupled with their intransigence, of course, is the legendarily glacial movement of the Indian defense acquisition process.

IMPEDIMENTS TO COOPERATION

Different Military and Strategic Orientations

Briefly touched upon earlier, arguably the largest obstacle to an expanded U.S.-India strategic alliance—one that genuinely advances the security of both countries and stabilizes the South Asia region—is also the most obvious: the two countries are virtually strategic polar opposites. Going beyond the standard bromides about the “world’s two largest democracies”³¹ and “shared concerns” about both China’s hegemonic economic intentions³² and Pakistan’s terrorists,³³ the United States and India actually have little strategic common ground. The United States has said repeatedly that it wants India to play a greater role in regional security and to act as a regional power

that will counter China.³⁴ The United States takes for granted the assumption, based on its own strategic philosophy of acting aggressively on the world stage, that because India is also a large, populous democracy with similar economic needs, it too would naturally desire to project its interests beyond its borders and exert its influence, at least over its own neighborhood. That is, however, a poor assumption, and a good deal of U.S.-India policy discussion falls into a hole of misunderstanding as a result of this single strategic dichotomy, due largely, in part, from the diplomatic strategy of the United States.

For the most part, Indian leaders are perfectly well aware of what the United States would like them to do. However, India has little political will for gunboat diplomacy and less interest in projecting hard power abroad to act assertively as a “counter” to China or anyone else. For example, India resisted intense pressure from the Bush administration in 2003 to send troops to Iraq, even in a non-combat role.³⁵ For its part, the United States, as mentioned earlier, still very much hopes India will grow to become a counterbalance to rising Chinese power and influence in Asia. That is, essentially, a misplaced hope. It is simply not how India identifies itself politically in a strategic sense nor how it popularly perceives its national historical character. In fact, India has a very limited ability to even protect its own citizens abroad. In 2015, Operation RAHAT required a permissive environment, the full support of Saudi Arabia, the Indian national airline, and numerous civilian merchant vessels to extract its citizens (and approximately 1,000 foreigners) from Yemen. Six other evacuations of Indian nationals have also required permissive environments, diplomatic engagement, and civilian logistical muscle to

implement.³⁶ They were successful, even brilliant, humanitarian evacuations, but they were not expeditionary military operations, nor could they have been.

From the forward-leaning worldview of the United States – which India interprets as being permanently engaged in a broad spectrum of nation-building projects, state-building efforts, far-reaching strategic defense alliances, and the almost-daily application of military violence around the globe – India’s passiveness on the world stage is frustrating. It seems almost banal to remark upon this perception, yet it often goes overlooked in high-level dialog: India’s strategic military focus is almost entirely internal. While India has global economic interests and, by some accounts, the fastest growing economy in the world, the security of those global interests almost entirely depends on the kindness of strangers.³⁷ This is not going to change significantly no matter how much the United States tries to push it. In fact, history shows that the more India is pushed by outside powers, the stronger its passive resistance to that force becomes.³⁸

The Indian Army and Air Force were deliberately designed virtually exclusively for internal defense and, until a decade ago, the Indian Navy was largely a coastal defense force.³⁹ India today has no significant expeditionary force projection capability beyond a short-duration and short-range, commando-type operation of possibly battalion size.⁴⁰ With no dedicated soldiers trained specifically for amphibious warfare, similar to the U.S. Marine Corps, India would be hard pressed to land the equivalent of a U.S. Marine Expeditionary Unit in the Indian Ocean region and sustain them in combat for any length of time. The Indian Navy is in the process of building eight landing craft utility vessels, each capable of carrying 140

soldiers,⁴¹ and recently announced an ambitious plan to build four amphibious assault ships that are landing platform docks similar to the single vessel of the Austin Class (the INS *Jalashwa*), which India currently operates. However, these vessels have not yet been designed; the earliest that the first one would join the fleet in an operational capacity is at least a decade from now.⁴² On the political side, the Sri Lanka intervention fiasco of the late 1980s left many in India with little appetite for future foreign military entanglements; India learned the lessons of its Vietnam, while the United States did not. This political orientation is partly a natural reflection of India's worldview, as discussed earlier, and also a consequence of India's greatest security challenge since independence: maintaining internal order.⁴³ Furthermore, widespread poverty, demands for access to sanitation, a lack of clean water, and rapid population growth—which shows no signs of slowing before 2050 at the earliest—suggest that India will lack the economic means to develop a military with counterbalancing regional throw weight in the future, even if the political desire to do so were to grow significantly beyond its current level.⁴⁴

Domestic Indian Political Sensitivities

One of the principal impediments to U.S.-India defense cooperation can be traced to a reflexive, anti-American streak that exists in India's political culture. The sources of this strain are at least threefold. First, India's political culture is an artifact of the British colonial legacy. Ainslie Embree, a noted historian of modern India, has discussed the origins of this at some length. He argues that the Indian elite inherited many of the cultural prejudices of the British ruling class in India.⁴⁵

An element of anti-Americanism has long existed within this elite, which successfully transmitted these biases to their post-colonial successors. In their eyes, Americans were deemed to be boorish, lacking in cultural mores, and not especially cosmopolitan. These attitudes, for the most part, are now starting to dissipate with generational change. However, this attitude still persists among some segments of the Indian elite.

Second, America's long-term strategic relationship with Pakistan still casts a long shadow over U.S.-India ties.⁴⁶ Entire generations of Indians saw the United States supporting Pakistan during much of the Cold War. Of course, a closer examination of the historical record reveals that the U.S.-Pakistan strategic partnership was hardly uniform or uninterrupted; however, few remember the ruptures in the relationship. Instead, many within India's strategic community focus on how the United States mostly supported Pakistan at the UN Security Council on the Kashmir dispute, forged a military pact with the country in 1954, and tilted toward Pakistan during the 1971 crisis. Later, these individuals saw the United States turn to Pakistan during the Soviet invasion and occupation of Afghanistan. Furthermore, during this time, in their view, the United States knowingly turned a blind eye toward Pakistan's clandestine nuclear weapons program. Finally, in the wake of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, the United States again sought to court Pakistan to achieve its strategic objectives in Afghanistan without sufficient regard for Indians' concerns and sensitivities. India saw an unwillingness by the United States to directly bring charges upon Pakistan for its long-standing dalliance with a range of terrorist groups, many of which had carried out acts of terror on Indian soil.⁴⁷ In a related vein, India also

saw Pakistan as, at best, an untrustworthy and partial partner in the U.S. global counterterrorism strategy.⁴⁸ This evaluation of the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, its historical accuracy aside, continues to animate the beliefs of a segment of India's strategic community. In effect, these individuals view the United States with a large degree of mistrust and doubt that the United States can be relied upon to address India's security concerns. In their worldview, the U.S.-Pakistan relationship vitiates the prospect of any meaningful strategic partnership with India.

Those who share these views do not put much stock in the American efforts to "de-hyphenate" the U.S.-Pakistan and U.S.-India relations. During President William Clinton's first term, U.S. Ambassador to India Frank Wisner sought to separate the U.S.-Pakistan relationship from U.S. ties to India.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, this effort, though lauded in New Delhi at the time, did not fully persuade those who were convinced that the United States would effectuate this policy.

Third, the distrust of the United States also stems from India's tradition of nonalignment. Some within India's attentive public recognized that nonalignment as a foreign policy doctrine was all but moribund after the Cold War. However, others did not share this view. Under the previous UPA regime, nonalignment was resurrected under the guise of the pursuit of strategic autonomy. The present government, however, has not invoked the doctrine and has shown scant interest in the remnants of this anachronistic movement.⁵⁰ That said, there remains a core group of politicians, analysts, and activists who are still wedded to some variant of strategic autonomy and see some merit in resurrecting it.⁵¹ Consequently, with a change

of administrations, some policy offspring of this doctrine may be revived. The proponents of the doctrine would argue that an excessive dependence on the United States would invariably hamper India's ability to make its own strategic choices. A variant of this "nonalignment/strategic autonomy" paradigm, which might be dubbed "nonalignment redux," contends that strategic alignment with the United States could needlessly provoke the PRC.⁵² Advocates of this view fear that in the event of a conflict with the PRC, the United States is likely to stand on the sidelines and not come to India's assistance. Consequently, in their assessment, closer U.S.-India strategic ties could actually redound to India's disadvantage.

Obviously, none of these perspectives is entirely insurmountable. However, they also suggest that enhancing the U.S.-India strategic partnership will require close attention to these domestic, political sensitivities. Ignoring them could lead to more flawed assumptions and thereby derail future progress.

The Trust Deficit

As China's power and presence in the region grow, the U.S. bilateral relationship with Pakistan reaches troubling new lows, and the strategic situation in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate. The United States sees the deepening and broadening of its security relationship with India as intuitively worthwhile. However, as discussed previously, the value of such an expanded security partnership is not as obvious from the Indian perspective. Beyond the political and strategic calculus, there are several additional socio-cultural issues and concerns in India which weigh against aspects of a broader strategic partnership, at

least as the United States normally conceives it. The most significant of these factors can arguably be summarized as concerns over relational inequality, doubts about long-term reliability, political fallout, and the potential defense and readiness consequences of being drawn too closely into the U.S. security orbit. These factors are actually interwoven and tend to flow elusively into one another in conversation whenever an interlocutor tries to tease them apart, debate them, or counter each individually.

At or near the top of the list of these concerns is resistance in the Indian body politic to any perception of an unequal relationship. There is a sense in multiple sectors of Indian political life which the authors have heard often that in alliances and strategic relationships, the United States eventually comes to think of itself as “first among equals,” not least because of its faith in its enormous military power. This concern, that the United States gradually presumes a *de facto* leadership role and a position of dominance in any bilateral relationship, is real and current in New Delhi. Indian leaders are certainly aware of the pressure the United States exerted on its long-time strategic partner, Great Britain, in the run-up to the Iraq war, not only to help beat the war drums across the Atlantic but also to participate militarily in the invasion of Iraq in 2003.⁵³ Involvement in such foreign military adventures is anathema to Indian foreign policy, and the feeling that “the tiger cannot change his stripes” makes an Indian political class already wary of foreign entanglements even more resistant to anything that resembles vulnerability to policy pressure from the United States. There is real resistance to a strategic commitment which might lead to unequal standing, and to any security cooperation with a potential to

morph into a paternalistic, “big brother-little brother” kind of relationship. While national pride in independence in India takes a subtly different form from that found in some other parts of the world, it is nevertheless as strong a force as anywhere else, and India’s leaders will not countenance India as a second-tier partner to anyone. It is difficult to overstate the extent to which this concern generates an almost organic force of political resistance to the United States today, like two great magnets holding each other apart.

Another major social stumbling block to greater strategic cooperation is the issue of public trust and its political consequences. In discussions with scholars and military officers in India, subtle questions about U.S. reliability and motivations almost always hover near the surface. U.S. leaders naturally proceed from an assumption that the United States is a trustworthy, long-term ally and security partner. Indeed, most Americans take this as a matter of national pride. However, citizens of other countries sometimes take a longer historical view. For example, some Indians will privately and tactfully remind visitors from the United States of former pledges of support which the United States is seen to have abandoned, or instances where Washington reversed policy course when it was politically expedient or when presidential administrations changed – including during the Vietnam War; during covert support to Iraqi Kurds in the 1950s; and, more recently, in the Iran nuclear agreement and the Paris Agreement on climate change.⁵⁴ Global perceptions of historical time vary: while 4 years seems like a veritable eternity of policy to many Americans and their leaders, many other countries, including India and China, tend to take a more long-term view. The argument is as follows: If the United States cannot maintain

a steady course for even 4 years, how can India place its strategic trust in the United States for 20 years or more? Partisan politics in the United States can add to the impression abroad that the United States cannot always be relied on to maintain a reliable policy course and not hang former allies out to dry when political winds change. For example, at the time this monograph was written, Indian defense scholars and strategists watched carefully how the United States handled its spoken and unspoken commitments to the Kurds of Iraq in the face of pressure from Turkey, now that U.S. military goals against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria in Iraq have largely been accomplished through reliance on Kurdish Peshmerga forces. India, which is closely watching the unprecedented friction between the United States and its North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies in Europe, views the Trump administration's demands that the nations of Europe "either pay the United States for its great military protection, or protect themselves" as a cautionary tale against reliance on the United States.⁵⁵ Wary of shifting political winds and what some in India see as an alliance of convenience, India's strategic thinkers are cautious about hitching India's horse to America's wagon. In fact, a politically daunting percentage of Indians today are suspicious or distrustful of the United States, which makes it that much more difficult for India's leaders to advocate for closer ties.

There are also concerns among India's strategic planners about the potential second-order consequences of an increased alliance with the United States. Above all, India wants to avoid having an over-reliance on any one source of military equipment and technology, lest that source of new equipment (and spare parts for existing equipment) be lost for whatever

reason. Russia remains India's largest legacy supplier of weaponry, particularly in aviation, accounting for 75 percent of Indian imports from 2004 to 2014. Notably, the balance has shifted closer to equality with the United States in recent years: from 2014 to 2016, India sent US\$5 billion to Russia for defense equipment, and US\$4.4 billion to the United States.⁵⁶ India does not want to become dependent on the United States for defense equipment, nor alienate Russia as a supplier. This desire supports the argument against major financial outlays for expensive weapons systems from either source, as such an investment may create an imbalance which may further imply an offsetting purchase from the other. Thus, acquisitions become a diplomatic balancing act. For their parts, both Russia and the United States are concerned about the classified capabilities of advanced defense systems that have been supplied to India being inadvertently disclosed to the other, which adds another dimension to technology transfer considerations within the bureaucracies of the U.S. Department of State and Department of Defense. France and the Euro-Arab Dialogue remain a somewhat-distant third place in arms sales to India, but serve as a reminder that India is not putting all of its eggs in two baskets. It is also worth noting that the United States has generally been more successful in complying with the "Make in India" initiative in arms sales contracts with India than Russia has been. However, Russia has had success with a number of aviation contracts under the "Make in India" initiative, including the sale of 200 Kamov Ka-226 twin-engine Russian utility helicopters.

Finally, political assessments made in Washington about India's strategic situation, such as the assumption that, because it is surrounded by potential

adversaries, India would naturally seek strategic allies, are less germane than they first appear. Beyond a circle of strategists, academics, and military planners in the Indian defense intelligentsia who take a more pragmatic view of a dangerous neighborhood, the spirit of self-sufficiency and freedom from outside influence runs deep in Indian politics. Underpinning concerns in New Delhi, these social realities are more complicated than Washington's assumptions generally allow, and are equally as daunting as the political realities.

Reactions from Pakistan and the PRC

Any attempt to enhance the U.S.-India strategic partnership almost invariably will elicit adverse reactions from both of India's long-standing adversaries, Pakistan and the PRC. Pakistan, during the Cold War, successfully placed an important brake on any attempt at security cooperation between India and the United States. The United States, which was often solicitous of Pakistan's views, acquiesced to Pakistani demands with some regularity. A small handful of examples illustrate this proposition.

As early as 1954, Pakistan's political leadership successfully persuaded the United States to forge a bilateral military pact, claiming that it was a staunch anti-communist ally. The Dwight Eisenhower administration, which knew little about the complexities of the regional politics of the subcontinent, acquiesced to these entreaties. At the time, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru wrote to Eisenhower, making it clear that U.S. weapons transfers would not be used to fend off communist expansion but, rather, would be used against India. Eisenhower, in an attempt to reassure

India, offered to also provide suitable military assistance. Nehru, who spearheaded the Non-Aligned Movement, rebuffed Eisenhower's offer.

Later, in the aftermath of the 1962 Sino-Indian border war, a trauma from which India has to yet fully recover, it sought increased military assistance from the United States. The United States initially proved willing to provide such assistance. However, when Pakistan, a formal American ally, raised sharp objections, the United States decided not to provide any substantial amounts of weaponry. This experience, among other factors, over time, would lead India to steadily drift into the Soviet orbit. The Soviets, in turn, adroitly bolstered their relationship with India via a generous arms transfer arrangement.⁵⁷

Even in the post-Cold War era, Pakistan has, until very recently, managed to exercise a unit veto on some Indian efforts to engage the United States on matters of regional security. Nowhere is this more evident than in Afghanistan. For example, in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, and the subsequent U.S. intervention in Afghanistan, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee offered Indian air bases for the supplying of American forces in the country. Once again, concerned about possible Pakistani misgivings, the George W. Bush administration declined the Indian offer. Subsequently, Pakistan also successfully convinced the Bush and Obama administrations to limit India's activities in Afghanistan, claiming that an expansion of the Indian role would be inimical to Pakistan's national security interests. Yet again, both administrations gave in to Pakistan's demands.

The PRC has long acted in concert with Pakistan to undermine India's security interests in the region. This relationship was forged shortly after the Sino-Indian

border war.⁵⁸ Since then, Pakistan, for all practical purposes, has emerged as a strategic surrogate for the PRC in South Asia. It has been the recipient of substantial military and economic assistance, it has obtained support for its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs, and it has enjoyed diplomatic support on a host of critical issues. Among other activities, the PRC has repeatedly prevented Pakistan-based terrorists from being placed on the UN list of global terrorists.⁵⁹ Given this close strategic nexus, quite apart from more specific concerns about an incipient U.S.-India strategic partnership, there is little or no question that the PRC would react adversely to any attempt to bolster U.S.-India strategic ties. There is ample evidence of the PRC's hostility toward any form of strategic cooperation between India and the United States. For example, when Bush announced his intention to withdraw from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972, India, under Prime Minister Vajpayee, endorsed the decision.⁶⁰ The reaction from the PRC was just short of vituperative.

More recently, the PRC has been downright hostile toward the U.S.-India Civil Nuclear Agreement of 2008 on the grounds that India is not a member of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty regime. Subsequently, the PRC has been the principal stumbling block to India joining the Nuclear Suppliers Group, despite American support for the country's candidacy.⁶¹ The PRC has also looked askance at India's participation in the quadrilateral or "Quad" arrangement involving Australia, India, Japan, and the United States.⁶²

Given this record, there is little or no question that both Pakistan and the PRC would respond adversely to any strengthening of the U.S.-India strategic partnership. In fact, if the U.S.-India partnership acquires

greater momentum, it is entirely possible, and indeed likely, that the Pakistan-PRC strategic nexus will be bolstered in response. The PRC has already made a substantial financial commitment to Pakistan through its “belt and road initiative” and is a major weapons supplier to the country.

Despite the likely reactions from the PRC and Pakistan, neither the United States nor India should hesitate from proceeding apace with their strategic partnership, as the deepening of PRC-Pakistan ties will almost certainly occur in any case, and should be seen as a case of post hoc ergo propter hoc. Moreover, the U.S.-Pakistan relationship, even during the Cold War, was transactional.⁶³ Even since the Cold War’s end, the basic features of this relationship have remained unchanged. Indeed, some have argued that U.S. reliance on Pakistan to pursue its interests in Afghanistan has been fundamentally flawed.⁶⁴

Obviously, the U.S.-China relationship is far more involved and complex. The Trump administration’s recent trade sanctions and tariff regime have only added to this complexity. Nevertheless, there are compelling reasons for the United States to concern itself with the growing assertiveness of the PRC in Asia.⁶⁵ Given India’s fears and misgivings about the PRC, the gradual but perceptible decline in India’s reflexive anti-Americanism creates the potential for the country to begin to push back against further Chinese expansionist behavior. To that end, the United States has already made suitable overtures, even as China has cast a wary eye on them.⁶⁶ Consequently, regardless of the likely reactions of the PRC, it makes eminent sense for the United States to continue with its efforts to engage India on a range of strategic issues.

STRATEGIC COOPERATION: AREAS THAT HAVE POTENTIAL FOR GREATER SUCCESS

Technology Sharing and Defense Manufacturing

In 2011, India chose not to purchase the U.S. F-16 fighter that had been in contention along with five other aircraft, narrowing its choices to the Eurofighter Typhoon and the French Rafale. The proposed sale was for a tender that the Indian Government had released to acquire some 126 medium multi-role combat aircraft to replace the aging workhorse of the Indian Air Force, the Mig-21. Though the argument for not short-listing the Lockheed Martin F-16 was made on technical grounds,⁶⁷ it is widely believed in U.S. policy circles that political considerations also played an important role. The Congress Party-led UPA regime, some highly placed U.S. Government officials argue, simply could not handle the political freight of turning over yet another major defense contract to the United States.⁶⁸ Earlier that same year, India had acquired 10 C-17 heavy lift aircraft at a cost of US\$4.1 billion from the United States. Today, the internal debate over the F-16 drags on.

After the Trump administration assumed office, then-Secretary of Defense James Mattis visited India and made a significant pitch for expanding the existing band of defense cooperation.⁶⁹ Despite the Trump administration's stated interest in building on the existing defense relationship with India and the Modi regime's apparent willingness to boost the relationship, the bureaucratic hurdles that previously hobbled defense cooperation remain in place. Indian decision-making structures remain hidebound, and India's policy on offsets often proves to be an obstacle to U.S. defense firms.⁷⁰

That said, a number of projects involving defense cooperation appear to be on the anvil. A handful of examples should illustrate the prospects of increased defense cooperation. In 2017, for example, the United States approved the sale of the General Atomics Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System to the Indian Navy. This system will be incorporated into India's second indigenous aircraft carrier which, at the moment, is in its planning stage. This technology is significant because it allows for more sorties from a carrier and reduces the thermal signature of the vessel.⁷¹ Earlier in 2017, one of India's largest industrial conglomerates, Reliance Industries, announced an agreement with the U.S. Navy for the repair and servicing of its warships at its Pipavav shipyard in Gujarat. This was made possible by the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement.⁷²

Other possible cooperative projects are still under discussion. In February 2018, the United States made an offer to India to co-produce armored personnel carriers in conjunction with Israel. Given that India already has significant defense cooperation arrangements with Israel, the possibility of this trilateral venture coming to fruition looks promising.⁷³

Despite these developments, three hurdles may still hobble an expansion of U.S.-India defense cooperation. First, India's defense procurement system stands in acute need of reform. It is complex, labyrinthine, slow, and unlikely to be reformed anytime soon.⁷⁴ Second, in a related vein and as has been already discussed, residual misgivings about the reliability of American weapons transfers still linger within important segments of India's defense establishment. Consequently, those figures may well seek to limit the scope of India's defense cooperation with

the United States. Third, the Modi regime's emphasis on "Make in India" may not dovetail with the Trump administration's export policies, which are focused on boosting American weapons exports. Of course, none of these hurdles are insuperable. However, American policymakers need to bear them in mind as efforts to engage India in this realm continue apace.

Intelligence Cooperation

There is solid potential for greater intelligence cooperation between the United States and India. However, both powers' intelligence services would have to overcome their intrinsic wariness and some heavy historical baggage. Day-to-day cooperation currently takes place through the usual diplomatic channels. Joint talks and exchanges of visits between high-level intelligence officials have been taking place twice a year for several years under the rubric of the "strategic defense dialogue" (once each year in the United States and once in India, at 6-month intervals), although not without some cloak-and-dagger secrecy about identities and locations. Such precautions highlight the degree of caution with which both sides approach the discussions. In the intelligence business, officials are concerned above all with protecting sources and methods—the identities of their sources of information and how it is obtained—and avoiding the compromise of such information via leaks or moles. Mutual trust in the intelligence world takes a very long time to develop and can be quickly broken if a source is uncovered by a friendly country. Another hurdle to greater cooperation between the United States and India is a sense of inequality among senior Indian intelligence officials in regard to

the flow of information to and from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). According to Major General V. K. Singh (Ret.), who previously served in Indian intelligence, there is considerable resentment that the CIA shares very little intelligence with India but routinely pressures India to provide more.⁷⁵

Further complicating matters, the path toward U.S.-India intelligence cooperation has been a rocky one. Several incidents planted the seeds of mistrust along the way that have taken root. For example, in 1997, two junior CIA officers in New Delhi had unauthorized meetings with senior Intelligence Bureau official Ratan Sehgal and were ordered out of the country as *persona non grata*. The United States reciprocated with the expulsion of two Indian Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) personnel working at the Indian Consulate in San Francisco, CA.⁷⁶ This is fairly standard spy-versus-spy probing in the world of clandestine services, but hardly the sort of behavior that builds trust between friendly countries. Things became much more serious and took a sharp turn for the worse in 2004, when Rabinder Singh, the Joint Secretary of RAW for Southeast Asia, defected to the United States via the U.S. Embassy in Kathmandu, which had issued him and his wife U.S. passports under assumed names and flew them to the United States.⁷⁷ As *Jane's Security News* noted with understatement at the time, the incident—which also implicated Israel's Mossad—was “likely to result in New Delhi placing limitations on intelligence sharing with both the USA and Israel, which could impact on the US-led ‘war on terrorism’.”⁷⁸

It should also be noted that while the CIA and RAW are the main components of the intelligence apparatus of the United States and India, respectively,

they are not the only components. The United States has a total of 17 agencies and organizations which collect intelligence.⁷⁹ In India, the National Technical Research Organization was created after 2000 as the hub of India's drones, spy satellites, and reconnaissance aircraft, similar to the U.S. National Security Agency and National Reconnaissance Office. After 2000, India also created a Defense Intelligence Agency that is similar to the organization of the same name within the U.S. Department of Defense and is charged with similar reporting responsibilities.

Regardless of these complexities and challenges, India and the United States share the same primary concern—terrorists in South Asia—and both countries' intelligence communities are focused intensively on tracking and eliminating these terrorists. India's RAW is responsible for external intelligence gathering. The Intelligence Bureau, from which RAW was spun off in 1968, is still responsible for intelligence within India, much like the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation. RAW is among the best intelligence services in the world, both highly capable and highly professional. Its greatest strength is the U.S. intelligence community's greatest weakness—human intelligence. Over the past few decades, RAW has had exceptional success in this domain. Conversely, the greatest strength of the United States in intelligence gathering is in what is euphemistically referred to as "national technical means." For example, during the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty talks with the Soviet Union, the United States used cutting-edge technology to acquire intelligence without human agents on the ground. While RAW has some capabilities in this area, and indeed has had some notable and well-documented successes in the past, it is far behind the

United States in this regard. Conversely, the CIA has struggled to penetrate terrorist organizations in Pakistan with human sources. Therefore, the two countries have capabilities that are mutually complementary. Each service is stronger where the other is weaker, creating the potential for genuine synergy in combating terrorism in South Asia. The intelligence communities of both countries report directly to their national leaders: RAW to the Prime Minister of India and the CIA to the President of the United States. In addition, both are otherwise only subject to a degree of legislative oversight via congressional committees. Thus, any progress toward greater cooperation would require both sanction and impetus from the highest levels of both governments and approval from the career bureaucrats in both organizations. There remains the likelihood of intelligence being stalled at the working level by officers with long memories.

Counterterrorism and Special Operations

Both the United States and India have complex and sometimes internally overlapping counterterrorism organizations. In India, RAW, the Intelligence Bureau, and the Defense Intelligence Agency are statutorily authorized to conduct external operations.⁸⁰ In addition, the Indian Army and Navy have specialized military units capable of small-scale strikes of a limited military nature. This is one of the richest potential areas for expanded cooperation in the near term for a number of reasons. First, such training is generally classified, so there is less likelihood that joint training will be subjected to public scrutiny and, thus, would have less potential for political blowback for New Delhi. In fact, given the political emphasis in both countries on

counterterrorism, there would likely be little political objection to any cross training which would enhance the skills of all involved in this domain, as there is strong, domestic, popular support in both countries for strengthening the mechanisms of counterterrorism. Second, these forces in both countries are training almost all the time when they are not deployed, so opportunities for cooperation are plentiful. Third, some of the training is in tactical skills and exercises, which are common enough to both countries (with relatively minor variations), so there is little or no concern at that level about sharing classified information. Both sides may have classified delivery systems and capabilities that they would prefer not to reveal, but there are also common techniques, skills, and competitive wargaming that would make training useful and challenging for both. Indeed, a considerable amount of such training is already being conducted, and both sides seem to benefit from it. For example, after the annual U.S.-India joint training Exercise Yuhd Abhyas in Alaska in 2016, a U.S. Army Special Forces Soldier noted that “within the first 2 [or] 3 days, I was learning tactics that I never would have thought of, and that in some ways were better than ours.”⁸¹

U.S. Special Operations Forces have also trained with Indian counterparts on at least two other recent exercises, Exercise Tarkash and Exercise Vajra Prahar. The first Tarkash training exercise took place in 2015, involving India’s National Security Guards (popularly known as “Black Cats”), who are considered the best counterterrorism force of the Ministry of Home Affairs. A second Tarkash exercise with the National Security Guards was repeated in March 2017. In January 2016, U.S. and Indian Special Forces also restarted Vajra Prahar, a small-scale training exercise focused

on small-unit special operations. Personnel of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), conducted Exercise Vajra Prahar again from January 18 to January 29, 2018, at Joint Base Lewis-McChord in Washington State and Camp Rilea in Oregon.

Notably, all of these exercises involved only U.S. Army Special Forces. Other military branches of both services appear to be lagging behind in joint training; however, the Indian Navy has sent commandos to the U.S. Navy SEALs for training. As part of joint naval Exercise Malabar in September 2017, there was also joint training between the special operations forces of the Indian and U.S. navies at Indian Naval Station Karna (Visakhapatnam). There has been some speculation that, while not lacking the physical stamina of their U.S. counterparts, the Indian Navy commandos lag behind in high-tech weaponry and advanced support technology, such as dedicated armed drones and specialized assets to deliver them to their objectives. This lag in technology is perhaps a second-order consequence of India's long-standing focus on internal self-defense rather than offensive operations and resulting budgeting priorities. If Indian Navy commandos were operating more like a 20th-century commando force, with more emphasis on well-trained soldiers and less on technology than would a 21st-century force that leverages advanced technology across the operating spectrum, then, in turn, this would hamper advanced joint training with the commandos' U.S. counterparts. This dichotomy could explain the apparent paucity of current joint exercises. Alternatively, they could simply be classified. Whatever the case, in overall strategic terms, there is plenty of room in the domain of counterterrorism — in forces, equipment, and training — for greater cooperation and

perhaps, eventually, even interoperability. This potential would be enhanced if India were to follow the lead of the United States in creating a joint special operations command (like the U.S. Southern Command) which would bring operational control of all of India's Special Forces and special operations forces under one roof. See figure 2.



Source: U.S. Army photo by Specialist Ashley Armstrong.

Figure 2. Indian and American paratroopers during Exercise Yudh Abyhas in Alaska in 2010⁸²

Naval Interoperability

At first blush, navy-to-navy cooperation and interoperability between the United States and India appear to be promising areas for expanded security cooperation. As noted, the United States is eager for expanded military-to-military cooperation, but

because of the negative domestic political optics for India, conventional land force exercises and cooperation are limited to small numbers of U.S. personnel on Indian soil. Thus far, the U.S.-India cooperation efforts have been largely confined to humanitarian training missions, like preparing for disaster relief operations. Cooperation between the two countries' air forces is constrained by other obstacles. However, naval exercises on the high seas would seem to offer an arena for military cooperation far from the public eye. Most navy maneuvers, such as "steaming in column," (i.e., in single file at a common speed) are universal to all navies. While the Indian Army is focused almost exclusively on the internal defense of India's borders, blue water navies are, by definition, an expression of national power on the high seas. Most importantly, regarding concerns about China's growing influence over the routes of global commerce, it is, of course, the sea lines of communication across the Indian Ocean which trouble strategists, not so much land corridors across the Indian subcontinent. Even with an unalterable strategic focus on homeland defense, India's leaders understand that protecting India does not stop at the water's edge. Indeed, India has been moving toward a blue water navy for more than a decade, and clearly recognizes that in modern naval theory, this automatically entails the fusion of operations of subsurface, surface, aviation, and satellite assets. The age of the stand-alone surface warship ended before India was born, and India's strategic naval planning in the fields of submarine warfare and carrier aviation clearly reflect this awareness. Thus, navy-to-navy cooperation and exercises would seem to be an ideal venue for cutting some of the Gordian Knots constraining the other services.

In reality, however, such cooperation does not go far beyond the public affairs optics. The most recent U.S.-India joint naval maneuvers theoretically took place in the framework of the old “Quad,” the informal security constellation of Australia, India, Japan, and the United States which first appeared about a decade ago. The maneuvers were known as Exercise Malabar. The most recent Exercise Malabar was conducted in June 2018 near the island of Guam. This exercise was theoretical in the framework of the “Quad” because India again refused to allow Australia to participate in the exercise, frustrating U.S. hopes of building a cohesive maritime bulwark against nascent but growing Chinese naval power.⁸³

Joint U.S.-India naval exercises have exposed several layers of problems in maritime cooperation, from the strategic level to the tactical. An account of his experience as a liaison officer on an Indian naval vessel in 2001 by a U.S. Navy lieutenant, for example, caused considerable internet controversy, as it was sharply critical of the Indian Navy’s capabilities.⁸⁴ Whether exaggerated or not, the account raised genuine questions about the skill of the Indian Navy in seamanship and joint operations, noting difficulties with rudimentary NATO codebooks, ship-to-ship signaling, and sometimes dangerously weak ship-handling skills when in close proximity to other vessels. The state of upkeep and maintenance of the Indian vessels was also reportedly poor. A spate of accidents earlier this decade has lent some credence to such accusations of a lack of professionalism in the Indian Navy.⁸⁵

At the strategic level, the possession of aircraft carriers and submarines does not ensure that a country is a force to be reckoned with at sea, any more than the possession of a Formula One race car can ensure that

the owner is a force to be reckoned with in a Formula One race (a reality which should be taken into account when assessing China's naval buildup as well). In fact, only the United States has the combat experience in continuous operations of multiple carrier battle groups that allows its navy to become an expert in this incredibly complex form of warfare. Furthermore, only France and the United States currently operate fixed-wing aircraft carriers with steam catapults for launching aircraft (instead of ski jump ramps used by China, India, and Russia), which are vastly superior for flight operations.⁸⁶ The fact is, India (and China) are decades (and 10 nuclear-powered aircraft carriers) behind the U.S. Navy in blue water power. The point is that simply building ships creates potential, but does not build capability. Beyond political presence, in comparison to the world's major naval powers, the Indian Navy in 2018 would bring relatively little to a fight. More troubling for the U.S.-India strategic partnership are multiple indications in 2018 of India's wavering strategic commitment to the Quad itself and a preference for appeasing China over confronting it. India has been called "the weak link in the Quad."⁸⁷

At the tactical level of war, in regional naval drills, India has been called "the odd man out."⁸⁸ U.S., Japanese, and Australian warships use common satellite data links and electronic combat systems, but India uses Russian-made equipment and refuses to use even temporary, suitcase-portable data links for Exercise Malabar, forcing all vessels to use crude, unencrypted, ship-to-ship radio communications and obsolete NATO handwritten maneuver codes with which the Indian ships struggle. This is indicative of the level of fundamental mistrust of the U.S. military that India retains. Furthermore, India has no amphibious warfare

capability and no doctrine for conducting it. In fact, many of the same obstacles to genuinely useful exercises between the two countries' air forces also affect naval exercises. For example, India operates Russian Sukhoi jets from its aircraft carrier, and when they fly in Exercise Malabar, their radars and electronic warfare jammers are turned off.

Former U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson recently termed the Indian and Pacific Oceans a "single strategic arena." In his vision of the United States and India as regional "bookends,"⁸⁹ Tillerson described the future of U.S.-India naval operations as leading to "great co-ordination . . . including maritime domain awareness, anti-submarine warfare, amphibious warfare . . . and search and rescue."⁹⁰ However, this vision is chimerical. Joint naval exercises do send a political signal, but the reality on the water is that mistrust of the United States, wavering commitment to the Quad, a universal lack of experience in modern multidomain naval warfare in the Indian Navy, and a complete lack of systems interoperability with the United States across the board make such maneuvers "more about 'cultural familiarisation' than drills for joint combat."⁹¹ Neither side will admit it but, for the foreseeable future, real operational navy-to-navy cooperation will remain largely a public relations exercise.

Cybersecurity

Cybersecurity is a domain in which there is a surprising amount of impetus and potential for greater security cooperation, given the overarching climate of distrust toward the United States which still pervades much of India's foreign and defense policy class.⁹² However, this cooperation has unusually deep

roots. An initial vehicle for the partnership was established in 2001, when the U.S.-India Cyber Security Forum was organized, one of the first such cooperative dialogues in the world.⁹³ Although it was initially hobbled by the widespread trust deficit, the Pakistan Government-sponsored attack on Mumbai by members of Lashkar-e-Taiba in November 2008 provided a powerful incentive for greater cooperation in counterterrorism in general and in the cybersecurity domain in particular. The result was a memorandum of understanding in July 2011 that made the original Cyber Security Forum much more useful and productive.⁹⁴ Cybersecurity cooperation continued to gain momentum in 2012 and 2013, such that, during the fourth U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue in New Delhi, attended by then-Secretary of State John Kerry and then-Indian External Affairs Minister Shri Salman Khurshid, the two men:

emphasized the need for the United States and India to develop stronger partnerships on cyber-security, including through the next iterations of the Cyber Security Consultations, the Strategic Cyber Policy Dialogue, and the Information and Communications Technology Working Group.⁹⁵

This, in turn, led to the negotiation of the Framework Agreement for the U.S.-India Cyber Relationship, announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and then-U.S. President Barack Obama in June 2016 during Modi's visit to the United States. The bilateral agreement also saw the formal announcement of India's designation as a U.S. "Major Defense Partner."⁹⁶ The Framework Agreement addressed all aspects of cyberspace cooperation, not just security, and since it was the first such agreement the United

States had signed, it was a landmark security achievement. The fact that the United States and India have been the global bilateral pioneers in this area, and have established such a solid legal and bureaucratic foundation for cyber cooperation, suggests broad buy-in by government agencies in both countries. This is especially important because cybersecurity issues are not compartmentalized, and often overlap with criminal activity, including money laundering; malicious, non-state, civilian hacking; and organized, state-sponsored attempts to breach computer security. Such a broad agreement makes cross-agency cooperation in the United States easier and faster. Of particular interest in this respect, 2 months after the Framework Agreement was signed in August 2016, Indian Minister of Defense Manohar Parrikar visited the United States and toured U.S. Cyber Command in Fort Meade, MD, an event that headlined in the public relations announcements of both countries at the time.⁹⁷ Such carefully choreographed bilateral visits are designed to send specific messages, and this one appeared to be: “cybersecurity cooperation is now something both countries are taking seriously.”

Space

While U.S.-India space cooperation is in its infancy, there is a potential defense aspect to it. In 2016, the two countries established a bilateral space cooperation mechanism for the purpose of deconflicting orbits, avoiding collisions, and sharing information about potentially dangerous orbital material falling back to earth.⁹⁸ Typically, the United States is not the only country to which India is reaching out for space cooperation. India signed space agreements

with Japan in November 2016 for “earth observation, satellite based navigation, space sciences, and lunar exploration;”⁹⁹ with Israel in July 2017 to put more Israeli satellites in space aboard Indian rockets;¹⁰⁰ and with France’s Central National D’Etudes Spatiales in March 2018 for maritime surveillance—an agreement which notably accompanied an announcement on further France-India nuclear power cooperation.¹⁰¹ What these latter agreements make abundantly clear is that, as with defense procurement, India has no intention of falling into the “strategic orbit” of any one country, and, as with arms purchases and military cooperation, India’s strategic calculus will remain deliberately multilateral and diversified. India’s capabilities in space are impressive. Its reliable workhorse launch platform, the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle-C40 (PSLV-C40), holds the record for most satellites successfully put into orbit by one rocket (104).¹⁰² As the Indian publication *The Diplomat* recently noted of India’s space program, “the security implications have not gone unnoticed by India’s regional rival, Pakistan.”¹⁰³ It can be safely assumed that India’s space program has not gone unnoticed by China as well. What India lacks in this area, however, is any sort of overarching space strategy or centralized space asset management. Its approach thus far—the dual use of its orbital fleet—might be best described as “let’s get a lot of stuff up there and organize it later.” As the United States has more satellites in orbit (568) than the next four countries combined (Russia, China, Japan, and the United Kingdom), space asset management would be a logical area for enhanced U.S.-India strategic cooperation in the future.¹⁰⁴ However, in March 2018, India set back space cooperation with the United States with the unauthorized launch of

four private U.S. commercial satellites, despite their being denied regulatory approval by the U.S. Federal Communications Commission.¹⁰⁵

RECOMMENDATIONS

What recommendations can be offered to policy-makers and officials in Washington and New Delhi about how best to strengthen the strategic partnership? If the two parties value the partnership, they both will need to make some key compromises to ensure that it thrives in the foreseeable future. To that end, we suggest some general and specific steps that each side should consider taking to move the partnership forward.

At the outset, the United States needs to sustain the policy of de-hyphenation: it cannot again allow Pakistan to hold the U.S.-India relationship hostage to its whims and vagaries. As argued herein, Pakistan has proven to be unreliable. Multiple and varied attempts on the part of the United States to induce Pakistan to align its security interests with the Western world have, for the most part, failed to produce results. Allowing the endless repetition of the carefully constructed Pakistani “we have nukes and we’re very fragile” narrative to continue to limit the scope of the U.S.-India relationship makes little sense. Maintaining the momentum of the ongoing shift in American policy in the South Asia region toward India and away from trying to buy Pakistani cooperation would greatly enhance the prospects of greater strategic cooperation.

In a related vein, the United States should encourage India to expand its footprint in Afghanistan with a view toward the long-term stabilization of the country.

Such a stance, no doubt, will generate alarm in Islamabad, which already sees an Indian agent behind every rock north of the Khyber Pass. Once again, given its decades of duplicity, Pakistan should not be allowed to exercise a veto on this matter. India, as a number of dispassionate observers have argued, has played an invaluable role in Afghanistan and can continue to do so.

The United States should also be willing to step up and resolutely support India if the PRC continues to exert pressure on India's Himalayan borders. For India, the PRC remains the long-term strategic threat. On its own, India lacks the capacity to cope with the threat. An explicit American commitment to back India would significantly assuage its security concerns and would also generate much needed trust in the U.S.-India security relationship. Specifically, the United States could issue a demarche, warning the PRC not to continue actions that seek to alter the territorial status quo along the disputed border. What form this hypothetical commitment and support would take, however, is certainly contentious, and China knows a demarche without teeth is just a piece of paper. Even a policy of deliberate ambiguity still requires a credible deterrent or credible capabilities, and these would require considerably deeper military-to-military ties than India seems willing to countenance in 2018.

Finally, from the U.S. side, the United States should address India's complaints about intelligence sharing, especially on the vexing question of the Pakistani military establishment's continuing alliance with a range of terrorist groups. These terrorist groups and their Pakistani enablers have long wreaked havoc on India and have repeatedly precipitated crises between the two states. Enhanced U.S. intelligence assistance

would help to rebuild trust, as would increased material assistance to India for closing the gaps and loopholes in India's own intelligence gathering on this continuing threat. This is an area where the United States would need to demonstrate a willingness to take a calculated risk to build trust by sharing more information than it currently does.

Obviously, India cannot expect the United States to sustain the momentum of this partnership on its own. It too needs to demonstrate a greater willingness to work with the United States on a range of extant matters. To that end, we suggest a number of possible initiatives that New Delhi should pursue.

Despite the persistence of Cold War-era nostalgia within parts of India's security apparatus, it is more than apparent that the U.S.-Russia arms transfer relationship is fraught with a host of problems. Russia has been stingy in transferring technology to India while being rapacious in terms of increasing the number of weapons contracts while not being able to sustain a technological edge in the production of advanced weaponry. Under the circumstances, it behooves India to more actively engage with the United States to not only acquire weapons, but to seek co-production arrangements as well. Only a robust arms transfer relationship with the United States would be impactful in addressing India's burgeoning security needs. To that end, New Delhi needs to implement major reforms to simplify and streamline its weapon acquisition procedures. The current mechanisms for weapons purchases are cumbersome and inefficient.

In a related vein, India also needs to move ahead with a number of foundational agreements with the United States that would facilitate communications, logistics, and intelligence sharing. None of these

agreements are especially exceptional, and the United States has them with a host of other friendly nations. However, both a domestic campaign of disinformation in India and unfounded fears of a diminution of India's sovereignty have hobbled the realization of these agreements.

In addition, India needs to address the legal barriers that it erected to foreign investment in its civilian nuclear power sector. Under the terms of the existing legal regime, U.S. companies, for all practical purposes, cannot invest in this arena. In this context, it is necessary to underscore that few within India's policy circles seem to adequately appreciate the extent of political capital that two U.S. administrations have expended to bring India into the ambit of the global nonproliferation regime, despite India's unwillingness to accede to the Nonproliferation Treaty.

In addition, India should work to routinize and expand the scope of the military exercises that it holds with the United States. India also needs to overcome its inhibitions about allowing greater professional contacts between the members of its armed services and their American counterparts, especially at the higher levels of command. Currently, U.S. military attachés at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi cannot even telephone their counterparts in the Indian Army and Ministry of Defense directly. Even visiting U.S. civilian defense scholars cannot make appointments directly with Indian military personnel and civilian government defense officials. Every single contact between a U.S. citizen and any Indian defense or military official must be authorized on a case-by-case basis by a bureaucrat in the Indian Ministry of External Affairs. This archaic, vestigial artifact of the Cold War and the Non-Aligned Movement, perhaps more than any

other single regulation, is severely hampering discussion and practical cooperation between the two partners, and could almost literally be eliminated with the stroke of a pen.

With the possible exception of the last, none of these recommendations can be easily or swiftly implemented. They are all likely to encounter both policy and bureaucratic resistance in both capitals and beyond. Both sides harbor troubling memories of the Cold War years and have misgivings about the reliability of each other's commitments. However, unless they evince a willingness to undertake some risks and help promote a culture of reciprocity and trust, it seems unlikely that the strategic partnership that has been forged over the course of the past 2 decades will make much progress in the foreseeable future. While both parties have made significant investments in fashioning this strategic partnership so far, and have overcome various hurdles to cooperation, a moment has now arrived when bolder steps need to be taken to ensure that the partnership will help meet the shared security challenges that loom over the horizon.

CONCLUSION

Are the United States and India unnatural partners? Can they actually forge a meaningful strategic partnership that goes beyond bromides and handshakes? At the end of the Cold War, this question may have been superfluous at best and chimerical at worst. The lack of strategic convergence in the relationship virtually precluded the forging of a viable partnership. However, given the movement that has taken place in U.S.-India relations over the past 2 decades, it is now possible to envisage circumstances under which the partnership might gain real traction. The

United States must accept that one size does not fit all in security partnerships, avoid condescension, recognize the paramount importance of the sovereignty issue for India, and stress genuine equality in the relationship. India must move away from the mental artifacts of nonalignment and a patchwork quilt approach to defense acquisitions, which vastly complicates the country's logistics and repair sectors. Even so, there is no obvious or simple path forward or easy answers to these difficult questions. The strategic and political gaps remain broad and deep. Consequently, even at this stage of progress, our prognosis must be hedged with various caveats. Much depends on how developments evolve at global, regional, and national levels beyond the bilateral equation.

At a global level, if the PRC continues to press ahead with its activities in the South China Sea and, more importantly, seeks to expand its naval presence in the Indian Ocean, it is reasonable to surmise that the Trump administration will continue to challenge it militarily through its traditional naval presence as it has done the past 2 years (and as the Obama administration did before that). As the U.S. administration maintains its longstanding naval presence in the Indo-Pacific, it will inevitably call on India to step up its own activities. In 2016, then-Minister of Defense Manohar Parrikar rebuffed Admiral Harry Harris's suggestion that the two countries undertake joint naval patrols. However, in the future, India may be more inclined to move forward with them, especially as the naval arrangement with Japan and the United States (and possibly Australia, if India gets off the strategic fence) becomes more robust—and if the technological impediments to 21st-century, networked, joint operations can be reduced or eliminated. Commitment

on India's part to a genuine, four-sided naval alliance, without a doubt, would significantly enhance the quality of the current strategic partnership. Many senior U.S. Navy officers and defense officials privately view India's reluctance to commit to its own maritime security as intimidated dithering, if not outright appeasement.

Regional developments will also help shape the evolution of the partnership. The Obama administration gradually reduced aid to Pakistan by nearly two-thirds; the Trump administration accelerated the reduction dramatically and halted virtually all aid in an effort to induce Pakistan further to end its support for the Taliban in Afghanistan. This policy shift, obviously, has been welcomed in New Delhi, which had long highlighted Pakistan's duplicity. The first question, of course, is whether the Trump administration proves willing to sustain this course. If it does, it can reasonably expect India to step up its role in Afghanistan. Such an expansion of India's role might involve providing more support to the Afghan security forces. The recent transfer of Russian-made helicopters to the Afghan National Air Force was a helpful step in the right direction. Greater involvement would not be without controversy within India. However, the Indian security establishment also should accept that fashioning a genuine strategic partnership would entail some costs. The second question is whether such developments would drive Pakistan still deeper into China's web and deepen its Faustian bargain for its national sovereignty in exchange for Chinese-built infrastructure of the type made by Sri Lanka. It seems headed in that direction regardless of the U.S.-India nexus.

In this context, given the Trump administration's hostility toward Iran and India's existing relationship with Tehran, the two sides may have to find a *modus vivendi* to avoid this issue undermining other shared interests. The Trump administration has sought to gather support for isolating Iran, a goal long sought by Israel for a number of reasons, including Iran's support for various terrorist organizations. It is also hardly an exaggeration to suggest that it has significant reservations about the Joint Comprehensive Program of Action reached with Iran under the Obama administration. The installation of the hawkish John Bolton as National Security Advisor tilted the United States toward open hostilities with Iran. India, on the other hand, sees Iran as an invaluable partner in containing Pakistan and enhancing its vital access route to Afghanistan via the Chabahar Port. The U.S. agreement in November 2018 to make an exception for the Chabahar Port in its sanctions against Iran was an important concession to India and an adroit hedging of logistics bets in the ongoing Afghan conflict.

Finally, national policies may prove to be the most important determinant of the future of this partnership. Will the Trump administration continue to invest in efforts in persuading India to align its views with those of the United States when it comes to dealing with the PRC? Alternatively, will it tire of India's fence-sitting and simply seek to work with its existing alliance system in Asia, relying mostly on Australia and Japan? If so, India is destined to continue to be the odd man out. As the military capabilities of the PRC continue to grow, as it seeks to expand its influence in South Asia and beyond, and as it begins to project a more formidable naval force in the Indian Ocean, whether India's security establishment will see the

need to shed its past inhibitions about a closer security partnership with the United States remains an open question. Of course, the ebb and flow of India's domestic politics, in some measure, may shape the answer to this question. A government that is led or dominated by the Indian National Congress may be unwilling and, indeed, incapable of overcoming its deep-seated misgivings about U.S. reliability. However, a Bharatiya Janata Party-led or a Bharatiya Janata Party-dominated government may have a more realistic worldview and fewer compunctions about a closer strategic embrace. These domestic factors, no doubt, are important. However, if the perceived threat from the PRC becomes sufficiently acute and India's own capacity to cope with the emergent threat is found wanting, a willingness to work more closely with the United States may prove to be the only viable option for any Indian Government. Such a forced marriage would be awkward at best.

U.S.-India strategic ties today are at an inflection point. It is certainly possible that with deft diplomacy, the two sides can further distance themselves from the baggage of the past and commit to a true strategic partnership. Such a development would suggest a future quite unlike the past. However, given the unpredictable challenges that the rapid rise of the PRC will pose for Asia (and, indeed, the world), leaders in both Washington and New Delhi may deem that the time has arrived to seize the possibility of forming an enduring strategic partnership – natural or not.

ENDNOTES

1. Image created by the author.
2. Richard Wike, Bruce Stokes, Jacob Poushter, and Janell Fetterolf, "U.S. Image Suffers as Publics around World Question Trump's Leadership," Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, June 2017, pp. 57-59.
3. Michael Moran, "The 'airlift of evil'," NBC News, November 29, 2001, available from http://www.nbcnews.com/id/3340165/ns/world_news-brave_new_world/t/airlift-evil/.
4. Fred Kaplan, "The Freedom Agenda Fizzles: How George Bush and Condoleezza Rice made a mess of Pakistan," *Slate*, November 5, 2007, available from http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/war_stories/2007/11/the_freedom_agenda_fizzles.html.
5. For a full consideration of this period, see Steve Coll, "Directorate S," *The New York Times*, January 31, 2018.
6. C. Christine Fair, "How Pakistan Beguiles the Americans: A Guide for Foreign Officials," *War on the Rocks*, June 24, 2015, available from <https://warontherocks.com/2015/06/how-pakistan-beguiles-the-americans-a-guide-for-foreign-officials/>.
7. Hari Sud, "Welcome Condoleezza Rice, Bye Colin Powell – Indian Perspective," *Ivarta*, February 15, 2005, available from http://www.ivarta.com/columns/OL_050215.htm.
8. Anne Gearan and Adam Goldman, "U.S. Diplomat and Longtime Pakistan Expert Is Under Federal Investigation," *The Washington Post*, November 6, 2014, available from https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/us-diplomat-and-longtime-pakistan-expert-under-federal-investigation/2014/11/06/f7fd3240-65f1-11e4-9fdc-d43b053ecb4d_story.html.
9. Fair.
10. Shashi Tharoor, "Why India Loves Bush," *The Daily Beast*, October 7, 2008, available from <https://www.thedailybeast.com/why-india-loves-bush>.

11. "Obama Says bin Laden had 'support network' in Pakistan," CNN, May 9, 2011, available from <http://www.cnn.com/2011/POLITICS/05/08/pakistan.us.relations/index.html>.

12. Suhasini Haidar and Narayan Lakshman, "Obama to be chief guest at Republic Day celebrations," *The Hindu*, updated September 23, 2016, available from <http://www.thehindu.com/news/international/Obama-to-be-chief-guest-at-Republic-Day-celebrations/article14021221.ece>.

13. "A Deepening Partnership with India," *The New York Times*, June 14, 2016, available from <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/14/opinion/a-deepening-partnership-with-india.html>.

14. Michael Hughes, "Pakistan counter-strike on Trump threatens US anti-terror efforts in Afghanistan," *The Defense Post*, January 10, 2018, available from <https://thedefensepost.com/2018/01/10/pakistan-us-anti-terror-efforts-afghanistan/>.

15. Press Trust of India (PTI), "Mattis' India visit aimed at taking Indo-US defence ties to next level," *The Hindu*, September 24, 2017.

16. Katrina Manson and Farhan Bokhari, "US suspends \$2bn in security assistance to Pakistan," *The Financial Times*, January 5, 2018.

17. Farhan Bokhari, Katrina Manson, and Kiran Stacey, "Pakistan halts intelligence-sharing with US after aid suspension," *The Financial Times*, January 11, 2018.

18. See, for example, Bharat Karnad, "Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the F-16: Mattis has to hardsell these issues on his visit to India," *The Hindustan Times*, September 21, 2017. For a contrary view, see S. Paul Kapur and Sumit Ganguly, "F-16s, Made in India: Why Second Best is Best," *Foreign Affairs*, March 14, 2017, available from <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2017-03-14/f-16s-made-india>.

19. PTI, "Make in India: Government gives shape to five industrial corridors," *The Economic Times*, May 11, 2015.

20. Rajat Pandit, "COMCASA will pave way for armed drones, sharing of op intel," *The Times of India*, September 7, 2018.

21. Rahul Sagar, "'Jiski Lathi, Uski Bhains': The Hindu Nationalist View of Indian Politics," in Kanti Bajpai, Saira Basit, and V. Krishnappa, eds., *India's Grand Strategy: History, Theory, Cases*, New Delhi, India: Routledge, 2016.

22. Rajat Pandit, "US pips russia as top arms supplier to India," *The Times of India*, August 13, 2014.

23. Elizabeth Roche, "James Mattis in India: US commits to transfer advanced defence technology for Make in India," live-Mint, September 26, 2017, available from <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/07dee1V8WtcWlYPFcFeslM/US-commits-to-transfer-advanced-defence-technology-for-Make.html>.

24. On a smaller scale, a commando raid into Male Island in the Maldives Islands (Operation CACTUS) to eliminate Tamil PLOTE coup plotters against the government on that island in 1988 was successful, and a cross-border raid into Myanmar dubbed a "counterinsurgency operation" took place in 2015. In both cases, the number of forces involved was small, and both involved only special operations forces for a short-duration raid-type mission.

25. Sanjoy Majumder, "Indian raid in Myanmar raises regional tensions," BBC News, June 19, 2015, available from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-33193275>.

26. Andrew J. Rotter, *Comrades at Odds: the United States and India, 1947-1964*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000.

27. M. S. Kohli and Kenneth Conboy, *Spies in the Himalayas: Secret Missions and Perilous Climbs*, Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2002.

28. Strobe Talbott, *Engaging India: Diplomacy, Democracy and the Bomb*, Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2006.

29. Thomas J. Christiansen, *The China Challenge: Shaping the Choices of Rising Power*, New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2016.

30. HT Correspondent, "US approves sale of 22 Guardian drones to India," *The Hindustan Times*, June 23, 2017.

31. "US: Tillerson calls for India ties to counter China," BBC News, October 19, 2017, available from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41675796>.

32. Matthew Pennington, "Tillerson Seeks Stronger Ties with India, Chides China," Associated Press, October 18, 2017, available from <https://www.usnews.com/news/politics/articles/2017-10-18/tillerson-seeks-stronger-ties-with-india-chides-china>.

33. "Stronger Indo-US ties for a stronger India," *The Economic Times*, October 25, 2017, available from <https://blogs.economictimes.indiatimes.com/et-editorials/stronger-indo-us-ties-for-a-stronger-india/>.

34. "US: Tillerson calls for India ties to counter China."

35. John Kifner, "AFTER THE WAR: OTHER FORCES; India Decides Not to Send Troops to Iraq Now," *The New York Times*, July 15, 2003, available from <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/07/15/world/after-the-war-other-forces-india-decides-not-to-send-troops-to-iraq-now.html>.

36. "Seven major rescue operations conducted by India," Yahoo News, March 30, 2016, available from <https://www.yahoo.com/news/seven-biggest-rescue-operations-conducted-by-india-110220981.html>.

37. Sukumar Rajah, "How India is Stepping Out of China's Shadow," *Global Trade*, June 2, 2016, available from <http://www.globaltrademag.com/global-trade-daily/commentary/how-india-is-stepping-out-of-chinas-shadow>; Salvatore Babones, "India Will Outgrow China In 2018, But Must Invest In Next-Generation Value Chains To Succeed," *Forbes*, January 2, 2018, available from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/salvatorebabones/2018/01/02/india-will-outgrow-china-in-2018-but-must-invest-in-next-generation-value-chains/#455bb80244d8>.

38. Jonathan Mogul, comp., and Barbara de Boinville, ed., "A Force More Powerful: Study Guide," Washington, DC: Greater Washington Educational Telecommunications Association, 2000, pp. 4-6, available from <https://www.nonviolent-conflict.org/>

wp-content/uploads/2016/02/A-Force-More-Powerful-Study-Guide.pdf.

39. David Scott, "India's Drive for a 'Blue Water' Navy," *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies*, Vol. 10, Iss. 2, Winter 2007-2008.

40. Shashank Joshi, *Indian Power Projection: Ambition, Arms and Influence*, London, UK: Routledge, 2016.

41. "Indian Navy commissions second landing craft utility vessel LCU L52," *Naval Today*, August 21, 2017, available from <https://navaltoday.com/2017/08/21/indian-navy-commissions-second-landing-craft-utility-vessel-lcu-l52/>.

42. "India to make naval ships that can launch attack in enemy zone," *Economic Times*, July 15, 2018, available from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/india-to-make-naval-ships-that-can-launch-attack-in-enemy-zone/articleshow/58777785.cms>.

43. Jaswant Singh, *Defending India*, London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 1999.

44. Joseph Chamie and Barry Mirkin, "India's Population: Becoming Number One," *YaleGlobal Online*, August 10, 2017, available from <https://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/indias-population-becoming-number-one>. See also, Lawrence Saez, "India will never become a superpower," *Asia Dialogue*, January 5, 2018, available from <http://theasiadialogue.com/2018/01/05/india-will-never-become-a-superpower/>.

45. Ainslie Embree, "Anti-Americanism in South Asia; A Symbolic Artifact," in Alvin Z. Rubenstein and Donald E. Smith, eds., *Anti-Americanism in the Third World*, New York: Praeger, 1985.

46. For a thoughtful and critical appraisal of the relationship, see Robert J. McMohan, *The Cold War on the Periphery: The United States, India, and Pakistan*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

47. On Pakistan's involvement with terror, see S. Paul Kapur, *Jihad as Grand Strategy: Islamist Militancy, National Security, and the Pakistani State*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

48. The Indian assessment may not be entirely off the mark. For a discussion, see Steve Coll, *Directorate S: The C.I.A. and America's Secret Wars in Afghanistan and Pakistan*, New York: Penguin Books, 2018.

49. The son of the legendary Office of Strategic Services and CIA officer of the same name.

50. It may be pertinent to mention that Prime Minister Modi was only the second Indian prime minister to ever skip a Non-Aligned Summit. For a discussion, see Sumit Ganguly, "India After Nonalignment: Why Modi Skipped the Summit," September 19, 2016, *Foreign Affairs*, available from <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/india/2016-09-19/india-after-nonalignment>.

51. See for example, Sunil Khilnani, et al., *Nonalignment 2.0: A Foreign and Strategic Policy for India in the Twenty-First Century*, New Delhi, India: Centre for Policy Research, 2012.

52. For a forthright statement that argues why India should engage the United States to counter the PRC, see Rajesh Rajagopalan, *India's Strategic Choices: China and the Balance of Power in Asia*, New Delhi, India: Carnegie India, 2017, available from <http://carnegieindia.org/2017/09/14/india-s-strategic-choices-china-and-balance-of-power-in-asia-pub-73108>.

53. Nick Hopkins, "When Blair met Bush: how the UK went to war in Iraq," *The Guardian*, July 9, 2016, available from <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jul/09/iraq-war-after-blair-and-bush-met-the-tempo-changed>.

54. Bryan Gibson, *Sold Out? US Foreign Policy, Iraq, the Kurds, and the Cold War*, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015, pp. 26-27.

55. Eileen Sullivan, Maggie Haberman, and Jack Ewing, "Trump Renews Attacks on NATO and Trade Imbalances," *The New York Times*, November 12, 2018, quoting a message posted by President Trump on Twitter, available from <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/11/12/us/politics/trump-nato-trade.html>.

56. Franz-Stefan Gady, "Russia Remains India's Largest Arms Supplier (For Now)," *The Diplomat*, March 1, 2016, available from <https://thediplomat.com/2016/03/russia-remains-indias-largest-arms-supplier-for-now/>.

57. Surinder Nihal Singh, "Why India Goes to Moscow for Arms," *Asian Survey*, Vol. 24, No. 7, July 1984, pp. 707-720.

58. Anwar Hussain Syed, *China and Pakistan: Diplomacy of an Entente Cordiale*, Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1974.

59. PTI, "China blocks another move to list Masood Azhar as global terrorist by the UN," *The Times of India*, November 2, 2017.

60. For a discussion of India's interest in the issue, see Balraj Nagal, *India and Ballistic Missile Defense: Furthering a Defensive Deterrent*, Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2016, available from <http://carnegieendowment.org/2016/06/30/india-and-ballistic-missile-defense-furthering-defensive-deterrent-pub-63966>.

61. Reuters, "China leads resistance to India joining NSG," *The Hindu*, October 18, 2016.

62. Saibal Dasgupta, "China hopes India-US-Australia-Japan quadrilateral won't damage 'third party'," *The Times of India*, November 5, 2017.

63. Husain Haqqani, *Magnificent Delusions: Pakistan, the United States, and an Epic History of Misunderstanding*, New York: Public Affairs, 2013.

64. Carlotta Gall, *The Wrong Enemy: America in Afghanistan, 2001-2014*, New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2014.

65. For a particularly forthright statement, see Aaron Friedberg, *A Contest for Supremacy: China, America, and the Struggle for Mastery in Asia*, New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 2012.

66. Dan Lamothe, "The US and India are deepening military ties – and China is watching," *The Washington Post*, March 2, 2016.

67. Ashley Tellis, *Dogfight! India's Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft Decision*, Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2011.

68. Sumit Ganguly's personal correspondence with a senior, retired U.S. Government official, 2012.

69. Rajat Pandit, "India, US to further propel their expansive defence ties with Mattis' visit to Delhi," *The Times of India*, September 17, 2017.

70. For a discussion of India's offsets policy, see Angathevar Baskaran, "The Role of Offsets in Indian Defense Procurement Policy," in Jurgen Brauer and Paul Dunne, eds., *Arms Trade and Economic Development: Theory, Policy and Cases in Arms Trade Offsets*, Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2004.

71. Rahul Bedi, "US Offers EMALS Technology to India for IN's Proposed Second Indigenous Carrier," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, Vol. 54, No. 43, October 25, 2017, p. 5; also see Shishir Gupta, "India to get US military tech in 3 key areas," *The Hindustan Times*, February 10, 2015.

72. ET Bureau, "Reliance Defence inks Pact with US Navy to repair warships," *The Economic Times*, updated July 11, 2018.

73. PTI, "US has offered India co-production of armoured carriers along with Israel: Government," *The Economic Times*, February 5, 2018.

74. Amit Cowshish, "Reinvigorating Defence Procurement and Production in India," in Sushant Singh and Pushan Das, eds., *Defence Primer: India at 75*, New Delhi, India: Observer Research Foundation, 2016.

75. V. K. Singh, *India's External Intelligence: Secrets of Research and Analysis Wing*, New Delhi, India: Manas Publications, 2007.

76. Charu Lata Joshi, "Indo-US relations take a step backward following Ratan Sehgal episode," *India Today*, March 15, 1997, available from <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/diplomacy/story/19970315-indo-us-relations-take-a-step-backward-following-ratan-sehgal-episode-831210-1997-03-15>.

77. Praveen Swami, "Our Man in New Delhi," *Frontline*, Vol. 21, Iss. 13, June 19 to July 2, 2004, available from <http://www.frontline.in/static/html/fl2113/stories/20040702004403200.htm>.

78. "India's CIA Spy Scandal," *Jane's Security News*, July 1, 2004, available from <http://archive.li/FcEIy>.

79. Nina Agrawal, "There's more than the CIA and FBI: The 17 agencies that make up the U.S. intelligence community," *Los Angeles Times*, January 17, 2017.

80. Jayshree Bajoria, "RAW: India's External Intelligence Agency," Washington, DC: Council on Foreign Relations, 2008.

81. "On The Range With Green Berets And Indian Special Forces," *Funker350*, June 13, 2016, available from <https://www.funker530.com/on-the-range-with-green-berets-and-indian-special-forces/>.

82. U.S. Army photo by Specialist Ashley Armstrong in Ashley M. Armstrong, "U.S., Indian paratroopers share airborne jump, end exercise [Photos 4 of 4]," Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, November 18, 2010, available from <https://www.jber.jb.mil/News/News-Articles/Article/291407/us-indian-paratroopers-share-airborne-jump-end-exercise/>.

83. Asha Sundaramurthy, "India Keeps Australia Out of the Malabar Exercise—Again," *The Diplomat*, May 8, 2018, available from <https://thediplomat.com/2018/05/india-keeps-australia-out-of-the-malabar-exercise-again/>.

84. "US Officer spent 5 days onboard an Indian Navy warship, INS Delhi," *Paluba*, February 19, 2012, available from <http://www.paluba.info/smf/index.php?topic=17897>.

85. Ajai Shukla, "The sinking feeling over Indian navy," *Al Jazeera*, March 6, 2014, available from <https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/03/sinking-feeling-over-indian-navy-20143665414242983.html>.

86. Brazil's sole aircraft carrier, the *São Paulo*, is equipped with steam catapults and a retractable ski jump, but its A-4 Skyhawk aircraft are completely obsolete—the modern equivalent of

bi-planes in World War II. The aircraft carrier has suffered numerous mechanical problems and shipboard fires, and it may not be operational.

87. Derek Grossman, "India Is the Weakest Link in the Quad," *Foreign Policy*, July 23, 2018, available from <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/07/23/india-is-the-weakest-link-in-the-quad/>.

88. Sanjeev Miglani, "Indian navy the odd man out in Asia's 'Quad' alliance," *Reuters*, November 22, 2017, available from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-usa-quad/indian-navy-the-odd-man-out-in-asias-quad-alliance-idUSKBN1DM0UB>.

89. Rex Tillerson, "Remarks on 'Defining Our Relationship With India for the Next Century'," October 18, 2017, available from <https://www.state.gov/secretary/20172018tillerson/remarks/2017/10/274913.htm>.

90. Tanvi Madan, "The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of the 'Quad'," *Indian Defense*, November 16, 2017, available from <http://indiandefence.com/threads/the-rise-fall-and-rebirth-of-the-quad.66773/>.

91. *Ibid.*

92. Lisa Curtis, *After Mumbai: Time to Strengthen U.S.-India Counterterrorism Cooperation*, Washington, DC: The Heritage Foundation, December 9, 2008, available from <https://www.heritage.org/asia/report/after-mumbai-time-strengthen-us-india-counterterrorism-cooperation>.

93. Indian Ministry of External Affairs, "India-U.S. Cyber Security Forum Fact Sheet," New Delhi, India: Government of India, Press Information Bureau, 2006.

94. U.S. Department of Homeland Security, "United States and India Sign Cybersecurity Agreement," July 19, 2011, available from <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2011/07/19/united-states-and-india-sign-cybersecurity-agreement>.

95. U.S. Department of State, "Joint Statement: Fourth U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue," June 24, 2013, available from <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2013/06/211084.htm>.

96. PTI, "India major defence partner: U.S.," *The Hindu*, June 5, 2017, available from <http://www.thehindu.com/todays-paper/tp-national/india-major-defence-partner-us/article18720192.ece>.

97. U.S. Department of Defense, "U.S.-India Joint Statement on the visit of Minister of Defence Manohar Parrikar to the United States," Release No: NR-306-16, August 29, 2016, available from <https://www.defense.gov/News/News-Releases/News-Release-View/Article/929270/us-india-joint-statement-on-the-visit-of-minister-of-defence-manohar-parrikar-t/>.

98. Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury, "India-US set up space cooperation mechanism," *The Economic Times*, February 28, 2016, available from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-us-set-up-space-cooperation-mechanism/articleshow/51179716.cms>.

99. "India-Japan Joint Statement during Visit of Prime Minister of Japan to India," Government of India, Ministry of External Affairs, September 14, 2017, available from <http://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/28946/IndiaJapan+Joint+Statement+during+visit+of+Prime+Minister+of+Japan+to+India+September+14+2017>.

100. PTI, "India-Israel to deepen cooperation in space technologies," *The Economic Times*, July 3, 2017, available from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/science/india-israel-to-deepen-cooperation-in-space-technologies/articleshow/59427068.cms>.

101. PTI, "India, France agree to step up cooperation in space technology," *The Economic Times*, March 10, 2018, available from <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/politics-and-nation/india-france-agree-to-step-up-cooperation-in-space-tech/articleshow/63247541.cms>.

102. Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalan, "What's Next for India's Space Program?" *The Diplomat*, January 20, 2018, available from <https://thediplomat.com/2018/01/whats-next-for-indias-space-program/>.

103. Ibid.

104. Gregory Sousa, "Countries With the Most Operational Satellites in Orbit," *World Atlas*, April 25, 2017, available

from <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/countries-with-the-most-operational-satellites-in-orbit.html>.

105. Tim Fernholz, "An unauthorized satellite launch in India threatens US regulatory reform in space," Quartz, March 13, 2018, available from <https://qz.com/1226962/an-unauthorized-satellite-launch-in-india-threatens-us-regulatory-reform-in-space/>.

U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE

**Major General John S. Kem
Commandant**

**STRATEGIC STUDIES INSTITUTE
AND
U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE PRESS**

**Director
Professor Douglas C. Lovelace, Jr.**

**Director of Research
Dr. Steven K. Metz**

Authors

**Dr. Sumit Ganguly
Dr. M. Chris Mason**

**Publications Assistant
Ms. Denise J. Kersting**

**Composition
Mrs. Jennifer E. Nevil**



U.S. ARMY



FOR THIS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS, VISIT US AT
<https://www.armywarcollege.edu/>

ISBN 1-58487-810-X



9 781584 878100

9 0000 >



This Publication



SSI Website



USAWC Website