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India's Strategic Defense Transformation: Expanding Global Relationships

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**INDIA'S STRATEGIC DEFENSE
TRANSFORMATION:
EXPANDING GLOBAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Brian K. Hedrick

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FOREWORD

India's defense establishment is undergoing an unprecedented transformation as it modernizes its military, seeks "strategic partnerships" with the United States and other nations, and expands its influence in the Indian Ocean and beyond. This transformation includes a shift from an emphasis on the former Soviet Union as the primary supplier of defense articles to a western base of supply and an increasing emphasis on bilateral exercises and training with many of the global powers.

This Letort Paper by Lieutenant Colonel Brian Hedrick explores the nature of this transformation, offers insights into the history of Indian defense relations, and suggests implications to U.S. foreign and defense policy. Much has been written on India's relations with its neighbors, especially Pakistan and China. In contrast, this Paper adds a new perspective by taking a global view of India's rise as a regional and future global military power through its bilateral defense relations and the potential conflict this creates with India's legacy as a leader of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to publish this important and informative Paper for leaders across government and others with an interest in this subject to foster a greater understanding of the dynamic change occurring in the way India conducts its defense relations around the world.



DOUGLAS C. LOVELACE, JR.

Director

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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SUMMARY

Following India's independence in 1947, then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru embarked on a foreign policy that was based on principles of socialism and remaining noncommittal to the emerging struggle between the Soviet Union and the countries forming the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the post-World War II period. Eventually, this policy led to India becoming one of the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1955. In practical terms, it placed India in a position of securing bilateral international commitments only in situations that were clearly neutral in nature or in cases of last-resort. The basic principles of nonalignment also governed the military relationships of the Indian defense establishment, resulting in limited military-to-military contacts, usually through United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions or training at foreign military schools. These practices were generally followed by his successors until the early 1990s when a changing geopolitical structure and an internal economic crisis began to challenge these principles.

India's answer to this challenge is to reach out to as many "friendly foreign countries" as possible to establish a balance of nonalignment with global multilateralism. The diversification of its defense supply base from the Soviet Union and later Russia to western suppliers resulted in a series of new agreements supporting its diversification, while also securing agreements with many of its smaller friends. Since 2000, India has increased the number of countries with which it has defense-specific agreements from seven to 26 by the end of 2008. Bilateral and multilateral exercises are also an increasing feature of India's

expanding defense relations as it seeks to find new technologies to transform its military from Cold War era weapons to 21st century capabilities through such opportunities.

India's interests have changed over the past decade or more, taking it from a position of nonalignment and noncommitment to having specific strategic interests taking it on a path of "poly-alignment." This path appears to be following four specific, but intermingled courses:

- Becoming a regional power across the Indian Ocean basin and securing agreements from partners in this region that support this goal, while building up expeditionary capabilities in its navy and air force. At the same time, it continues to modernize its army to deal with potential threats from its immediate neighbors and internal insurgency groups, and to fulfill its goal of being a global leader in UN peacekeeping.
- Developing "strategic partnerships" with countries perceived as leaders of a global, multipolar order and seeking modern military capabilities from many of those countries. This includes modern weapon systems as well as the technology and licensed production associated with those weapon systems.
- Securing or maintaining ties with smaller countries globally, many of which are members of the NAM, that can provide support in international fora as well as provide potential markets for its own emerging defense industry.
- Maintaining its position of leadership in the NAM and publically presenting itself as "nonaligned" despite its actual alignments in the three above thrust areas.

Many of the recent changes in India's global defense relationships represent a vast departure from past policy and practices. Given that the Congress Party and its United Progressive Alliance coalition received a strong electoral mandate on its reelection in May 2009, these changes are likely to continue and perhaps will see bold moves to further develop and deepen strategic relationships around the world. As India cements its expanding defense relationships through purchase of major defense platforms and the associated technology transfers and co-production agreements, it will define the course of its long-term relationships for the coming decades. This presents both opportunities and challenges for the United States as it expands its military ties with New Delhi.

INDIA'S STRATEGIC DEFENSE TRANSFORMATION: EXPANDING GLOBAL RELATIONSHIPS

INTRODUCTION

Following India's independence in 1947, then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru embarked on a foreign policy that was based on principles of socialism and remaining noncommittal to the emerging struggle between the Soviet Union and the countries forming the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in the post-World War II period. Eventually, this policy led to India becoming one of the founding members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1955. Nehru's approach is often described as noncommittal, neutralist, and even immoral.¹ In practical terms, it placed India in a position of securing bilateral international commitments only in situations that were clearly neutral in nature or in cases of last resort. The basic principles of nonalignment also governed the military relationships of the Indian defense establishment, resulting in limited military-to-military contact, and those usually under the auspices of United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions² or training at foreign military schools.³ These practices were generally followed by his successors until the early 1990s when a changing geopolitical structure and an internal economic crisis began to challenge these principles.

The past 2 decades witnessed a significant transformation of India's geopolitical outlook. India's economic crisis in the 1990s and subsequent liberalization of the economy precipitated this transformation. In the most recent decade, a number of events built upon the earlier economic liberalization and led India to play

a significant role as an emerging power. The events involved in this shaping include testing of nuclear weapons, the Kargil conflict with Pakistan, emergence of India as an information technology services hub, increasing participation in UN peacekeeping missions, and broadening of global outlook. The result for the Indian military's foreign relationships is a departure from the isolation of nonalignment, an increase in the number of bilateral military agreements and military contacts, and radical changes in the procurement of military hardware.

Against this backdrop, the Indian military establishment began an ambitious (albeit fragmented) transformation that includes both the upgrading of technologies and a more global approach to the way its military engages with other nations. This monograph looks at the evolution of India's defense relationships, primarily over the past decade, through key indicators that include public statements describing bilateral relationships, defense-specific agreements, defense-specific bilateral forums, exchanges of high-level defense delegations, bilateral (and to a lesser extent multilateral) military exercises, and significant defense sales to India. These indicators were chosen to analyze related factors that would give a general cross-section of the strengths of military-to-military relationships. They were also meant to be factors that would be readily verifiable, although some proved more elusive than others.⁴

As the appendix illustrates, India has cast a wide net in establishing defense relationships world-wide, the vast majority since 2000. The most significant of these will be explored in some depth, while others will only be briefly touched upon to deliver a sense of breadth to the international activities of the Indian defense

establishment. But before diving into the current transformative processes, it is constructive to review briefly the history of India's military relations in the context of its foreign policy to develop a framework from which to define the scale of current changes.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

It is probably easiest to understand India's defense relationships by looking briefly at a series of periods that ultimately shaped the trajectory of Indian defense relations. These can roughly be broken down into the following four periods – post colonial, regional conflict, Cold War, and post-Cold War. Each segment is not distinct as a specific period of time, but they are useful segments of a continuum of evolving policy that have significant overlap. Each period is defined by general trends occurring within that period.

Defense Relations for a Post-Colonial India.

Following independence, India's defense relations were largely defined by Nehru's foreign policy and personal philosophy of nonalignment. Nehru concluded that the best option for India was an indigenous military-industrial complex that would free it from foreign entanglements. However, India did become a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations after independence as a result of certain necessities in the military and economic sectors, and pressure from the British government.⁵ Nehru briefly considered a military alignment with the United States (and possibly others) as early as 1948, but was quickly convinced otherwise by his close friend and advisor, Krishna Menon, who would later become his Minister of

Defense.⁶ Nehru was a strong supporter of the creation of the UN in the post-World War II world, favoring it as a potential forum for international mediation and hinting at a preference for multilateralism.

Almost immediately following independence, Nehru was confronted by a war with newly formed Pakistan over the princely state of Kashmir. The war began with Pakistan sending tribal irregulars across the border into Kashmir, to be followed up by regular forces once the Indian Army was brought in to deal with the irregular forces. In the wake of this war, India logically turned to its former colonial master, the United Kingdom (UK), as well as the United States and France, for the purchase of defense equipment to arm its military.⁷ The UN was eventually called in to broker a cease-fire, but not in a way that set well with India. This war set the stage for an enduring rivalry between India and Pakistan that would preoccupy Indian foreign policy for more than 5 decades. It also involved the UN in what India considered to be a domestic or at best a bilateral issue and highlighted for Nehru and his successors that the UN had its limitations and would be dominated by the great powers. Additionally, it established a precedent for Pakistan of using irregular forces to fight a proxy-war in ways that would later be increasingly characterized as terrorism.

India supported UN military efforts in the Korean War by sending a medical unit under the UN flag and was active in the UN diplomacy on the Korean peninsula in the 1950s. This was independent India's first foray onto the international security stage and the Indian Army's first deployment on a UN mission. In subsequent years, India tended to favor anti-western initiatives in the UN while opposing those that intervened in South Asia.⁸ It maintained a policy (with

a few regional exceptions) that it would only deploy troops under the UN flag as a de facto extension of its policy of nonalignment.

In the mid-1950s, Pakistan sought (and was pressured) to join a number of international treaty organizations in the wake of and for the purposes of containing expanding communist regimes in Asia. Specifically, in 1955 Pakistan aligned with the west in joining the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). India's response was to formalize its policy of nonalignment by co-founding the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) among like-minded third-world countries that same year. India conceived the Non-Aligned Movement to provide a forum that was devoid of the entanglements of bilateral and multilateral treaties, but theoretically provided security through a position of neutrality in solidarity with other similarly disposed countries. It primarily had an anti-imperialist focus on the great powers, but had the practical consequence of limiting significant bilateral agreements with all countries.⁹

A Decade of Regional Conflict.

The decade beginning in the early 1960s and extending a few years into the 1970s witnessed India's involvement in three wars on the subcontinent; one with China and two with Pakistan. These three wars significantly altered India's global views and challenged the efficacy of the NAM.

As early as the late 1950s, Nehru continually resisted the call of the right-wing opposition in parliament to join western military alliances to protect itself from an increasingly aggressive China that refused to recognize the McMahon line demarcating the boundary between

India and Tibet.¹⁰ Nehru naively believed that China would not use military force to assert its claims and even moved Indian forces into disputed areas. Once China attacked, Nehru was left with no choice but to accept the U.S. offer of military assistance from U.S. Ambassador John Kenneth Galbraith, as India lacked the military hardware to fight China.¹¹ This highlighted the weakness of NAM in two areas: (1) nonalignment did not protect India from China in the way that Nehru envisioned it would, nor did the other nonaligned countries rally to India's aid; (2) in an ironic twist of fate, it was the United States and other powers that India specifically wanted to remain unentangled from that came to India's rescue with support and equipment. India continued to hold to the lofty ideals of NAM, but the war itself was a wakeup call and a 5-year defense plan was introduced that called for expansion and modernization of the military through foreign purchases, and nearly doubled the defense budget.¹²

Following the war with China, Pakistan saw a window of weakness in India's military power and in 1965 used the opportunity to attempt to capture the rest of Kashmir before the opportunity closed. However, Pakistan had grossly underestimated Indian capabilities, and India not only repulsed Pakistan's attacks but was able to threaten Lahore, which is merely 30 kilometers from the border. Practically, though, the war was a stalemate because neither side could effectively gain significant ground in Kashmir due to a number of strategic miscalculations on both sides. Again, NAM proved ineffective, and it took the intervention of the great powers to establish a UN-sponsored cease-fire line.¹³

India went to war again with Pakistan in 1971 as a consequence of its support of the Bangladesh independence struggle in East Pakistan. India did not immediately become directly involved due to the fact that the Army's Eastern Command was scattered throughout West Bengal supporting the recently concluded elections, and the summer monsoons had set in, making it difficult for India to employ its armor in East Pakistan. Instead, India provided support and training to the guerrilla forces of the independence movement until conditions improved in its favor.¹⁴ In the prelude to this impending conflict, India's concerns about the balance of power in the region compelled it to sign its first bilateral treaty of "Peace, Friendship, and Cooperation" with the Soviet Union, which stated that each country would come to the aid of the other if attacked.¹⁵ The Soviet Union was already a significant supplier of defense equipment to India, but with the signing of this first treaty, the Soviets quickly became India's primary supplier of defense equipment. By this time, India understood its ability to procure equipment was an important security objective, and its defense relations were singularly focused on maintaining "reliable suppliers."

The Cold War.

Following the independence of Bangladesh, the significance of a bipolar global security structure became increasingly apparent to the Indian political establishment. The withdrawal of U.S. military support during the 1965 Indo-Pakistan war initiated this, but it was cemented in the aftermath of the 1971 war where the United States demonstrated solidarity with Pakistan (at least from the Indian point of view)

by sailing the aircraft carrier USS *Enterprise* near the entrance to the Bay of Bengal and suspended what little military assistance it was providing to India. Additionally, China sided with Pakistan in the war and denounced India. While the war itself was essentially a bilateral matter between India and Pakistan, it had the effect of highlighting the big power dynamics between the United States, the Soviet Union, and China, and raised questions again about the effectiveness of nonalignment.¹⁶

India gave little attention to its nuclear policy after independence; however, some of its nuclear scientists worked quietly on developing a nuclear explosive device for “peaceful purposes.” When China conducted its first nuclear test in 1964, India became concerned at having a nuclear power on its doorstep, especially one it had just been to war with, but the government was quickly distracted by the war with Pakistan and domestic political issues so did not focus on its own program. Following the 1971 war, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi and others in India’s political elite were concerned about the way New Delhi had become a pawn in the power-game between Washington, Moscow, and Beijing, and were unhappy at not being treated as a major power. Consequently, the government began more actively pursuing development of a nuclear explosive device around 1972 and then tested it in 1974 in what was termed a “peaceful nuclear explosion.” However, it is important to note that this period was also one of great turmoil in internal politics, and therefore it is often argued that this achievement was a demonstration of India’s technical know-how and an opportunity to inspire pride, nationalism, and a sense of achievement for the country. India opted not to weaponize its new capability and remained satisfied

with the knowledge that it had clearly indicated it had the know-how.¹⁷

On Christmas Day 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to subdue and control a brutal political struggle that had been brewing over the previous year between the communists and other political factions. This event again brought the major powers into the affairs of South Asia and had significant implications for India's foreign policy. The United States quickly reversed sanctions previously imposed against Pakistan, which had limited its military procurements and development of its nuclear program, and established bases and support for the mujahedeen fighting the Soviets and Soviet-backed communists. This had ramifications for New Delhi, as renewed support to Pakistan allowed for revitalization of its nuclear program and military modernization. India was faced with the dilemma of not wanting to upset the Soviets by objecting to the invasion, which it did, in fact, oppose on principle, but only offered mild criticism, as it did not want to offend its only source of military equipment. India found itself in a position of trying to balance goodwill with the United States to hedge against a Sino-American-Pakistan axis, while sustaining the support of the Soviet Union.¹⁸

When the Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan in 1988, the United States no longer had a rationale for continuing military support to Pakistan. While military support would not end immediately, the United States found it increasingly difficult to certify that Pakistan did not have a nuclear weapons program. Finally, in October 1990 U.S. President George H. W. Bush's administration notified Congress that it could no longer certify that Pakistan did not possess nuclear weapons. From this point forward, both India and

Pakistan considered themselves demonstrated and de facto nuclear weapons powers, respectively, which initiated strategic planning in India on developing a nuclear doctrine considering the implications of a nuclear war with Pakistan. The failure to certify Pakistan also initiated Pressler Amendment sanctions against Pakistan, which once again made it difficult for Pakistan to obtain conventional weapons from the United States. A delivery of F-16 fighter aircraft was suspended as a result of these sanctions, and Pakistan was forced to seek its weapons purchases from China alone.¹⁹ At the same time, the international order was changing as the Soviet Union pursued a policy of rapprochement with the United States and China under Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost*.

The End of the Cold War.

The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 came as a shock to India, as the Russian Federation did not carry the same clout and could no longer provide the kind of support for India in international fora that its predecessor had. The new Russia also no longer accepted the barter of goods and materials for military hardware in the same way the Soviet Union had, and its defense industry was in shambles. India now had to pay hard currency, something that was in short supply in the early 1990s. Despite a shortage of cash, India accelerated a process of looking westward for military hardware that was begun by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi.

India experienced a major economic crisis in 1991 that stemmed from growing trade deficits and increased capital expenditures in the 1980s that resulted in a critical reduction in foreign exchange reserves.²⁰ Some

of this was a result of trade deficits with large trading partners such as the Soviet Union and because of capital investment in public sector companies (many of them in the defense sector) that, despite large amounts of capital, were not producing anything. This in turn caused the government to purchase more equipment from foreign (mostly Soviet) suppliers.²¹ To raise much-needed capital, the government took significant steps to liberalize the economy from the socialist model pursued in the past. This opened up many areas for foreign investment, and the Indian defense sector saw this as an opportunity to obtain much needed technical know-how from foreign (primarily Western) defense companies.

The economic liberalization had a psychological effect on other areas, and as a result, the Indian defense establishment began looking outward for more international interaction beyond its participation in UN peacekeeping missions. U.S. Lieutenant General Claude Kicklighter traveled to India in 1991 and signed the first Indo-U.S. agreement to expand Army-to-Army contacts. This was followed a few years later in 1995 when the “Agreed Minute on Defense Relations” was signed by Secretary of Defense William Perry and Indian Minister of Defense S. B. Chavan and expanded the scope of the bilateral relationship to joint exercises and the possibility of technology transfers. However, a shift to the West was not easy. Most of India’s equipment was from the Soviet bloc, as was the related support structure. The Indian government had planned to begin inducting indigenously produced equipment by the 1990s, but the failure of the state-owned industries to deliver left it needing an alternative source, and shortages of foreign exchange made direct purchases few and far-between.

In May 1998, India conducted two nuclear tests, which were shortly followed by tests in Pakistan. These tests again brought the specter of sanctions to South Asia, but this was of little consequence to Pakistan, which was already sanctioned. Many of India's attempts to procure from the West (especially the United States) were placed on hold, leaving few, if any, options for military modernization. Notably, Russia did not impose sanctions after the tests, but did join with the other permanent members of the UN Security Council in condemning them.²²

The line of control running through Jammu and Kashmir that separates India and Pakistan-controlled sides of the state runs through some of the most treacherous terrain in the world. Consequently, the Indian Army vacates many of its highest outposts during the winter months. In the spring of 1999, when the army units returned to their posts, they found that Pakistani regular and irregular forces had occupied the outposts a few weeks earlier. The Indian Army, supported by the Indian Air Force, fought a mini-war with Pakistan over its positions along the line of control. The war itself was limited only to those areas where India had to reclaim its outposts. However, it took on a larger strategic context as both countries had just tested nuclear weapons, and the conflict attracted the attention of the international community. The United States brokered a cease-fire 2 months after fighting began and for the first time, backed India in a conflict with Pakistan. The war also highlighted for India its shortcomings in equipment, especially sensor technologies such as night vision equipment and ground surveillance radar. India began a more aggressive procurement program after the Kargil War, but its implementation was hampered by the limitations of the Indian bureaucracy.

India and Pakistan escalated tensions approximately 2 1/2 years later, with both the Kargil War and the events of September 11, 2001, in the United States fresh in their minds when members of the Pakistan-sponsored Lashkar-e-Taiba terrorist organization attacked the Indian parliament building on December 13, 2001. Both countries mobilized their militaries in a standoff that lasted until the summer of 2002. Multiple attempts by the international community to mediate were limited in effectiveness, and ultimately both sides had to agree bilaterally to demobilize. The lessons for India in the wake of the Kargil conflict and 2002 escalation with Pakistan were that it needed to change the way it viewed its defense relations and significantly revamp its procurement mechanisms.

Over the course of a little more than 5 decades, India went from a country with a firm position on nonalignment to a country looking for opportunities to enhance its security by developing strong defense connections with what it termed “friendly foreign countries.” Until the late 1990s, India primarily viewed its defense relationships with other countries through the lens of defense trade. With few exceptions, the solidity of the relationship was based on what the country was willing to sell to India and under what terms, and in some cases that meant military grant aid. This was a realm that was almost exclusively dominated by the Soviet Union, which entered into the first bilateral defense agreement with India in 1971. By 1990, only two other countries had entered into defense agreements with India. Mauritius signed a defense agreement in 1974 whereby India would provide leadership to the Mauritius Coast Guard from the Indian Navy.²³ Then in 1982 India signed a memorandum of understanding on the supply of defense equipment with

France. By the end of the 1990s, India was seeking to develop other sources of supply for military equipment and had signed an additional three agreements on defense equipment with Italy, South Africa, and the UK in addition to the aforementioned agreements with the United States. In 2002, India published the first iteration of its *Defence Procurement Procedure*, which was meant to establish processes for defense purchases, to include competitive bids. Some in the defense establishment were beginning to see the benefits of other forms of bilateral interactions resulting in the aforementioned two agreements on defense cooperation in exercises and training with the United States. Individual defense relationships and how procurement and other forms of engagement are altering Indian defense policy are further explored.

Russia.

India's current relationship with Russia is shaped by its previous relationship with the Soviet Union. The fall of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) left in its wake a weaker Russia and a new global dynamic that significantly altered that relationship. The Soviet Union offered relatively high technology weapons and equipment on very favorable terms without many of the strings of western suppliers. Until the 1990s, the USSR held the upper hand in the bilateral relationship—it had military equipment India needed, was willing to give India favorable terms (sometimes in the form of barter), and India had limited options for supply; but India had some leverage in being a significant component of Soviet defense exports. Once the Soviet Union broke up, the situation began to reverse. Russia faced the challenge of restructuring industries that were now spread across

several independent republics. The new Russia and its defense industry were plagued by increasing costs, a loss of many important scientists and engineers, and increasingly poor quality of its products. Its only deliveries to India in the mid-1990s were from orders originally placed with the Soviet Union.²⁴ By the late 1990s, India was already looking for new suppliers, and by 2002 had begun soliciting competitive bids under its new *Defence Procurement Procedure*.

In 2000, newly elected President of Russia Vladimir Putin initiated a revitalization of the Russian defense sector in hopes of recapturing its lost business from India and other former customers, including creation of the state arms monopoly *Rosoboronexport*. On his first visit to India in October of that same year, Putin managed to close approximately \$3 billion in purchases from a desperate India that had just fought the Kargil War and was experiencing significant shortages of equipment. President Putin and then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee also agreed to raise the level of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation from the level of their Defense Secretaries to India's Defense Minister and Russia's Deputy Prime Minister for Defense Exports.²⁵ This remains India's highest level bilateral defense dialog with any country.

Understanding that India was broadening its scope of sources for defense purchases, Russia sought to retain a large share of its market. To do so, it appealed to India's growing desire for technology by offering a number of co-development and co-production deals. This initially included Su-30 fighter aircraft and T-90 tanks, mostly built from kits.²⁶ However, Russia demanded that India sign an Intellectual Property Rights Agreement before it would provide any more technology. Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and

President Putin signed the agreement in 2005, but only after India shrewdly insisted that it only apply to technology purchased after the signing of the agreement. It also apparently states that Russia is India's preferred supplier.²⁷ Once the agreement was signed, India and Russia inked a number of very lucrative deals, many of which were in negotiation for years. Among these were the sales of the Russian aircraft carrier *Admiral Gorshkov*, which is being significantly modified and lease of an Akula-II class nuclear submarine, which India will use to train sailors while it builds its own nuclear sub. Additionally, Russia and India have entered into agreements for co-development of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile, a fifth-generation multirole fighter aircraft, a medium transport aircraft, hypersonic cruise missiles, and an assortment of smaller systems and subsystems.²⁸

In 2003 Russia and India held their first bilateral exercise, Indra, in the Sea of Japan with their two navies. This desire to change and expand the nature of their relationship was likely the result of desires on both sides. India was already reaching out more to other countries for engagement beyond defense sales and wanted to ensure Russia did not feel excluded, and Russia was eager to counter the U.S. influence in this area where a number of Indo-U.S. bilateral exercises had already taken place. The Indian Army conducted its first combined exercise with Russia in 2005, and the 2007 iteration included a contingent of Indian Air Force personnel. Naval exercises have tended to focus on piracy, smuggling, and terrorism while the Army/Air Force exercises focus on counterterrorism under a UN mandate.²⁹

India and Russia have also had a significant number of problems over the past decade, most having to do

with delayed deliveries and cost escalations. The most visible of these issues centers on the purchase of the *Admiral Gorshkov* aircraft carrier and its associated MiG-29 fighters. The *Gorshkov* was essentially gifted to India for the price of one dollar, and India signed a contract for \$1.5 billion in 2004 for the refurbishment and aircraft, with a 2008 delivery date. As of February 2009, the Russians had increased the cost of the carrier to \$2.9 billion for the package, up from \$2.1 billion in November 2007. Delivery is now projected for 2012.³⁰ India has already renamed the aircraft carrier the INS *Vikramaditya*, but the issue has severely strained Indo-Russian relations. Indian Navy Chief Admiral Sureesh Mehta initially opposed any increases in cost, but has since relented³¹ since Russia essentially has India over a barrel because their current aircraft carrier, INS *Viraat*, is scheduled to be decommissioned in a few years. However, subsequent intervention by Defense Minister A. K. Antony and Defense Secretary Vijay Singh may have caused the Russians to relent, at least a little.³² India has also experienced cost increases in its Su-30 aircraft deal, delivery of Il-38SD maritime patrol aircraft without necessary avionics and weapons, faulty ammunition, and poor quality in a variety of Russian arms.³³ The Indian military services are vocal in their complaining about the multitude of issues with Russian defense equipment, but the Ministry of Defense bureaucrats and politicians are still reluctant to irritate Russia significantly by holding a hard line or cancelling their deals.

Despite their problems, India has gone out of its way to ensure it retains a solid relationship with its reliable old friend. In 2007, when many of the issues were coming to a head, Prime Minister Singh invited President Putin to be the guest of honor at the Republic

Day parade, a tactic often used to demonstrate friendship.³⁴ Russia is second only to the United States in the number of high-level delegations to India, but beats out the United States in frequency of cabinet-level defense visits. Russia is usually the destination of choice when a new Minister of Defense takes over; Minister of Defense A. K. Antony made Russia his second trip after assuming office, and during that trip characterized the relationship as one of “mutual cooperation of joint production.”³⁵ Citing Russia as a “strategic partner” on a number of occasions, India has also secured a number of additional defense agreements on bilateral defense cooperation and joint development of a number of military systems.

United Kingdom.

Although India inherited its military from the British Empire and has been a member of the Commonwealth of Nations since independence, it did not develop a significant bilateral defense relationship until after the two countries signed a “Defence Equipment Memorandum of Understanding” in 1997. Prior to that, the UK had moderate defense trade with India that peaked during the Indo-China war and tapered off during the 1970s and early 1980s. Trade began to expand again in the 1980s with India’s purchase of Sea King helicopters and a second aircraft carrier. In the 1990s, Indian defense purchases from the UK included Jaguar and Harrier aircraft, and a Leander-class frigate.³⁶ The signing of the “Defence Equipment Memorandum of Understanding,” was Britain’s first military agreement with India since 1947. Britain also began holding regular defense consultations with India through an “India-UK Defense Consultative Group”

that is co-chaired by the Indian Defense Secretary and the UK Permanent Under Secretary of State for Defense. Since its inception, military-to-military contacts and research and development increasingly add to discussions, in addition to the traditional defense procurement issues. In 2004, India and Britain entered into their first co-production agreement for the Hawk advanced jet trainer aircraft and have a number of on-going projects involving VVIP helicopters, communications networks, naval support vessels, and upgrades to existing equipment.³⁷ Between 2003 and 2007, India signed contracts for approximately \$1.7 billion in defense sales. Britain is not selling many of the “big ticket” items to India, but it has an important and growing defense supply relationship. As an indicator, the UK was projected to be the largest foreign vendor at the 2009 Aero India air show in number of companies represented.³⁸

Despite sharing a common military lineage and having the common language of English, India and Britain did not carry out bilateral military exercises until 2005 when joint exercise Emerald Mercury was conducted in Hyderabad. Prior to that, there was only a limited tradition of exchanging officers at the staff college and war college levels, and a few other disparate training opportunities, something routinely done with many of India’s friendly foreign countries. Since 2005 and under the direction of the “India-UK Defense Consultative Group,” the two countries conducted the Konkan naval carrier group joint exercise in the Bay of Bengal in 2006, Himalayan Warrior Army-Marine high altitude exercise in India and Indradhanush Air Force exercise in the UK in 2007, and the Lion’s Strike and Wessex Warrior Army exercises in the UK in 2008.³⁹ Most of these exercises appear to be on track as annual

or biennial events, with locations alternating between India and the UK.

The Indo-British relationship is consistently characterized as a “strategic partnership” and is evidenced by the statements made during increasingly regular reciprocal visits.

European Union.

The relationship between India and the European Union (EU) is as new as the EU itself and is a descendent of past bilateral relationships between individual EU countries and India. The EU does not get extensively involved in defense matters, but because defense sales make up a large share of the relationship due to the European defense consortiums such as Airbus, Eurofighter, and Eurocopter, we need to consider the collective relationship as well as the individual bilateral relationships of individual states.

Of all the EU member states, France has the most robust and long-standing bilateral relationship with India, and the EU relationship derives much of its strength from this relationship. France began selling defense equipment to India in 1949, and despite early Indian skepticism due to earlier French colonial policies that limited the defense relationship, France was and is considered a “reliable supplier.” The Indo-French relationship did not really take off until 1962 when France finally relinquished its possessions in India, clearing away the colonial issues, and India was attacked by China as previously discussed. While France joined with the United States and UK sanctioning India in 1965 during the war with Pakistan, France was the first to lift sanctions and resume defense trade a year later. France probably did the best job

of delinking its defense trade with its foreign policy; to the extent that it also had a fairly robust defense trade with Pakistan. While the French never achieved the scale of defense sales that the Soviet Union did, they did provide some western technology desired by India and at least some diversification away from Soviet sources. Consequently, France was the second major power to sign a defense agreement with India when both countries signed the “Memorandum of Understanding on Supply of Defense Equipment” in 1982.⁴⁰ Among the purchases from France in the 1980s were Mirage-2000 fighter aircraft, air surveillance radars, and anti-tank missiles.⁴¹ The relationship remained strictly commercial and did not have any overt political linkages whatsoever, which fit nicely with India’s position of nonalignment.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, France was best positioned to offer western technology to India and further develop its supply relationship. However, India’s financial crisis in the early 1990s curtailed early progress. By 1995, India and France had begun talks to revitalize the Defense Cooperation Working Group, and in January 1998 French President Jacques Chirac was invited to be chief guest at the annual Republic Day Parade. During this visit, both countries decided to expand the dialog beyond just defense procurements. To its credit (from the Indian point of view), France did not sanction India after the 1998 nuclear tests but adopted a more “progressive” approach. While this did not result in any significant immediate advantage for France, the point is still remembered in South Block.⁴²

After 2000, things began to change. France and India began to have more substantive discussions in the biennial strategic dialog between the Indian Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister and the French Special Envoy, and in the annual high committee on defense

cooperation held between the Indian Defense Secretary and his French counterpart. Both dialogs added global issues to the agenda in addition to defense procurement, resulting in a significant increase in joint training and exercises and increased contact between senior defense officials. Regular visits of the chiefs of military services rarely, if ever, occurred before 1998; afterwards, visits began to occur on an almost annual basis, but recently involved more Indians travelling to France rather than the other way around. Because of the naval presence in the French possessions in the Indian Ocean, the French and Indian navies began exercising together as early as 1998. By 2003, regular air force exercises were taking place.⁴³ Defense sales expanded in the last 10 years as India purchased additional Mirage-2000s and Exocet missiles and leased Scorpene submarines from France.⁴⁴ France is also competing the Rafale fighter in the Indian Air Force medium multirole combat aircraft competition and has offered extensive transfer of technology for this and other defense sales. During Prime Minister Singh's visit to France for the Bastille Day parade in July 2009, both leaders pledged to increase defense cooperation, and Singh characterized the relationship as "a close and wide ranging strategic partnership"⁴⁵

The Indo-French relationship does have its problems. France's strong ties to both Pakistan and China were not a significant issue when the relationship was procurement-based, but now that the relationship encompasses more strategic issues, this may have implications in the long run. Former Prime Minister Atal Bihar Vajpayee stated that France had to "make a strategic decision between . . . India and Pakistan."⁴⁶ France has also been accused of corruption (and exonerated) in the Scorpene submarine deal, and

a \$600 million deal to buy helicopters from a French production unit of Eurocopter had to be cancelled due to allegations of corruption in the bidding process.⁴⁷ Cases such as this create perceptions that will take time to overcome. France and India also have the problem of not having a common language, which will likely hamper certain aspects of the strategic relationship.

Germany.

Germany's defense relationship with India is a fairly recent development. While both countries exchanged students at service schools as early as 1978,⁴⁸ defense ties were very limited. According to the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, the "strategic partnership" began in 2001.⁴⁹ India and Germany signed the Defense and Security Cooperation agreement in 2006, their first defense agreement. This was followed in 2007 with an agreement on "Mutual Protection of Classified Information." India and Germany hold regular meetings at the Defense Secretary-level and hold subgroup meetings on Strategic Defense Cooperation, Defense Technical Cooperation, and Military to Military Cooperation. While Germany does not have a significant trade relationship with India yet, it has been designated as the lead country for the Eurofighter bid for the medium multi-role combat aircraft competition.

Italy.

Italy has a modest defense trade relationship with India that began in 1970; however, it did not amount to much until 1993 when India placed an order for anti-submarine warfare torpedoes for its Bhramaputra and Shivalik-class frigates.⁵⁰ One year

later, the two countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding for Defense Cooperation in the field of Defense Equipment, which was renewed again in 2003. In recent years, Italy has been marketing its defense products to include C-27C transport aircraft, AugustaWestland helicopters, and a variety of naval weapons.⁵¹ Italy is also providing design consultancy to India for parts of its indigenous aircraft carrier project.⁵² Italy has not yet progressed to the point of establishing regular exercises with the Indian military or exchanges of students at the professional military colleges; but since the 2003 signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Defense Cooperation, Italian and Indian defense establishments conducted regular, senior-level interaction. The relationship continues to be primarily focused on defense trade.

Sweden.

Sweden's relationship with India is also almost exclusively defense trade based and consists exclusively of the 1986 sale of the FH-77 Bofors howitzers to India. This particular deal later became embroiled in one of the largest cases of graft and corruption in defense sales and was a major factor in the defeat of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's party in 1989 parliamentary elections. The ensuing scandal eventually led to stricter laws on corruption and the addition of an "integrity pact" as a requirement for all defense sales in the "Defense Procurement Procedure."⁵³ Sweden entered its JAS-39 Gripen fighter in the medium multi-role combat aircraft competition.

Israel.

India only extended full diplomatic recognition to Israel in 1992. Prior to that, it maintained limited contact with the Jewish state due to concerns about inflaming its large Muslim population over Palestine and Cold War politics. Since then, Israel surpassed France to become India's second largest defense supplier with the conclusion of a \$1.1 billion contract to sell the Phalcon airborne warning and control system (AWACS), and both countries are jointly developing a \$2.5 billion surface-to-air missile system. Israel presents a very favorable arms source for India, as it is willing to transfer technology to India with few, if any, strings attached as other western suppliers do. The main limitation is that some of Israel's technology is derived from U.S. technology, which does have strict arms control measures.⁵⁴

Counterterrorism and intelligence cooperation are the largest bilateral strategic issues.⁵⁵ Both countries signed an intelligence sharing agreement in 2007 and hold regular talks on counterterrorism. It is important to note that much of the counterterrorism cooperation happens outside of the Indian Ministry of Defense, as this is mainly an issue for the Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of External Affairs. India and Israel have conducted bilateral army and air force exercises, with a focus on counterterrorism. The Ministry of Defense does hold regular talks with Israel through the India-Israel Joint Defense Committee and India-Israel Joint Working Group on Defense Cooperation, the former held at the Defense Secretary-level. Bilateral meetings at the service chief-level and below are now occurring on a regular basis. India has thus far been relatively successful at balancing a strong defense relationship

with Israel in contrast to its policies and relationships with regard to both Palestine and Iran. However, the left parties in India tend to be critical of the relationship with Israel, and the relationship has had to endure accusations of impropriety in defense deals such as India's selection of the Israeli Medium-Range Surface to Air missile instead of the indigenous Advanced Air Defense Missile produced by the Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO). The government is also criticized for not conducting the procurement through a global tender.⁵⁶

NAM Partners and Others.

India's relationships with members of the NAM and other countries take on a different dynamic than that of the global powers. In these relationships, India is the larger power, and in many cases the supplier of military hardware and/or military training. Among many developing countries, NAM has been a common bond, as has membership in the British Commonwealth with a smaller set of countries.

India's relationship with South Africa extends from well before its independence, as both have a common bond of throwing off the yoke of British rule in the 20th century. Militarily, however, the relationship was less involved, and India has served as both supplier and recipient of arms. In the 1970s, India supplied Centurion tanks to South Africa and in the late 1990s and 2000s received Casspir armored personnel carriers from South Africa.⁵⁷ There is also some trade in small arms and ammunition. Despite this limited defense sales relationship, both countries signed a Memorandum of Understanding concerning Cooperation in the Field of Defense Equipment in 1996

followed by an Agreement on Defense Co-operation in 2000. A subsequent Agreement on Supply of Defense Equipment was signed in 2003. India and South Africa have an established bilateral defense forum, the “India-South Africa Joint Defense Committee” and the chiefs of the South African Army and Navy both visited India as recently as 2007. South Africa also sends a few military officers to Indian defense schools.⁵⁸ The navies interact through a newly established trilateral naval exercise that also includes ships and personnel from the Brazilian Navy.

Brazil is the third leg of the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) dialog forum trilateral commission that seeks to strengthen the multilateral system in areas such as UN Security Council reform and promoting “South-South cooperation” across three continents and among three regional powers in their respective neighborhoods. Because of the distances involved, defense ties between Brasilia and New Delhi have been limited. However, India purchased six executive jets from Brazilian airplane manufacturer Embraer in 2003 for the Air Force and recently entered into a deal with the same company to jointly develop an airborne early warning and control aircraft based on the EMB-145.⁵⁹ Also in 2003, India and Brazil signed an “Agreement on Defense Cooperation,” their first bilateral defense agreement, which also led to the aforementioned trilateral naval exercise with South Africa. Brazil also has a nascent defense sales relationship with Pakistan, but like France, has been able to manage it with regard to its relationship with India.⁶⁰

Ecuador has emerged as an important procurer from India’s defense sector with the purchase of 12 Dhruv Advanced Light Helicopters from Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. India is also attempting to break

into the defense aviation markets in Peru, Bolivia, and Venezuela.⁶¹

Iran presents an interesting problem for India in terms of defense relationships due to the close scrutiny given the overall Indo-Iranian relationship by the west, and especially the United States. India maintained good relations with Iran both before and after the revolution. In recent years, it has focused primarily on access to Central Asian energy and as a route into Afghanistan to support its reconstruction projects. Defense relations are very limited, but the two countries have conducted small-scale naval exercises since 2003.⁶² Additionally, India trains a few Iranian naval officers each year.⁶³ India and Iran do not have a separate, specific, defense agreement, but the language of the 2003 “New Delhi Declaration” includes an agreement “to explore opportunities for cooperation in defense, including training and exchange of visits.”⁶⁴ The Iranian Navy Commander visited India in 2007 and since then Indian senior military leadership has also visited Iran. India’s limited relationship with Iran, while necessary for limited strategic reasons and to appease certain segments of the Indian domestic population, is often problematic for its relationship with the United States and Israel.⁶⁵

Mauritius and Tajikistan present unique cases of India’s defense relationships as both involve the only operational basing of Indian military outside of India. Mauritius has a defense agreement that has been in place since 1974 whereby the Indian Navy provides military leadership to the Mauritius Coast Guard on deputation. India has also transferred naval vessels and equipment to Mauritius over the years.⁶⁶ More recently, India has signed a basing agreement with Tajikistan that gives it access to a Tajik Air Force Base that is also shared with the Russians.⁶⁷

Australia, Japan, Singapore, and South Korea are all developing emerging defense relationships with India, with each having an independent focus guiding the direction of the relationship. All have signed bilateral defense agreements with India, and with the exception of South Korea, all have regular bilateral defense talks. Australia and Japan are focused on maritime security and participated in the multilateral Malabar naval exercise, along with India, the United States, and Singapore in 2007. In addition to the maritime security focus, Singapore is also interested in using India's military training facilities due to its own lack of large training areas as evidenced by the agreements for training on Army and Air Force bases. These agreements are unique for India and provide Singapore a training location much closer than the United States, where it currently conducts much of its training. Singapore is also interested in tapping the Indian defense market and was marketing its Pegasus lightweight howitzer to the Indian Army. However, this deal has already become embroiled in a corruption scandal.⁶⁸ Finally, South Korea is a potential source of technology for India's emerging shipbuilding industry and potential partner for development and marketing of other defense equipment.⁶⁹

The Ukraine, Poland, and other former Soviet republics are also potential defense partners with India. The Ukraine inherited much of the former Soviet defense industry and is licensed to produce a number of Russian military systems. It currently has contracts to service many of India's Soviet-era aircraft and vehicles. The two countries are also working on a bilateral defense agreement and possible sales of major end items, much to the chagrin of Russia.⁷⁰ Poland is interested in developing a defense supply relationship

focused on upgrading many of India's Soviet-era systems with new Polish technologies. Uzbekistan signed an agreement on "Cooperation in Military and Military-technical Matters" in 2005,⁷¹ and Kyrgyzstan transferred some of its used MiG-21 fighters to India in 2003 according to the *SIPRI Arms Transfer Database*.

While much of the focus and attention has been on India's defense relationships with major or middle powers, India has been solidifying its relationship with many smaller and developing countries as well, many of which are members of NAM. These relationships are mostly based on India providing a source of military training, often fully or partially funded by the Government of India. Figures 1 and 2 show the extent of military training provided to foreign countries by India from 2000 to 2006. Figure 1 shows the number of slots funded for many developing countries by the Government of India Ministry of External Affairs under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation program that was founded in 1964 and has grown over the years.⁷² In many cases, especially developing African countries, India is also the supplier of small arms, ammunition, or commercial trucks and jeeps.⁷³ India also provides military training teams to several developing countries.⁷⁴ Some of these relationships have been further solidified in recent years through the signing of simple memorandums of understanding for defense cooperation. Cambodia, Indonesia, Nigeria, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates are known to have such agreements. India has a specific interest in cultivating relationships in the Middle-East as part of its "look west" policy and a concern for energy security, security of sea lanes, terrorism, and its large expatriot worker populations.⁷⁵ India's defense agreement with Oman includes port facility arrangements for resupply of its naval ships while operating in the region.⁷⁶

Government of India Funded Foreign Military Students Studying in India.

	2000*	2003*	2004	2005	2006
Afghanistan				4	70
Algeria					1
Bangladesh	38	27	31	23	28
Bhutan	1	2	2	2	1
Benin		1			1
Botswana	1		3	15	4
Burkina Faso	2				1
Cambodia	4	8	9	13	15
Congo					2
DPRK					2
Egypt		1	1	1	
Eritrea				7	
Ethiopia			1		2
Ghana		1	6	22	18
Indonesia	13	5	10	12	9
Kazakhstan	4	6	5	7	5
Kenya	3	6	6		11
Kyrgyzstan	1	6	4	2	6
Lao PDR	4	3	6	5	3
Lebanon				3	6
Lesotho		3	3	4	5
Malaysia	8	16	8	13	14
Maldives			1	2	2
Mauritius	39	22	28	39	38
Mongolia	4	1	4	5	8
Myanmar	20	23	26	45	36

Namibia	2				8
Nepal	3	3	3	2	3
Nigeria	2		9	18	18
Philippines		1			
Russia	1				
Seychelles	13	18	10	26	10
Sri Lanka	6	5	5	3	5
Syria	1	1	2	4	1
Sudan			1		
Tajikistan		32	6	5	10
Tanzania	4		6	5	4
Thailand		1	1	3	8
Uganda	6	2	3	3	
Uzbekistan	2	2	3	6	1
Vietnam	11	21	15	15	18
Zambia	4	3		11	12
Zanzibar				3	
TOTAL	197	220	218	328	386

Note: 2000 and 2003 columns are slots that were accepted by the foreign governments, whereas the subsequent years indicate slots offered only. These slots were either fully or partially funded by the Ministry of External Affairs' Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation program.

Figure 1. India's Bilateral Relationships.⁷⁷

Self-funded or Reciprocal Foreign Military Students Studying in India.

	2000*	2003*	2004
Australia		2	1
Bangladesh	3	3	3
Botswana	3	5	37
Chile			1
France	1		4
Germany	1	1	1
Iran	1		1
Kenya	1		6
Kuwait	1		1
Japan			1
Malaysia			4
Nigeria	15	3	25
Oman	7	1	
Qatar	1	1	
ROK	2	1	1
Singapore	1		3
South Africa			3
UAE	4	1	
United Kingdom	4	4	4
United States	4	3	3
TOTAL	49	25	99

Note: 2000 and 2003 columns are slots that were accepted by the foreign governments whereas 2004 indicates slots offered.

Figure 2. India's Bilateral Relationships.⁷⁸

China.

A specific discussion of bilateral defense relations with India's neighbors was intentionally excluded from this monograph except as they relate to the larger global dynamic because the regional dynamics are significantly different and much has been written on that topic already. China is the exception because it sits in a unique position relative to India in that it is part of India's regional calculus as a neighbor, but

also stands out as the lone exception in the region due to its position as a major power. During his January 2008 visit to China, Prime Minister Singh described the bilateral relationship by stating, “. . . our strategic and cooperative partnership should be based on strong, diversified and mutually beneficial economic ties.”⁷⁹ The addition of the word “cooperative” in contrast to most other countries where only “strategic” is used clearly meant to send a signal to the Chinese that this relationship is something special and different.

India has genuine concerns about China’s intentions and growing presence in the Indian Ocean, and the two countries still have unresolved border issues. China’s military support to Pakistan remains a major concern as well. Despite this, there has been significant progress in rapprochement between the two Asian powers, and some of this has spilled into the defense relations. While the relationship has not progressed to the *Hindi-Chini-bhai-bhai* (“India and China are brothers”) of the 1950s, military-to-military contacts are beginning to occur on a regular basis. India and China signed a “Memorandum of Understanding on Exchanges and Cooperation in the Field of Defense” in 2006 and conduct an annual defense dialog. The two countries began conducting regular bilateral exercises in 2008 focused on anti-terrorism and have exchanged senior defense officials. India remains suspicious of China, but understands that the future lies in securing closer defense ties.

United States.

The U.S. defense relationship with India experienced a number of ups and downs over the years. The first 4 decades of Indian independence were dominated by Cold War politics with India’s previously discussed

war with China being the pinnacle of U.S.-India relations during that period. Despite this, the United States consistently supported Indian officers attending U.S. military schools through the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, and U.S. officers attended India's premier professional military education schools.⁸⁰ However, during those years the Government of India did not place a lot of strategic value on the person-to-person contacts these opportunities provided (though the military services valued the opportunities), and the United States could never establish itself as a reliable source of defense supply – the metric India used as a barometer of defense relations. It seemed as if any time the two countries made inroads, war with Pakistan, nuclear tests, or Cold War politics would get in the way of closer defense ties. As a result, the United States was branded as an “unreliable supplier” within the Indian establishment. This mindset endured through the 1990s despite many attempts to overcome it. U.S. Army Pacific Commander Lieutenant General Claude Kicklighter was moderately successful at initially expanding military-to-military contacts through low-level exercises and a regular bilateral dialog at the army component-level of Pacific Command through what became popularly known as the “Kicklighter Accord” signed in 1991.⁸¹

Military-to-military contacts made better inroads than defense supply to the bilateral relationship for the following reasons—they were relatively nonthreatening (as long as they were low-level), not considered particularly important (or a barometer of the relationship) and most importantly, did not require a long-term commitment that had consequences if broken. The 1995 “Agreed Minute” signed by Secretary of Defense William Perry and Minister of State for Defense M. Mallikarjun raised the level of bilateral

relations to the Ministry of Defense and established mechanisms at the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy-level for the United States to engage with India. The 1998 nuclear test and subsequent sanctions brought the relationship to a halt just as many initiatives were beginning to take shape.⁸² However, the mechanisms, such as the Defense Policy Group meetings and subordinate service Executive Steering Group meetings were easily revived once sanctions were lifted in 2001.

The “reliable supplier” issue was last raised after the 1998 sanctions prevented India from obtaining spare parts for its Sea King helicopters, even though they were purchased from the UK. Many of the parts were licensed U.S. technology that fell under the sanctions. In one of his last acts in office, President Bill Clinton lifted the sanctions on January 19, 2001.⁸³ The memory of these sanctions still lingers today, but the issue no longer dominates the discussions. Significant inroads to the relationship have since been made.

Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and then Minister of Defense Pranab Mukherjee signed a “New Framework for the U.S.-India Defense Relationship” in 2005, which formally introduced the idea of a “strategic partnership” and laid out the areas of common strategic interest. It also reaffirmed the Defense Policy Group as the apex body of defense discussions and its subordinate groups. Significantly, it added the Defense Procurement and Production Group, which aimed to bolster a newly emerging defense supply relationship. Shortly after sanctions were lifted, India completed a deal to purchase Q-37 Firefinder radars from the United States that was begun in the 1990s and put on hold due to the sanctions. This represented the first major defense purchase from the United States in over 4 decades.⁸⁴ Since then, U.S. defense sales to India have grown significantly and include major defense

systems such as C-130J aircraft, P-8I maritime patrol aircraft, H-3 Sea King helicopters, and the former Austin-class amphibious transport dock, renamed INS *Jalashwa*, and currently the second largest ship in the Indian Navy. India will likely order C-17 Globemaster aircraft to replace its fleet of Il-76 transport aircraft,⁸⁵ and has invited the United States to participate in tenders for medium multirole combat aircraft, attack helicopters, heavy lift helicopters, and a wide range of other equipment and services to include design consultancy on some of its new warships.

U.S.-India bilateral military exercises have grown in number, size, and scope as India has begun to see the value of bilateral exercises being more than just the person-to-person contacts. In addition to regular army and naval exercises, the Indian Air Force participated for the first time in the world-class Red Flag exercise in the United States in August 2008.⁸⁶ These exercises provide the Indian military opportunities to observe U.S. equipment and capabilities that they may be interested in as the Indian military upgrades to newer technologies. It also gives them exposure to new tactics and doctrine that are necessary for the employment of new military technologies. Since 2001, India and the United States have conducted over 50 bilateral or multilateral exercises.⁸⁷

The level and frequency of senior defense contacts between the United States and India has increased significantly since 2001, to the point that the United States eclipses all of the other countries in the frequency of senior-level contacts. In 2008 alone, the Secretary of the Navy, Chief of Naval Operations, Secretary of Defense, Chief of Army Staff, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff visited India at the highest levels. At the three-star and lower levels the number of visitors expands significantly. While not matching

the frequency of U.S. visitors to India, Indian defense leaders conducted a significant number of visits to the United States, including the Minister of Defense and many delegations to military bases and defense industry.

The U.S.-India relationship holds great promise, but a number of obstacles still exist. First and foremost are the lingering suspicions of U.S. "reliability." While there is significant progress, these suspicions remain in the back of the Indian mind and create hesitation on the part of decisionmakers. This is sometimes exacerbated by the political Left and its universally myopic opposition to any engagement with the west. The necessary, but often complicated and intimidating, U.S. arms export control laws only serve to feed these suspicions. The net result is an inability to come to agreement on a number of substantive bilateral military agreements necessary to move the relationship to the next level and failure to resolve these issues may actually reverse progress already made.⁸⁸ End-use monitoring was agreed to during Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's July 2009 visit to India, but it was not a smooth success. Several opposition parties walked out of Parliament in protest when it was announced.⁸⁹

DOMESTIC LIMITATIONS

Many of the bilateral challenges for India's expanding defense relations were discussed in the context of each individual country. However, a number of systemic problems within the Indian bureaucracy limit its ability to grow the number of "strategic relationships." Broadly, these can be grouped into four main issues, three structural and one political. These are summarized below.

1. The sheer volume of expanding relationships has placed a strain on India's bureaucratic system, which has so far not significantly changed to deal with the scope of the new relationships. The Indian Ministry of Defense does not have a large staff to deal with the large number of foreign engagements in which it is currently involved. The primary point of entry into the ministry for foreign nations is through the Joint Secretary for Planning and International Cooperation. Despite the large increase in bilateral agreements since 2000, this office has not been significantly expanded to accommodate the new relationships. Part of the way the ministry has dealt with this is to delegate down to the Integrated Defense Staff (IDS) or the individual services. While this has helped by partially eliminating a bureaucratic step (the Joint Secretary still oversees most activities of the services), these staffs have not grown to cope with the new relationships.⁹⁰ Recently, the IDS has taken a larger role, but still lacks the depth of personnel to effectively manage the expanding relationships. Even at this level, the IDS and military services funnel relations through the respective foreign liaison offices, but do not have corresponding "desk officers" dedicated to managing the individual bilateral relationships.

2. Foreign affairs is the domain of the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), which consequently has to be involved in virtually all matters relating to foreign relations, to include defense. The Ministry of Defense has limited authority to conduct defense policy with other nations without extensively consulting the MEA. Again, the MEA is limited in the number of personnel working on specific countries, providing another chokepoint to developing bilateral defense relations.⁹¹

3. The Government of India has a very hierarchical decisionmaking process whereby even minor decisions need to be approved at very high levels of the bureaucracy. This creates a major chokepoint for getting things done and usually means the person across the table in negotiations is not empowered to make decisions. Most defense-related issues, to include procurements, fall under the oversight of the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), a parliamentary committee led by the Prime Minister that has oversight over national security issues.⁹² The CCS generally only meets every 2 weeks.

4. India's system of government makes international decisions highly dependent on domestic politics. India uses the parliamentary system of government and since the 1980s depends on a coalition to form a government. These coalitions are often fragile and frequently subject to the whims of relatively minor parties, not to mention the opposition party(s) whose primary purpose is to "oppose." As a result, bilateral activities are sometimes cancelled or modified just to appease coalition partners or a particularly vocal opposition if elections are near.

Figure 3 illustrates a potential correlation between the timing of national parliamentary elections and the number of bilateral defense agreements. In 2004, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its coalition lost the general election to the Congress Party-led coalition. While the BJP began to negotiate a number of bilateral defense agreements, these negotiations were presumably placed on hold in the run-up to the election. Subsequently, the winning Congress Party coalition began to negotiate a number of agreements shortly after taking power. The chart shows a gradual increase which can be explained by the lag between the beginning of negotiations and actual signing as well

as time for the new government to develop a foreign policy.

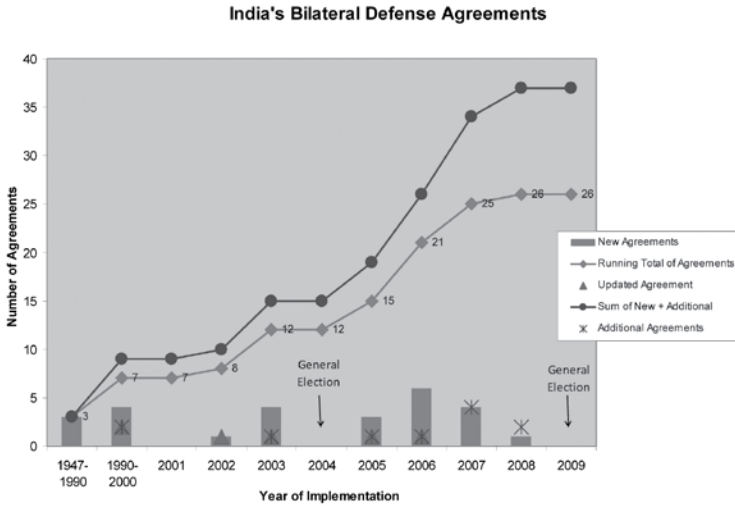


Figure 3. India's Bilateral Defense Agreements.

In the run-up to the 2009 general elections, the number of defense agreements signed begins to taper off. Because the previous (BJP-led) government lost and had engaged in a number of agreements close to the election, Congress may have taken a more conservative approach to prevent foreign policy from becoming a detriment in national elections. There are many examples of the Communist Party coalition members objecting to defense agreements, especially with the United States.

While correlation does not always mean causality, the anecdotal evidence suggests this to be at least a partial explanation. The Congress Party won the 2009 elections with an even stronger mandate than before, and without many of its more vocal coalition partners, such as the Communists. India then agreed to U.S.

end-use monitoring in July 2009, merely 2 months after seating the new government. Therefore, it is likely that we can expect more decisive decisions in future defense agreements.

FROM NONALIGNMENT TO POLY-ALIGNMENT

The world has changed and the challenges have grown more complex. The moral force that Pandit Nehru spoke of was a force that came from the power of ideas and from an abiding faith in the principles of justice and reason. . . . We look forward . . . as we seek to fashion a contemporary and compelling vision for the Nonaligned Movement.⁹³

Prime Minister Singh's above statement at the NAM summit at Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, on July 15, 2009, sought to reaffirm the relevance of the NAM while recognizing it needed to change to deal with an increasingly interconnected world. India is addressing this challenge uniquely in an attempt to straddle its commitment to nonalignment and its growing need to secure necessary relationships globally.

The past decade for India was a scramble to establish "strategic relationships" with most of the major powers and many of the middle powers, China being the lone exception with some progress made there too. A good gauge of this is the number of bilateral defense agreements concluded over the years (see Figure 3). India concluded only seven new bilateral agreements from 1947 to 2000, and four of those were in the decade between 1990 and 2000; however, from 2000 to 2008 India concluded 19 new agreements. Beyond this, many other countries have defense-related agreements with India that are embedded in broader bilateral agreements. The few agreements prior to the end of the cold

war were largely borne out of necessity—to procure needed military equipment. In the post cold war transition years (1990-2000), many of the agreements were still borne out of procurement necessities that were a result of shifting to western sources in lieu of the former Soviet Union. However, there was a new element introduced by the United States—that of military-to-military security cooperation. The new agreements that followed after 2000 increasingly adopted various aspects of defense cooperation beyond defense procurement including bilateral exercises, exchanges, and training. Nonalignment in the traditional sense as a foreign policy started to unravel as more and more bilateral defense agreements were brokered.

This is an important departure from the past where India was more inclined to assert “nonalignment” in international relations and avoid entanglements. Instead of avoiding alignments all together, India is now seeking to align with (just about) everyone, or become “poly aligned.” However, it is not a significant leap in terms of the broader effects on its global relationships. By establishing a broad range of alignments with many countries, India is able to maintain its stand on multilateralism and much of its nonalignment ideology while reaping the benefits of having strategic relationships with other countries. India still perceives and presents itself to be “nonaligned” as indicated by the quote at the beginning of this section. However, many of its actions are increasingly in the direction of “poly-alignment.”

Following the end of the Cold War, India began to actively promote the idea of a multipolar world as an alternative to the unipolar world led by the United States. As India emerged from its financial crisis of the early 1990s, it also became aware of its own opportunity

to be a “pole” in the multipolar world. Indian pundits often suggested that the poles would include Russia, the United States, the EU, China, Japan, and India. This was often represented in the 1990s by a hexagon with five solid sides and one dashed side for India. Today, the inclination of most Indians would be to depict the hexagram with six solid sides.⁹⁴ This view has often manifested itself through promotion of UN Security Council reform that includes India as a new permanent member. India sought to develop support for its case by establishing “strategic partnerships” that would likely result in votes for India. Frequently, bilateral agreement signings or joint statements (not limited to the defense sector) are accompanied by statements supporting a bid for a permanent Security Council seat for India.⁹⁵

The defense sector presents an opportunity to cement these relationships through defense trade, which India had previously nominally considered a significant measure of the relationship, at least with countries like Russia and France. As an illustration of the changes, in 2001 Aero India was dominated by Indian companies, attended mostly by Russian, Ukrainian, French, and Israeli companies and had 10 other lightly represented countries.⁹⁶ The representation of countries was generally reflective of India’s external relationships, taking into consideration potential defense exports from those countries. At Aero India 2009, 25 foreign countries were heavily represented and for the first time, the number of foreign exhibitors exceeded the number of Indian exhibitors.⁹⁷ Recognizing India’s opening of the defense sector and the potential of India’s increasing defense procurement budget, the presence of foreign defense suppliers has blossomed in India. Many of the supplier countries also see the political and symbolic signal major deals convey and

have gone to great lengths to court the Indian defense market. This change in interest in India is precipitated by a combination of the following factors and changes in India to attract potential suppliers that can contribute to an enhanced defense relationship while meeting critical defense needs for the military.

- Since the late 1990s, India's economy has been growing at a rate of over 8 percent and with defense expenditures generally allocated as a percentage of gross domestic product, India is now increasingly able to afford coveted western technologies.
- Publication of the first edition of the *Defense Procurement Procedure* in 2002 removed a lot of opacity in India's procurement process and mandated a competitive bid process for foreign procurement.⁹⁸ Subsequent editions were increasingly favorable to western companies.
- Procurement tenders place a lot of emphasis on technology transfer, licensed production, and reinvestment through defense offsets.⁹⁹ These types of arrangements create more symbiotic relationships than simple purchases.
- Relaxation of rules on foreign investment in the defense sector, enabling foreign companies to own up to 26 percent of defense sector undertakings, with a possible increase to 49 percent in the near future.¹⁰⁰ This has the additional benefit of attracting co-development partners and new technology.
- Unhappiness with Russia as a defense supplier in terms of both quality of defense articles and perennial problems with price escalation and delayed delivery has created a significant motive for diversification of the supply base.¹⁰¹

Another area that indirectly contributed to India's shift from nonalignment to poly-alignment is its participation in UN peacekeeping operations. With the exceptions mentioned previously in India's neighborhood, India has maintained a policy of noninterference with the exception of UN peacekeeping missions. The UN provides the cover that India needs to remain nonaligned yet still contribute on the global stage as one of the top three contributors to UN missions. However, in the past decade the international community (including the United States) and the UN have taken initiatives to conduct multilateral training on UN tasks. This had the effect of further promoting the importance of multilateral exercises and events. Prior to that, India was responsible for its own training and seldom participated in training outside of India. While there are no specific data to support it, there is a presumption that the increased exposure to the global military and political environment as a result of UN peacekeeping missions has increased India's need and desire for greater military contacts globally.

Beyond poly-alignment, India has also begun to directly assert itself as a regional power, especially as it acts on its concerns about Chinese expansionism in the Indian Ocean. To facilitate this, it is seeking to convert its brown-water navy to a blue-water navy, evidenced by the acquisition of new aircraft carriers, submarines, and larger surface vessels. India's Air Force is also expanding its reach through purchases of air-to-air refuelers and longer range transport aircraft. These expansions of capability go beyond the capabilities needed to address the traditional border threats from China and Pakistan and portend a greater concern for strategic issues, including protection of shipping lanes, energy resources, and India's large expatriot populations in the Middle East and Mediterranean.¹⁰²

India contributes to counterpiracy operations off the Horn of Africa, primarily to protect its own interests, but nominally coordinating with other countries conducting operations in the region.¹⁰³ There are also reports of India establishing a network of listening posts in places like Madagascar and Mauritius to monitor activity in the Indian Ocean.¹⁰⁴

IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. POLICY

The rapid warming of relations between India and the United States over the past decade is proving to be a significant, yet challenging, new relationship. The new opportunity for tens of billions of U.S. dollars in defense-related sales, while not necessarily the most important part of the relationship, are a significant enabler that will open up countless new opportunities to grow the bilateral defense relationship. Because many of the U.S. defense technologies have important applications in domestic counterterrorism, these sales also expand opportunities well beyond the two defense establishments into law enforcement and border control issues. Despite the tremendous opportunities, U.S. policymakers need to keep a few things in mind as the Indo-U.S. defense relationship moves into new and unexplored territories.

- The NAM will continue to be a central component of the way India formulates its foreign policy. To a lesser extent, India will look to the UN as a way of forming global consensus on multilateral issues (that do not adversely affect India). At the same time, India will fiercely protect its own internal and bilateral issues from becoming part of the international dialog (Kashmir being the most obvious example).

- Domestic politics will continue to be a dominant force in the decisions India makes, including its foreign policy. This is an artifact of the hypersensitivity any ruling party or coalition has to domestic issues and the real or perceived impact of foreign policy on the electoral vote banks. Similarly, minority coalition partners in the government will continue to influence some foreign policy decisions by acting as the spoiler, especially with regard to the larger powers.
- As an extension of its NAM policy, India will continue to view its relationship with the United States through the lens of multilateralism, preference for a multipolar global power structure, and the impact on its bilateral relations with other countries.
- India will continue to forge new defense relationships around the world, increasingly with a view to exporting defense material from its own developing industry. However, it will likely begin to shift its energy towards deepening many of the relationships it has established to date.
- India will increasingly assert itself as a regional power in the Indian Ocean. Most of the time, its interests will nominally converge with those of the United States (such as current counterpiracy operations) yet will not necessarily formally “align” with the United States; however, occasionally India’s interests may diverge (such as Indian support to Mauritius’ claim to Diego Garcia¹⁰⁵), creating potential irritants in the relationship.
- India will likely emphasize balance in its defense relations, especially with the larger powers of

the United States, Russia, the EU, UK, and Israel. This balance will often be reflected in defense procurement decisions, as these are enduring symbols of the bilateral relationship. Most bilateral and multilateral military exercises will not be affected with considerations of balance, with the exception of larger, more visible exercises.

CONCLUSION

India's interests have changed over the past 2 decades from a position of nonalignment to one of having specific strategic interests that lead it to a path of "poly-alignment." This path appears to be following four specific, but intermingled, courses:

1. Become a regional power across the Indian Ocean basin and secure agreements from partners in this region that support this goal, while building up expeditionary navy and air force capabilities. At the same time, India continues to modernize its army to deal with potential threats from its immediate neighbors and internal insurgency groups.

2. Develop "strategic partnerships" with countries perceived as leaders of a global, multipolar order, and seek modern military capabilities from many of those countries. This includes modern weapon systems as well as the technology and licensed production associated with those weapon systems.

3. Secure or maintain ties with smaller countries globally, many of which are members of the nonaligned movement, that can provide support in international fora as well as provide potential markets for India's own emerging defense industry.

4. Maintain a position of leadership in the Non-Aligned Movement and publicly present itself as “nonaligned” despite its actual alignments.

Many of the recent changes in India’s global defense relationships represent a vast departure from past policy and practices. Given that the Congress Party and its United Progressive Alliance coalition received a strong electoral mandate when it was reelected in May 2009, these changes are likely to continue and perhaps will lead to bold moves to further develop and deepen strategic relationships around the world. As India cements its expanding defense relationships through the purchase of major defense platforms and the associated technology transfers and co-production agreements, it will define the course of its long-term relationships for the coming decades. All of this presents a mixed bag of significant opportunities and challenges for bilateral defense relationships.

ENDNOTES

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2. India has conducted only four external operations outside of a United Nations mandate: 1950—Support to Nepal for Rana uprisings, 1971—aid to civil government of Sri Lanka, 1987-90—Indian Peacekeeping Force in Sri Lanka, and 1988—Operation CACTUS in the Maldives. Jaswant Singh, *Defending India*, New Delhi: MacMillan India, 1999, p. 143.

3. Foreign professional training was mostly limited to English-speaking countries such as the United Kingdom, United States, and former British colonies. Some technical training was obtained from non-English-speaking countries such as France and the USSR in connection with equipment purchases.

4. The Indian Ministry of External Affairs website, *meaindia.nic.in*, is not comprehensive in its cataloging of international agreements and broader searches of media reporting was necessary to capture the full scope of defense agreements.

5. Zachariah, pp. 162-163.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 198.

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8. Vernon Hewett, *The New International Politics of South Asia*, Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1997, p. 110.

9. Zachariah, pp. 158-159.

10. *Ibid.*, pp. 237-239.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 248.

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16. George Perkovich, *India's Nuclear Bomb*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999, pp. 161-165.

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 168-171.

18. *Ibid.*, pp. 221-224.

19. *Ibid.*, pp. 307-312.

20. Nirupam Bajpai, "Economic Crisis, Structural Reforms, and the Prospects of Growth in India," Cambridge, MA: Harvard Institute for International Development, 1996, pp. 1-4.

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22. Jyotsna Bakshi, "India-Russia Defence Cooperation," *Strategic Analysis*, Vol. 30, No. 2, April-June 2006, pp. 450-451.

23. This is the one exception to India's defense agreements; previous and later agreements would be supply focused. See High Commission of India, Port Louis, "India-Mauritius Relations," available from meaindia.nic.in/foreignrelation/Mauritius.pdf.

24. Bakshi, p. 450.

25. *Ibid.*, pp. 451-455.

26. SIPRI, "Arms Transfer Database," available from www.sipri.org/contents/armstrad/at_db.html.

27. Bakshi, pp. 457-458.

28. R. K. Jasbir Singh, *Indian Defense Yearbook 2008*, New Delhi, India: Natraj, 2008, pp. 149-150, 161.

29. *Ibid.*, pp. 158-159.

30. *India Defense*, "India, Russia to Hold Negotiations to Resolve INS Vikramaditya Pricing Deadlock," May 5, 2009, available from www.india-defence.com/reports-4356.

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40. Constance Roger, "Indo-French Defense Cooperation—Friends in Need or Friends Indeed?" Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies Research Paper No. 7, New Delhi, India, March 2007, pp. 6-8.

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42. Roger, pp. 11-12. "South Block" is the government Secretariat Building in New Delhi that houses the offices of the Prime Minister, Ministry of Defense, and Ministry of External Affairs.
43. *Ibid.*, pp. 13-15.
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**India's Strategic Defense Transformation:
Expanding Global Relationships**

Appendix

DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP MATRIX

Country	Relationship Description ¹	Bilateral Agreements	Bilateral Forums	High Level Delegations To India	Bilateral / Multilateral Exercises	Defense Sales To India (2003-08) ²
Australia	"Relations between Australia and India are evolving into a strong partnership" ³	- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Defense Cooperation (2006) ⁴ - Information Sharing Agreement (2007) ⁵	- Maritime Security Operations Working Group ⁶	- Chief of Australian Defense Force (May 07) ⁷ - Australian Naval Chief (Aug 07) ⁸ - Australian Defense Minister (Jul 07) ⁹	- Milan multilateral naval exercise	
Brazil	"India has a strategic partnership with both Brazil and South Africa." ¹⁰	- Agreement on Defense Cooperation (2003) ¹¹	- Joint Defense Committee ¹²	- Army Chief (Dec 06) ¹³	- Ibsamar Trilateral Naval Exercise (May 08) ¹⁴	- \$378 million - Embraer ERJ-145
Cambodia		- MoU on Defense Cooperation (2007) ¹⁵		- Commander-in-Chief, Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (2006) ¹⁶		
Canada				- Defense Minister (Feb 08) ¹⁷		
China	"...our strategic and cooperative partnership should be based on strong, diversified and mutually beneficial economic ties." ¹⁸	- MoU On Exchanges and Cooperation in the field of Defense (2006) ¹⁹	- Annual Defense Dialog ²⁰	- Peoples Liberation Army Navy Commander (Nov 08) ²¹	- Hand-in-Hand, 2008 annual anti-terrorism exercise ²² - Naval exercise ²³	
Egypt	"...elevate our relations to a level that reflects our mutual strengths and complementarities." ²⁴		- Indo-Egypt Joint Defense Committee Meeting (AddSec) ²⁵			

Country	Relationship Description ¹	Bilateral Agreements	Bilateral Forums	High Level Delegations To India	Bilateral / Multilateral Exercises	Defense Sales To India (2003-08) ⁷
France	"India and France enjoy a close and wide ranging strategic partnership" ^{2,6}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MoU on Supply of Defense Equipment (1982) - Gov to Gov agreement on defense (1998)²⁷ - Defense Cooperation agreement (2006)²⁸ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indo-French Strategic Dialog - Indo-French High Committee on Defense Cooperation (DefSec) -- Sub Committee on Military Cooperation -- Sub Committee on Strategic Issues -- Sub Committee on Defense Industry Procurement and Research and Technology²⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - French Defense Minister (Apr 03)³⁰ - Chief of French Army (Nov 07)³¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Varuna annual Naval exercise³² - Garuda annual AF exercise³³ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - \$2 billion - Mirage 2000 - SM-39 Exocet - Mirage 2000-5
Germany	"We have reaffirmed our strong mutual commitment to the strategic partnership that was launched in 2001." ³⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defense and Security Cooperation Agreement (2006)³⁵ - Agreement on the Mutual Protection of Classified Information (2007)³⁶ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defense Secretaries Meeting (DefSec) -- Strategic Defense Cooperation -- Defense Technical Cooperation -- Military to Military Cooperation³⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defense Secretary (Apr 07)³⁸ - German Defense Minister (Jun 07)³⁹ 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - \$169 million - Dornier 228 Aircraft
Indonesia		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defense Cooperation Agreement (2006) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint Defense Cooperation Committee⁴⁰ -- Navy-to-Navy Staff Talks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Indonesian Navy Chief (Apr 07)⁴¹ 		
Iran	"...a continuing close and rich bilateral relationship between our countries." ⁴²			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Iranian Navy Commander (Mar 07)⁴³ - Iranian President (Apr 08)⁴⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Naval Exercise (2003,2006)⁴⁵ 	

Country	Relationship Description ¹	Bilateral Agreements	Bilateral Forums	High Level Delegations To India	Bilateral / Multilateral Exercises	Defense Sales To India (2003-08) ²
Israel	"We share a number of cherished values." ⁴⁶	- Intelligence Sharing (2007) ⁴⁷	- India-Israel Joint Defense Committee (DefSec) -- India-Israel Joint Working Group on Defense Cooperation ⁴⁸	- Israeli Air Chief (Feb 04) ⁴⁹ - Israeli Naval Chief (Aug 07) ⁵⁰ - Israeli Army Chief (Sep 08) ⁵¹	- Army Exercise - Air Force Exercise ⁵²	- \$2.3 billion - Phalcon (AWACS) - BVRAAM - ELM-2032 Radar - Barak-8 SAM - SPYDER SAM
Italy	"...work towards the establishment of a strategic partnership..." ⁴³	- MoU for Defense Cooperation in the field of Defense Equipment (1994/2003) ⁵⁴	- Joint Working Group on Defense ⁵⁵	- Italian Defense Minister (2003) ⁵⁶ - Under Secretary of State for Defense (Nov 06) ⁵⁷ - Italian Defense Minister (May 07) ⁵⁸ - Italian Army Chief (Nov 08) ⁵⁹		
Japan	"They reaffirmed the importance of the Strategic and Global Partnership..." ⁶⁰	- MoU On Maritime Security And Coast Guard Cooperation (2006) ⁶¹ - Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation (2008) ⁶²	- Defence Policy Dialogue (DefSec) ⁶³ -- military-to-military talks ⁶⁴	- CoS Japan Maritime Self Defense Force (Feb 06) ⁶⁵ - CoS Japan Ground SDF (Mar 06) ⁶⁶ - CoS Japan Air SDF (Apr 06) ⁶⁷ - Japanese Defense Minister (Aug 07) ⁶⁸	- Participant in Malabar 2007 - Sahyog-Kajjin Coast Guard anti-piracy exercise ⁶⁹	
Kazakhstan	"[The] two Sides agreed to establish and develop a strategic partnership based on the principles of sovereignty and equality." ⁷⁰	- possible agreement on Defense Cooperation ⁷¹				
Kyrgyzstan				- Defense Minister (Nov 2005) ⁷²		- \$ unknown - MIG-21 transfer
Madagascar		- Lease for Naval Listening Post (2006) ⁷³				

Country	Relationship Description ¹	Bilateral Agreements	Bilateral Forums	High Level Delegations To India	Bilateral / Multilateral Exercises	Defense Sales To India (2003-08) ²
Malaysia		- MoU on Malaysia-India Defence cooperation (1992) ⁷⁴	- Malaysia-India Defense Cooperation Meeting (DefSec) ⁷⁵ -- Sub-Committee for Military Cooperation	- Defense Minister (Jun 06, Jan 08) ⁷⁶ - Chief of Malaysian Army (Dec 06) - Malaysian Chief of Air Force (Feb 07) ⁷⁷	- Milan multilateral naval exercise - "passage exercise" (May 08) ⁷⁸	
Mauritius		- Defense Agreement (1974) ⁷⁹		- Commissioner of Police (Jan 06, Feb 08) ⁸⁰		
Mongolia				- Minister of National Defense (Feb 07) - Chief of Mongolian Air Force and Air Defense (Feb 07) ⁸¹		
Mozambique		- Agreement on Defense Cooperation (2006) ⁸²	- Joint Working Group. ⁸³	- Defense Minister (Mar 06) ⁸⁴		
Nigeria		- MoU on Defense Cooperation (2007) ⁸⁵		- Defense Minister (Feb 06) ⁸⁶		
Oman	"Oman and India are united in our resolve to cement our relationship into a mighty strategic relationship." ⁸⁷	- MoU on Defense Cooperation (2005) ⁸⁸	- Joint Military Cooperation Council (DefSec) ⁸⁹	- Under Secretary for Defense (May 06) ⁹⁰	- Biennial Naval Exercises ⁹¹	
Philippines		- Agreement on Defense Cooperation (2006) ⁹²				
Poland		- Agreement on Defense Cooperation (2003) ⁹³	- Joint Working Group on Defense Cooperation (Sec(Def Prod)) ⁹⁴	- Defense Minister (Nov 08) ⁹⁵		- \$260 million - WZT-3 Armored Recovery Vehicle

Country	Relationship Description ¹	Bilateral Agreements	Bilateral Forums	High Level Delegations To India	Bilateral / Multilateral Exercises	Defense Sales To India (2003-08) ²
Qatar		- Defense and Security Cooperation Agreement (2008) ⁹⁶		- CoS Qatari Armed Forces (Aug 06) ⁹⁷		
Russia	"We are satisfied with the overall development of our strategic partnership." ⁹⁸	- Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Co-operation (1971) ⁹⁹ - Bilateral Defence Cooperation Agreement (1998) ¹⁰⁰ - Joint Development Agreement on 5 th gen fighter (2007) ¹⁰¹	- India-Russia Inter- Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation (DefMin) ¹⁰² -- subgroups on aviation, shipbuilding and landforces ¹⁰³	- Defense Minister (Jun 06) ¹⁰⁴ - Commander-in-Chief of the Russian land forces (Jun 07) ¹⁰⁵ - Defense Minister (Sep 08) ¹⁰⁶	- Indra annual Army and AF anti-terror and search and destroy exercise ¹⁰⁷ - Indra biannual Naval exercise ¹⁰⁸	- \$13.5 billion - AT-14 Korvet - Gorskov aircraft carrier - Tunguska AD system - Smerch MRL - MiG-29s - Talwar frigate - Akula nuclear sub (lease) - Mi-17 helicopters - SU-30s - T-90 Tanks - BMP-2 IFV - Mi-17V-5 (armed)
Singapore	"India's relations with Singapore have evolved into a strong partnership." ¹⁰⁹	- India-Singapore Defense Cooperation Agreement (2003) ¹¹⁰ - 5 year agreement for AF training on Indian AF bases (2007) ¹¹¹ - Agreement for joint Army training on Indian Army bases (2008) ¹¹²	- India-Singapore Defence Policy Dialogue (DefSec) ¹¹³ -- Joint Working Group on Intelligence ¹¹⁴	- Minister for Defense (Oct 06) ¹¹⁵ - Permanent Secretary of Defense (Oct 07) ¹¹⁶ - Chief of Defense Forces ¹¹⁷	- Sindex annual AF exercise ¹¹⁸ - Participant in Malabar 2007 - Milan multilateral naval exercise	

Country	Relationship Description ¹	Bilateral Agreements	Bilateral Forums	High Level Delegations To India	Bilateral / Multilateral Exercises	Defense Sales To India (2003-08) ²
South Africa	"India has a strategic partnership with both Brazil and South Africa." ¹¹⁹	- MoU concerning Cooperation in the Field of Defense Equipment (1996) - Agreement on Defense Co-operation (2000) - Agreement on Supply of Defense Equipment (2003) ¹²⁰	- India-South Africa Joint Defense Committee ¹²¹	- Chief of S. African Army (Sep 07) ¹²² - Chief of S. African Navy (Feb 07) ¹²³	- Ibsamar Trilateral Naval Exercise (May 08) ¹²⁴	
South Korea	"Long Term Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity" ¹²⁵	- MoU on Defense Industry and Logistics Cooperation (2005) - MoU on Coast Guard cooperation (2006) ¹²⁶		- Minister of National Defense (May 07) ¹²⁷		
Tajikistan	"We are building a wide ranging and intensive relationship..." ¹²⁸	- Bilateral Defense Agreement for Air Base Access (2002) ¹²⁹		- Defense Minister (Jan 05) - First Deputy Defense Minister (2006) ¹³⁰	- Transport and para-drop exercise (2003) ¹³¹	
Thailand			- Indo-Thai Joint Working Group (Navy)	- Commander-in-Chief Royal Thai Air Force (Sep 06) ¹³² - Commander-in-Chief Royal Thai Navy (Mar 07) ¹³³	- Maitree Army counter-terrorism exercise (2007) ¹³⁴	
Ukraine		- Bilateral Defense Agreement (draft 2009) ¹³⁵				
United Arab Emirates		- MoU on Defense Cooperation (2003) ¹³⁶	- Joint Defense Cooperation Committee ¹³⁷	- CoS UAE Land Forces (Nov 06) ¹³⁸ - Naval Chief (Jan 09) ¹³⁹		

Country	Relationship Description ¹	Bilateral Agreements	Bilateral Forums	High Level Delegations To India	Bilateral / Multilateral Exercises	Defense Sales To India (2003-08) ²
United Kingdom	"...imparted a fresh momentum to our strategic partnership." ¹⁴⁰	- Defence Equipment Cooperation Memorandum of Understanding (1997) ¹⁴¹	- India-UK Defense Consultative Group (DefSec)--3 sub-groups: -- Mil-Mil Contacts -- Defense Equipment -- Research and Technology ¹⁴²	- British Chief of Defence Staff (May 02) ¹⁴³ - Permanent Under Secretary for Defence (Apr 04) ¹⁴⁴ - Defence Minister (Oct 04) ¹⁴⁵ - British Army chief (Oct 07) ¹⁴⁶	- Emerald Mercury joint exercise (Mar 05) ¹⁴⁷ - Konkani Naval exercise in India and UK on alternate years ¹⁴⁸ - Himalayan Warrior Army-Marine exercise in India (Oct 07) ¹⁴⁹ - Lion's Strike and Wessex Warrior Army Exercises in UK (Sep 08) ¹⁵⁰ - Indradhanush AF Exercise ¹⁵¹	- \$1.7 billion - Jaguar aircraft - Hawk trainer aircraft
United States	"...developing and strengthening the strategic partnership with the United States" ¹⁵²	- Kicklighter Agreement on Defense (1991) - Agreed minute of defense Cooperation (1995) - General Security of Military Information Agreement (2002) ¹⁵³ - New Framework for the U.S.--India Defense Relationship (2005) ¹⁵⁴	- Defense Policy Group (DefSec)--4 sub-groups: -- Defense Procurement and Production Group -- Joint Technical Group -- Military Cooperation Group -- Senior Technology Security Group ¹⁵⁵	- PACOM Commander (May 09) ¹⁵⁶ - Secretary of the Navy (Mar 08) ¹⁵⁷ - Chief of Naval Operations (Apr 08) ¹⁵⁸ - Secretary of Defense (Feb 08) ¹⁵⁹ - Chief of Army Staff (Oct 08) ¹⁶⁰ - Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (Dec 08) ¹⁶¹	- Yuth Abhyas bilateral Army exercise (May 02) ¹⁶² - Malabar Naval Exercise - Cope India Air Force Exercise ¹⁶³ - Red Flag Air Force Exercise (Aug 08) ¹⁶⁴ - Vajraprathar Army CT exercise - Multiple special forces exercises annually ¹⁶⁵	- \$3.4 billion - TPQ-37 firefinder radars - Trenton landing platform dock - UH-3H helicopters - C-130J aircraft - P-8I Maritime Patrol aircraft
Uzbekistan		- Agreement on Cooperation in Military and Military-Technical Matters (2005) ¹⁶⁶				

ENDNOTES-APPENDIX

1. Most recent description of the bilateral relationship by either the President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister or Defense Minister of India. Lower officials used if the aforementioned did not contribute a statement. Statements reflect overall relationship, not just Defense.

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