

## INDO-US RELATIONS IN CHANGING REGIONAL CONTEXT OF POST-9/11 EVENTS

Dr. Mussarat Jabeen\*

### Abstract

*Bilateral relations between India and the United States emerged against a background of major shift in American security requirements and emerging economy of India. During much of the Cold War era, India was not an important factor in American thinking of international security due to its anti-American approach and inclination towards the former Soviet Union. However, the post-Cold War period transformed the old rivalries into a new strategic partnership due to certain reasons, including the disintegration of the Soviet Union and China's emergence as a rival regional power. Indian military power was also significant for American presence in the Persian Gulf and the East Asia, which led the latter to conduct a serious dialogue with India. India's fourth largest army and powerful navy with the largest submarine fleet further increased its importance for the US-led war on terror. This situation provided more solid basis for cooperation on foreign policy issues than its need in the earlier decades. The study has assumed that the US has recognized the significance of a stronger relationship with India in the changing regional scenario. The relationship between the two states is a partnership rather than an alliance. The paper purports to highlight the relations between the two countries, focusing the post-9/11 era.*

**Key words:** security, terrorism, military cooperation, economy, ally, shared interests, region.

### Introduction

The last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the tectonic shifts in international affairs as drastic changes occurred in global politics. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the socialist bloc ended the bipolarity weakening the balance of power and leading to a unipolar world. Start of the 'New World Order' and the status of the sole superpower were considered as American victory, but strategic uncertainties surfaced due to shattering of

---

\*Dr. Mussarat Jabeen is Assistant Professor at the Department of International Relations University of Sargodha.

bipolarity. Changing scenario enhanced the intrusive involvement of the United States for containing China's emerging power, making India a balancer for maintaining strategic balance. In this situation it was not surprising that the US shaped its security doctrine and global role in the light of this new position. Exploring the various areas of convergence of interests, the US built a strategic partnership with India for gaining certain objectives.<sup>1</sup> These goals were:

- The US has vital strategic interests in the world's largest reserves of energy lying in the Middle East, the Gulf region and South Asia. India occupies the strategic location linking the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean.
- Another common value is the freedom of the high seas, particularly the sea-lanes venting from the Hormuz Straits and branching out in the West and the East. Occupying the base facilities in the region, the US military tried to secure its interests in South Asia.
- Chinese military power in the Asia Pacific, a region with the largest energy reserves, is taken as a challenge to American dominance. India also perceives China as a security threat to its vital interests owing to the latter's preponderance of nuclear weapons and military might. For India, Chinese assistance to Pakistan for missile development has strengthened Pakistan's position in South Asia.
- In global politics, geo-economics and geo-strategic considerations are very crucial and cooperation in this direction can enhance the strength of nations. Indo-American strategic partnership is to increase the multiple interests. For India, the US offers strategically rich options for making it a powerful nation, while India is supportive of the US for countering the emerging threats in the region.<sup>2</sup>

All the above mentioned factors led the two countries to seek a closer relationship with expanding cooperation in the wider field of interests including defence and security, health and education, commerce and investment, high-technology, cyber security, civil nuclear energy, information technology etc. Exchange of high-level officials' visits further vitalized and strengthened the bilateral relationship with bipartisan support in both the countries. The remarkable transformation in political economy, trade structure and investment patterns brought new alignments between the two nations. Meanwhile, the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 changed the scenario dismantling this development as it led the US to develop a unilateral approach towards global politics shifting its priority from non-proliferation to terrorism.

---

<sup>1</sup> Mussarat Jabeen, & Ishtiaq Ahmed, "Indo-US Nuclear Cooperation", *Journal of South Asian Studies*, vol. 26, no. 2, July-December, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Subhash Kapila, "India-US Strategic Partnership: The Advent of the Inevitable," *South Asia Analysis Group*, December 2006. <<http://www.saag.org/papers2/paper120.html>>, Accessed on 31 December 2006.

The doctrine of preemption, preventive military operations and bypassing of the United Nations became the prevailing features of US foreign policy. In the changing situation, New Delhi did not lose its importance with readjusting and re-evaluating its external relations. It began to work with the collaboration of Washington. Former secretary of state Colin Powell stated that "India has the potential to keep the peace in the vast Indian Ocean area and its periphery. We need to work harder and more consistently to assist India in this endeavor while not neglecting our friend Pakistan."<sup>3</sup>

### **Changing Position of Indo-US Relations**

In the post-Cold War period, the first interaction of the high-level military officers of the US and India was in New Delhi in January 1992. In this meeting, military cooperation was discussed, as the US showed its concerns about the rise of 'Militant Islam' in South Asia.<sup>4</sup> Viewing the South Asia as the most volatile part of the world, India was the only option for the US to secure its interests in the Islamic Crescent stretching from Turkey to Malaysia. A Joint Steering Committee of the two navies was also established, which conducted joint naval exercises in 1992. In January 1995, 'Agreed Minute on Defense Relations' was signed to conduct joint military exercises and trade cooperation. India began to receive military and economic aid under this agreement.<sup>5</sup>

The present shift in Indo-US relations occurred during the second term of President Clinton as well as Indian election of 1997 when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) came into power. The BJP strove to redefine the Indo-US relationship and broke itself from the traditional foreign policy patterns that prevailed between the two nations for the five decades. Previously, the relations between the two states could be ascribed as satisfactory or reasonable. Major reason of these tense relations was the structure of the Cold War, which kept India in the Soviet's camp and this alignment dragged it indirectly against the US that was seeking regional allies against the communist threat. In fact, India wanted to be a global player and charted a largely autonomous course since its independence in 1947. The end of the Cold War changed the nature of relations, and a growing awareness of India's strategic potential led the US to a serious re-evaluation of its policy towards New Delhi. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 did not push it back. As the *Washington Post* commented that New Delhi became important to Washington not only for larger markets and information age goods, but also for countering terrorism, managing proliferation and containing China, which enhanced its worth.<sup>6</sup> About the past position, William Saxbe, a former US ambassador to India, recalled that he met the then-US secretary of state for final instruction before

---

<sup>3</sup> Colin L. Powell, "Confirmation Hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee", January 17, 2001.

<sup>4</sup> AfzaalMahmood, "A Strategic Defense Pact," *Dawn*, (Karachi), July9, 2005.

<sup>5</sup> Ghayoor Ahmed, "India's Defense ties with US." *Dawn*, (Karachi), July 7,2005.

<sup>6</sup> *Washington Post*, (Washington) March 22, 2001.

leaving for India and Henry Kissinger said, “the less I hear from you and the less I hear about India, the happier I will be.”<sup>7</sup>

Perceiving India as an opportunity, Pakistan was dropped from the agenda. Following the Kargil conflict and military coup in 1999, the US gradually took Pakistan as a problematic and troublesome country, if not a failed state. Contrary to this, the contents of Indo-US relation were indicative of a constructive and constant bilateral engagement, directing towards partnership based on ‘increasingly overlapping national interests.’ This move towards warm relation determined the future course of common objectives from the agenda.<sup>8</sup>

### **India: A Choice of George W. Bush**

The entrance of George W. Bush in presidency brought a dramatic shift in bilateral relations. He emphasized that his administration had high expectation for India. One day before the terrorist attacks, a US official was reading a brief for Congressional staff about the Bush administration’s plans to suspend all nuclear related sanctions on India, while leaving in place many on Pakistan to limit the aid.<sup>9</sup> Richard Boucher, Assistant Secretary of the State for Public Affairs, stated that “the transformation in Indo-US relations, interests and evolution from ‘estranged democracies’ to ‘engaged democracies’ was a remarkable change in bilateral relations.”<sup>10</sup>

George W. Bush came to office with the perception that India was more an asset than a responsibility, and planned to create a comprehensive economic, political, and defence relationship with New Delhi. His motives were high, but complex due to India’s emergence as a potential balancer to a rising and threatening power of China. He had been interested in Indian technology since the days of his governorship of Texas.<sup>11</sup> Bush considered bilateral assistance and foreign aid as a ladder to get access to the new era of globalization, as open markets and free trade were to expand the circle of development in opening societies, building the infrastructure of democracy. America’s vital, enduring and growing interests in Asia transformed the relations into a strategic partnership.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Rober M. Hathaway, “The US India Courtship: from Clinton to Bush” in Sumit Ganguly, Ed., *India as an Emerging Power*, (London: Frank Cass, 2003), p.6.

<sup>8</sup> Ashly J. Tellis, C. Christine Fair and Jamison Jo Medby, “Limited Conflict under the Nuclear Umbrella,” RAND, Santa Monica, 2001, pp.9-12.

<sup>9</sup> Lee Feinstien, “When Policy Priorities Converge: US Relations with India and Pakistan after September 11<sup>th</sup>” Carnegie Endowment of International Peace, Working Paper, No.27, May7, 2002. <<http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications>>

<sup>10</sup> Richard Boucher, “New Directions in U.S Indian Relation,” US Department of State, Washington: Press Statement, June 19,2001.

<sup>11</sup> Stephen Philip Cohen, “A Deal Too Far?,” *ORF Brookings Paper*, February28, 2006.

<sup>12</sup> George W. Bush, “The National Security Strategy of the United States of America,” Washington: The White House, September 17, 2002, <[http://www.nationalsecuritylaw.net/Article.National%20Security%20Strategy%20\(White%20House%202002\).pdf](http://www.nationalsecuritylaw.net/Article.National%20Security%20Strategy%20(White%20House%202002).pdf)>

The National Security Strategy 2002 was the guiding document for transformation of Indo-US relations. It elaborated the need and intention of the US to pressurize other nations to accept American definitions of democracy, human rights, free trade and good governance, which were simultaneously considered as universal values and cornerstones of US foreign policy. These values were taken as a vehicle to grasp the forces of freedom in the foreseeable future and to create a balance of power favourable to human sovereignty. In these conditions, all the nations and societies have a choice for themselves to get rewards as well as challenges of political and economic liberty.<sup>13</sup> The US concluded that India is undoubtedly a pivotal power in South Asia with a corresponding interest in maintaining regional stability. It is also a status quo power without irredentist claims on its neighbours. It does appear to act as the security manager in the region, but largely in a benevolent fashion.<sup>14</sup>

Bush termed his policy towards India as “distinctly American internationalism” even before becoming a president. Being Governor of Texas, he argued in 1999 that the US had overlooked India in its strategic calculations and must work to ensure that India was a force for stability and security in Asia.<sup>15</sup> He saw India as a potential counterweight to China, which till 9/11 ranked high on the list of newly designed possible enemies of the US.<sup>16</sup> India became a natural choice of the Bush administration to secure the Indian Ocean sea-lanes from Suez to Singapore, a route for the flow of the enormous amount of oil and trade. The security of these routes on a long-term policy was not easy for the US through its 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet in the Pacific or 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet in the Mediterranean. A local power was required to guard it properly and India was attractive for the US due to its location. In addition, China’s enormous military advantage on the mainland facing Taiwan can also be neutralized, if India keeps the Chinese military reserves busy in Central China. These plans were to strengthen American dominance in the contemporary geo-strategic scenario, however, the process became a little slower due to the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

### **Terrorist Attacks and Indian Position**

The terrorist attacks on 11 September in US were the most brazen attacks since Pearl Harbour when Japanese planes attacked at American fleet on 7 December 1941 and dragged it into the World War-II. In response to 9/11 attacks, the American policy suddenly became the South Asia- and Middle East-centric with an objective to remove the perpetrators of this crime from power at both places. A new America emerged flexing its muscles and letting no one to block its way to avenge this heinous act. The US launched an attack

---

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Bhabani SenGupta, “India in the Twenty-First Century”, *International Affairs*, vol. 73, no.2, 1997, pp.308-310.

<sup>15</sup> Ashley Tellis, “Testimony to Senate Foreign Relations Committee,” June 2004. <<http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications>>

<sup>16</sup> C. Raja Mohan, “A Paradigm Shift Towards South Asia,” *The Washington Quarterly*, Winter 2002-3, vol. 26, no.1, p.144.

on Afghanistan, the haven for the alleged mastermind of the 9/11 attacks, and subsequently Iraq, citing the similar reasons. Much of this was done unilaterally without waiting or delaying to get international approval. India was located in the region where this global problem established order in a failed state. New Delhi had high expectations and tried extremely hard to make the US drop Pakistan as its ally in favour of India inducting it into the high table of diplomacy. India offered unconditional and ambivalent support for the success of the American agenda.<sup>17</sup>

Efforts to counter terrorism had already been the subject of a pragmatic and productive Indo-US dialogue before 9/11, and a long-term bond was constituted between the two countries. Explaining South Asian region as the prime source of terrorism, Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee stated in his address to the American Congress that “no country has faced as ferocious an attack of terrorist violence as India has in the past two decades: 21,000 were killed by foreign-sponsored terrorist in Punjab alone and 16,000 had been killed in Jammu and Kashmir.”<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, Indo-Pak crises placed greater stress on this aspect of the bilateral relationship, and Washington avoided overt support to India. This dispute with its nuclear dimension was intensified in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks of 9/11. India offered full cooperation and this was unexpected in the background of its decades-long non-alignment policy. It eagerly offered transit and refuelling facilities to the US ships and aircrafts from its bases in the war against Afghanistan. Such an offer was unthinkable a few years earlier arguably. For obvious reasons, the US preferred the base facilities of Pakistan for its special forces and aircrafts due to logistic and strategic reasons. The US got extra leverage over Pakistan because of the military regime and this kind of cooperation could never be expected from India, even under a fawning BJP-led special consideration. It was expected that the US would craft anti-terrorism policies in a manner that would never undermine the territorial integrity of other nations particularly the victims of this scourge.<sup>19</sup>

New Delhi assessed that decisive moment in the world affairs had arrived and must be seized firmly. However, the American move to enlist Cold War allies and building partnership with them, particularly with Pakistan, was resented by the several Indians. The Bush administration lifted sanctions and provided economic support and legitimacy to General Musharraf's regime in Pakistan, which had never been expected before. India viewed the renewal of Pak-US relations as the supreme irony in reference to anti-terrorism, which was the basis for new American involvement in Pakistan. India claimed to be one of the principal countries to support the anti-terrorism campaign; moreover, it looked at Pakistan as the main source of Indian problems of

---

<sup>17</sup> Jabeen & Ahmed, ‘Indo-US Nuclear...’,

<sup>18</sup> Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Address to Joint Session of US Congress, Washington D.C. Embassy of India, September 14, 2000.

<sup>19</sup> Mussarat Jabeen, “Either You are with US or against US”, *Journal of South Asian Studies*, vol.24., no.2, July-December 2009.

terrorism before.<sup>20</sup> There were a series of major incidents in India after 9/11 and first of them happened on 1 October 2001 in Srinagar, capital of Kashmir, when an attack was made on the state assembly, in which 38 people were killed.<sup>21</sup>

The second was an attack on the Indian Parliament on 31 December 2001. In the subsequent weeks, tension escalated and all types of communications, including air, train and bus services, were terminated between India and Pakistan. The military buildup between the two countries, followed by the bombing further tensed the situation. India withdrew its high commissioner from Islamabad for the first time after the 1971 war. American Secretary of State Colin Powell remained in contact over a period of several weeks that might represent the most intensive involvement of any US official in a South Asian issue. Powell made his second trip to the region within three months 'to cool it down.' Bush made a telephonic call to Vajpayee convincing him to be patient, emphasizing on the positive role of his administration with no intention of ignoring Indian concerns.<sup>22</sup> The third incident took place at Kaluchuk (Jammu) on 14 May 2002. This attack claimed 31 lives, including army personnel and their family members. India alleged that all the three terrorists killed in this incident were identified as Pakistani nationals.<sup>23</sup>

After these events, the US urged Pakistan to take action against the terrorist groups responsible for attack on the Indian Parliament. Pakistan took certain actions, but those were termed cosmetic in nature by India. India alleged that it might suite to Musharraf to concentrate on Jammu & Kashmir after the fall of the Taliban in order to placate domestic discontent arising out of his role in Operation Enduring Freedom, a US-led war in Afghanistan to counter terrorism. It might also be in American interest to bail out Pakistan for its services, which the former still required for anti-Taliban and anti Al-Qaeda campaign, but it was never acceptable to India, a long-time so-called victim of Pakistan's sponsored terrorism.<sup>24</sup>

There have been several other instances of terrorist attacks in India over the last decade, including Mumbai attack of November 2008, that have badly affected the relations and brought the two countries to a point of suspending all types of diplomatic ties. India blamed Pakistan for all such activities and wanted the US to take concrete measures to address the challenge of terrorism, dismantling their safe havens and disrupting all financial and tactical support to them.

---

<sup>20</sup> Mohan, "A Paradigm Shift...", pp. 142-44.

<sup>21</sup> Dugger Celia, "Pakistan asks India to Revive Talks Aimed at Bringing Peace to Kashmir." *The New York Times*, 9 October 2001.

<sup>22</sup> Hathaway, "The US India...", pp.17-18.

<sup>23</sup> Ministry of External Affairs (Govt. of India), "Kaluchak Massacre", May 14 2002.

<<http://www.mea.gov.in/in-focus-article.htm?18990/Kaluchak+Massacre+14+May+2002>>

<sup>24</sup> Mohan, "A Paradigm Shift...",

## Terrorism Card and Indian Demand

Since 9/11, India has been insisting the US to play the terrorism card effectively in its favour and wanted Washington to ask Islamabad to withdraw its support for terrorists in Afghanistan and Kashmir. Ambassador David Mulford stated that India's challenges were not merely economic, but they were strategic, because all around its periphery were growing threats of terrorism, failing states, insurgency and drug trafficking. There are nearly fourteen terrorist and separatist movements "of varying rigour and intensity," other than the violence in Jammu and Kashmir.<sup>25</sup> Washington showed reluctance to accept New Delhi's allegation that terrorism emanating from Afghanistan had links with the insurgency in Kashmir. No doubt, President Bush promised an all-out war against terrorism and those states that are harbouring terrorists, but he avoided to agree with India on Srinagar events and gave a deaf ear to the demand of equating alleged Pakistani-backed terrorism in Kashmir with global terrorism. India also tried to persuade the Bush administration to force Pakistan for closure of the training camps and logistic support and other assistance to 'terrorism in Kashmir.'

American approach to combat terrorism somewhat dampened Indian hopes, as the Bush doctrine of pre-emption did not correspond with Indian demands. India assumed that both countries had similar views on Islamic fundamentalism, but the US only showed its concerns with the terrorism directed against it. To eliminate the terrorism, it is not necessary to take the lives of the terrorists, where and when they appear or are found, but it has to be rooted out. As the "trustee of global stability," it is imperative for the US to recognize this and act accordingly.

Despite bombing in New Delhi and the reaction of other events on American public opinion, Bush insisted better relations between India and Pakistan because long-time antagonism between the two neighbours was against the US interests and the war on terror. However, Bush's vision of India did not change and his administration made only strategic accommodation with Pakistan to counter the terrorism. The former US ambassador to India, Robert Blackwill, made it clear that Bush had envisioned a long-term relationship with New Delhi.<sup>26</sup> India tried to persuade the US that Osama bin Laden was not the sole challenge, but there were several other terrorist groups in Kashmir that were allegedly sponsored by Pakistan. India also blamed the intelligence agencies and attempted to draw the world's attention in the same manner as it did in December 1999, when an Indian Airlines plane IC-814 carrying 178 passengers was hijacked in Kathmandu (Nepal), refuelled in Lahore (Pakistan) and flown to Kandahar (Afghanistan). It was alleged that the plane was hijacked by Pakistan-based organization, Harakat-ul-Mujahideen, which was designated as a foreign terrorist organization by the US Department

---

<sup>25</sup> "India's Many Wars," *Jane's Foreign Report*, December 16, 2004, <<http://www.janes.com/subscribefrp/doc>>

<sup>26</sup> Cohen, "A Deal too..." p.8.

of State in 1997.<sup>27</sup> The hijackers demanded to release 35 Kashmiri prisoners, including Maulana Masood Azhar, a Pakistani cleric, Ahmed Omer Saeed Shaikh, a British national of Pakistani origin and Mushtaq Ahmed Zargar of Jammu and Kashmir in exchange of the passengers. On Indian government's refusal to concede the demands, the hijackers wounded several passengers and killed a newly-wed person, who was on his honeymoon trip with his wife. This act created panic and passengers' relatives pressurized the Indian government to yield the demands. New Delhi commented that President Musharraf had shown neither the interest nor ability to control the activities of terrorist organizations that were supporters of these elements. Furthermore, India implicated Pakistan in this event, lobbying the Clinton administration to declare Pakistan as a "terrorist state." Indian press reports suggested that army-terrorist links had been growing stronger since the tension in Kashmir.<sup>28</sup>

### **Pakistan as a Factor in Indo-US Relations**

Pak-US relations were always a major irritant in Indo-US ties. It was believed that Republican administrations were generally soft to the Cold War allies and this perception strengthened the idea that Pakistan would be a beneficiary of this policy since it had been a Cold War ally. This notion was further strengthened in Bush era when he announced that Clinton administration was too critical to Indonesia over the military-backed violence in East Timor and the Moluccas.<sup>29</sup> The US friendly policy towards Pakistan and showering of money, military hardware and diplomatic niceties were also part of this policy, but at the same time, these favours were not digested by India.

Pakistan's support to the US in the war against terrorism and America's increasing relations with India to deter the potential threat of China, a 'Great Power' of the future, are two different lines. India is continuously showing its resentment over the US assistance to Pakistan as it views the latter as 'supporter of terrorism in India.' The Indians are inflexible and want the US to avoid lumping it with Pakistan in all policy decisions. India perceives itself in a different status with no match to Pakistan. It expects the US to follow the same policy as it did in the case of China and Taiwan. Each of them was dealt with independently and separately. On their own level, Indian politicians have found the solution of this issue. To them, blocking economic assistance and increasing defence budget would neutralize all the advantages that Pakistan might have with new American alignment.<sup>30</sup> In November 2001, Robert Blackwill, the then American ambassador, viewed India as victim of terrorism showing his

<sup>27</sup> The US Department of State, Chapter 6: Foreign Terrorist Organizations, Country Report on Terrorism 2011, July 2012, <<http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/crt/2011/195553.htm>>

<sup>28</sup> M. Saleem Kidwai, *US Policy Towards the Muslim World: Focus on Post 9/11 Period*, (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America 2010)

<sup>29</sup> Rajeswari Pillai Rajagopalamp, "Indo-US Relations in the Bush White House," *Strategic Analysis*, vol.25, no. 4, July 2001, pp.546-47.

<sup>30</sup> Hari Sud, "India and US Relations: Ground Realities," January 1, 2005, p.10. <[http://www.indiacause.com/columns/OL\\_050101.htm](http://www.indiacause.com/columns/OL_050101.htm)>

country's pledge that the war against terrorism would not over until terrorism was ended against the two countries. Answering to a question about 'Pakistan-supported' militants in Kashmir, he said that a terrorist was a terrorist, not a freedom fighter. No country would be permitted to provide sanctuaries to terrorists.<sup>31</sup>

The war on terrorism has provided the US an opportunity to have a decisive and positive impact on South Asia. Washington is in the position to solidify a long-term relationship with India without bracketing it with Pakistan and to prevent another regional war by addressing the Kashmir dispute. Indian emerging economy, skilled workforce, and democracy have made it Asia's third power, which is attractive for the US. India has set its professional military under firm civilian control. New Delhi also entertains the conviction that the US would give it access to highly sophisticated military equipment as had already been in the case of Phalcon system. Americans offered the sale of F-16s and F-18 'Hornets' to India when they announced the sale of F-16s to Pakistan. But the Indian army has always been very reluctant to purchase American equipment due to the fickleness of the US Congress, which is quick to accuse its clients of misconduct and impose sanctions on them and hence stop delivery of spare parts, as it repeated this practice in the case of Pakistan in the past.<sup>32</sup> A former Indian Air Force chief Anil Tipnis and former Army chief Shankar Roy Chowdhury had separately showed their opposition to the government, in general, and the defence minister, in particular, for such a military procurement. But the civilian government did not bother these objections and was ambitious about the US technology transfers that allow manufacturing of aircrafts in India.<sup>33</sup> A Rand report stated that American calculation about India and Pakistan giving priority to India decoupling Pakistan. It elaborated the important role of Indian economy and technological capabilities, which were making it a major Asian power.<sup>34</sup> Despite the closer relations with the US and recognition of India as an emerging soft power, New Delhi still shows concerns over Pak-US relations as American position is still vague on the Indian interpretation of terrorism in Kashmir.

In changing position, the US is not only supporting the Indian stance on terrorism in Kashmir, but also sharing sensitive information with New Delhi about activities at terrorist bases throughout South Asia, particularly in Kashmir, Bangladesh and Nepal.<sup>35</sup> The US also openly supported Indian allegation regarding the series of bomb blast in Mumbai and Kashmir. Richard

---

<sup>31</sup> Ravi Tomar, "India-US Relations in a Changing Strategic Environment", *Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Group*, June 25 2002, <[http://www.aph.gov.au/About\\_Parliament/Parliamentary\\_Departments/Parliamentary\\_Library/pubs/rp/rp0102/02RP20](http://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/Parliamentary_Departments/Parliamentary_Library/pubs/rp/rp0102/02RP20)>

<sup>32</sup> Abdul Sattar, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy 1947-2005: A Concise History*, (Karachi: Oxford University press), 2007.

<sup>33</sup> Christophe Jaffrelot, "India, the United States' new Ally in Asia," July 2005. <[http://www.columbia.edu/cu/alliance/Papers/Paper\\_Christophe-Jaffrelot-2005.pdf](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/alliance/Papers/Paper_Christophe-Jaffrelot-2005.pdf)>

<sup>34</sup> Rajagopalan, "Indo-US relations..." p.548.

<sup>35</sup> B. P. Khanna and Lalit Sethi, "Different Hemispheres, Common Foe," *Armed Forces Journal*, December 2004, p.37.

Boucher seconded Indian allegations and opined, “we all know that terrorism in South Asia and some of the terrorist groups that have design against India still have place in Pakistan.”<sup>36</sup> This was the first time, when the US accused Pakistan, insisting it to break relations with accused militant groups and take the New Delhi’s terrorism problem seriously and formally acknowledge the links between terrorism in Kashmir and groups operating in Pakistan. President Bush stressed the international community to stand united against terrorism and declared unequivocally that there was no justification for the vicious murder of innocent people.<sup>37</sup> Recently President Barack Obama and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh condemned the terrorist attack in Samba (Jammu) and Kashmir on 26 September 2013. Both reiterated their commitment for countering terrorism in all its forms, eliminating their safe havens and infrastructure. Both leaders called for Pakistan to work for bringing the perpetrators of the Mumbai attacks (2008) to justice.<sup>38</sup>

This all led India to a meaningful relationship with the US for building a pragmatic partnership. India views that a strategic partnership, strictly speaking, is between the two equals and partnerships offered to India cannot be extended to Pakistan. Owing to an unequal status between Pakistan and the US, India suggested Islamabad to be careful in its engagement with America and find ways to overcome this asymmetrical relationship. On the other hand, Pakistan is alarmed about the close Indo-US relationship and support in nuclear technology. Pakistan has re-examined American sale of sophisticated weapons to India that have earlier been opposed by India for Pakistan. In the ultimate analysis, the US does not want and cannot afford to have an unfriendly India.<sup>39</sup>

## **China factor in Indo-US Relations**

China factor has played an important role in materializing Indo-US strategic partnership. The US policy in Asia is not only preferring India for counter terrorism but also using it as a lever for containing China to achieve its goals in Asia. In the post-Cold War era, Asia emerged as the world’s new centre of gravity and Washington wanted a pivotal role in the region, perceiving China as a strategic competitor rather than a strategic partner like India. It cultivated India to strengthen it vis-à-vis Chinese power. During the Cold War era, the US tried to maintain friendly relations with China but the later embarked upon the policy of modernization of its market economy. While the end of the Cold War made China a future contender of America with a very high rate of economic

<sup>36</sup> Kidwai, “US policy towards...”

<sup>37</sup> Saroj Bishoyi, “International Terrorism and Religious Extremism: Challenges to US and India”, in Kidwai (ed.), *US Policy towards...*, pp. 280-81.

<sup>38</sup> The White House, “U. S.-India Joint Statement, ”September 27, 2013, <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/09/27/us-india-joint-statement>>

<sup>39</sup> “Bush’s Second Presidency and its Implications for Indo-US Relations”, p.5, <[http://orfonline.org/cms/export/orfonline/modules/policybrief/attachments/py050204\\_1162551077859.pdf](http://orfonline.org/cms/export/orfonline/modules/policybrief/attachments/py050204_1162551077859.pdf)>

growth and modernization of its armed forces. China is also on the path of expanding its influence in the Pacific region where America had vital security and economic stakes.

For both India and the US, China is a common threat, while Japan also shows concerns on China's rising economic and strategic power in the region. Japan was previously a strategic ally of India, and in changing regional paradigm, strategic cooperation escalated between the two. In East Asia, the US is closer to Japan and the Japanese are also worried about a nuclear North Korea.<sup>40</sup> President Bush appeared to be more realistic about China as compared to Clinton or even his father Bush Senior. He was not under the influence of multinational cooperation and followed a policy of conengagement (a term used in a RAND study for a mixture of containment and engagement) and insisted China to stop missile cooperation with Pakistan.<sup>41</sup>

Bush took several steps to curtail China at regional and world level. In his State of Union Address on 29 January 2002, he enlisted China with seven states that had been singled out as a possible target, in the context of any future conflict across the Taiwan Straits. China strongly protested the US for listing it explicitly as one of the targets for a nuclear strike along with other rough states.<sup>42</sup>

Another proof of American policy of containment of China is the sales of the military hardware to India, which can be used against China, including the PC Orion maritime reconnaissance aircraft that are used to trace submarines and would be helpful in the Indian Ocean against Chinese submarines. With the use of the Aegis radar system, Indian naval vessels are in a position to monitor Chinese military movements while operating in the Malacca Straits.<sup>43</sup> These threats occupy US strategic thinking and its military officers confirmed that China occupied their policy towards India. For example, range of new Indian *Agni-II* missile is in the position to hit targets across Central and East Asia including mainland China. But India's reluctance to test the *Agni-III* is to preclude China from entering into a missile race with it.<sup>44</sup>

The growing economic power of China in South Asia is accelerating cause for cherished Indo-US relation. The analysts believe that Indo-US defence pact is developed to assist India in becoming a 'key global power in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to contain China.' The same view is shared in a Pentagon Report that China might come into view as a strategic challenger to the US.<sup>45</sup> It is also observed that senior American officials, including former defence secretary Donald Rumsfeld, and CIA Director Potter Goss, have shown their

---

<sup>40</sup> *News International*, October 10, 2006.

<sup>41</sup> Muhammed Ayoob, "South Asia's Danger and US Foreign Policy," *Orbis*, Winter, 2001.

<sup>42</sup> Rajagopalan, "Indo-US Relations...", p. 549.

<sup>43</sup> Raghu, "Indo-US Defense Agreement, Partnership or Entrapment," *The Marxist* 21, no.2 & 3, April-September, 2005.

<sup>44</sup> Baldev Nayer Raj and T. V. Paul, *India in the World Order: Searching for Major-Power Status*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2003.

<sup>45</sup> Ghayoor Ahmed, "India's Defense Ties with US." *Dawn*, (Karachi), July 7, 2005.

apprehensions about the multiplying power of China. It seems that American imperative interests in South Asia are being threatened by China and in this situation India is a hope to help US out to contain China. Pakistan is a close partner of China, which cannot fit in this triangle.

### **Indo-US Cooperation against Global Terrorism**

Expressing cooperation on terrorism, Jaswant Singh, former Indian foreign minister, and Colin Powell, former US Secretary of State asserted in New Delhi on 17 October 2001 that India and the US are natural allies and would stand shoulder to shoulder in the war against terrorism fulfilling the responsibility as the world's largest multi-ethnic democracies. It was expected that collaborative work would improve the situation. The two sides asserted that the prospects of cooperation between India and the US have never been as bright as currently.<sup>46</sup> Similarly, Indian former foreign secretary Kanwal Sibal in his address to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in February 2003 observed:

We both are targets. The epicenter of terrorism is in our region and we have a common stake in eliminating it. Both of us rejoiced in the downfall of the Taliban and support the Government of President Karzai in Afghanistan. Both of us focus on stability in Central Asia and elimination of the fundamentalist threat in this region. Our common experiences and suffering make us natural partners. As democracies, the challenge we face is acute. Free and open societies like ours have to find answers to the inadequacies of existing law enforcement and crime prevention mechanism dealing with terrorism, while preserving their high standard of the rule of law, judicial process and transparency.<sup>47</sup>

Combined military functioning of the US and India have been continued through different agencies, including the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter-terrorism since 2001. This group was established in early 2000 and it "proved to be a useful mechanism for exchange of information, intelligence sharing, anti-terrorism training programmes and strength-based international links between crime prevention agencies in both the countries."<sup>48</sup> In January 2002, JWG met in New Delhi under the leadership of former security adviser Mishra and US Ambassador Francis Taylor, a key person of State Department on terrorism. Both officials talked to finalize the project of the sale of American electronic sensors, which could be used along the Line of Control (a boundary

---

<sup>46</sup> *Dawn*, October 18, 2001.

<sup>47</sup> Kanwal Sibal, "India-US Partnership in Changing Security Challenges", Washington DC.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, February 4, 2003, <<http://www.carnegieendowment.org/publications>>.

<sup>48</sup> Embassy of the United States of America, "People, Progress and Partnership: the Transformation of India US Relations", New Delhi: Embassy of the United States of America, 2001.

line that divides Indian and Pakistani occupied Kashmir). India claimed that this outcome was evidence of an official American recognition of Pakistan's support for "terrorist" infiltration across the border.<sup>49</sup> The JWG is an attempt to explore the "advanced methods for exchange of information, especially reviewing of threat perceptions, early warning, coordination in administrative and judicial matters to prevent terrorist activities, and to facilitate the actions against perpetrators of such acts".<sup>50</sup> As a result of cooperation through JWG, the war on terror strengthened the political dialogue. The frequent meetings of JWG are to show cooperation on terrorism. These meetings brought qualitative changes in bilateral relations. In addition to this, both armies are conducting joint military exercises. 'Yudh Abhyas' is an annual exercise, which started in 2004. 'Cope India', an air force exercise, is also part of 'Yudh Abhyas', which is being conducted bi-annually. Last time, it held in October 2009 in Agra-India focuses on mobility operations for humanitarian aid. The US remains committed to a broad defence trade relationship that enables transfer of nuclear technology.<sup>51</sup>

A new Counterterrorism Cooperation Initiative was signed in 2010 to increase mutual counterterrorism activities like information sharing and capacity building.<sup>52</sup> President Obama announced Homeland Security Dialogue during his visit to India in November 2010, and his Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano toured India in May 2011 for the first round of dialogue.<sup>53</sup> The next meeting held in May 2013 in Washington. The dialogue has several sub groups in different areas and it reviews their engagements with each other. In December 2013, New Delhi organized an Indo-US Police Chief Conference.<sup>54</sup>

The 9/11 led to other initiatives for bilateral working and US-India Cyber Security forum was founded in 2002. Its purpose was to launch an extensive programme of action addressing the cyber-terrorism and security information.<sup>55</sup> It held its first meeting in New Delhi in April 2002 and second in Washington in November 2004. Indo-US Defence Policy Group also became active after 9/11 and expanded its scope to cover military-to-military cooperation in counter-terrorism. It was established during the Clinton

---

<sup>49</sup> "India, US hold Anti-Terrorism Talks with Focus on South Asia," *Agence France Presse*, January 21, 2002, retrieved from Lexis-Nexis.

<sup>50</sup> L. K. Advani, "Address by Deputy Prime Minister of India L.K. Advani in the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations, June 12, 2003.

<sup>51</sup> Embassy of India, "Brief on Indo-US Relations." Washington, D.C.: Embassy of India, July 2014, <<https://www.indianembassy.org/pages.php?id=41>>

<sup>52</sup> Embassy of United States, "Ambassador Roemer signs U.S.-India Counterterrorism Cooperation Agreement," July 2010, <<http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/pr072310.html>>

<sup>53</sup> US Department of Defense, Report to Congress on U. S. -India Security Cooperation November, 2011, <[http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/20111101\\_NDAA\\_Report\\_on\\_US\\_India\\_Security\\_Cooperation.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/20111101_NDAA_Report_on_US_India_Security_Cooperation.pdf)>

<sup>54</sup> Embassy of India, "Brief on Indo..."

<sup>55</sup> Ministry of External Affairs, "The India-U.S. Cyber-terrorism Initiative," *India News*, April 30, 2002.

administration to facilitate the dialogue on issues of mutual interest, particularly the defence. This group enhanced cooperation between the two navies against piracy and terrorism, providing transit facilities to American ships in the Malacca Strait through Indian naval escort.<sup>56</sup> The preferred areas of DPG are maritime security, humanitarian assistance, disaster relief and counterterrorism. There are seven subgroups under it to discuss and defend the defence trade, technical cooperation, and technology security. In 2011, all the three forces held 56 cooperative events with the American forces and India never conducted such exercises with any other country.<sup>57</sup>

## **Maritime Security in Oceans**

The US and Indian Navies have been working in collaboration since 1991 when Kickleighter Proposals were designed by the American General Claude Kickleighter to increase naval relations. The proposals sought to expand defence cooperation through joint military training and exercises apart from other measures. The joint Executive Steering Groups (ESGs) of Army, Navy and Air Force were established to increase collaboration in the high seas. After setting up the Naval ESG, the first joint exercise was held in May 1992.<sup>58</sup> However, Indian nuclear tests of 1998 disrupted their regularity and naval interaction was resumed in 2002 after changing situation. Joint operations of both navies were conducted on four separate occasions. First was Indian Navy's security for American ships transiting the Strait of Malacca after 9/11. Second was disaster relief work for victims of the tsunami in the Indian Ocean in 2004-2005. Third was non-combatant evacuation operations in Lebanon in 2006 and last was counter-piracy operations in the Gulf of Aden in 2008.<sup>59</sup>

President Bush identified India's potential in both the Indian and Pacific oceans during his visit of March 2006 and proposed a maritime security framework. The 2006 Indo-US Framework for Maritime Security Cooperation was intended against a wide range of maritime threats, including: transnational crime like piracy, trafficking and smuggling as well as safety of navigation, search and rescue were also included. The issues of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, environmental degradation and natural disasters were enlisted in the framework. Naval cooperation led to conduct four exercises annually: Malabar, Habu Nag (naval aspects of amphibious operations), Spitting Cobra (explosive ordnance destruction focus), and Salvex (diving and salvage). Malabar is the highest annual bilateral maritime exercise to reinforce maritime tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) of the two countries. Malabar is conducted in alternate years and has been a multinational exercise, including the navies of Singapore, Japan and Australia. Habu Nag is also

---

<sup>56</sup> Bishoyie, "International Terrorism..."

<sup>57</sup> US Department of Defence, "Report to Congress..."

<sup>58</sup> Ministry of Defence (Govt. of India), Annual Report 2003-04, <[mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/...2745.../India++2004.pdf](http://mercury.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/...2745.../India++2004.pdf)>

<sup>59</sup> Ninan Koshy, "India: Linchpin of the Pivot? The Strategy of rebalancing U.S. Security in Asia," September 24, 2012, <[www.theepochtimes.com](http://www.theepochtimes.com)>.

important and being conducted on a larger scale. These exercises are enhancing professional cooperation between the two navies making them familiar with high-end naval warfare, including anti-surface warfare, missile defence, anti-submarine warfare, and naval special warfare.<sup>60</sup> Apart from this, Pacific Fleet-Indian Navy Executive Steering Group is conducting regular annual meetings engaging naval bilateral staff talks, mutual port visits, and personnel exchanges of all ranks. The US Coast Guard is taking measures with the assistance of the Departments of Defence and Homeland Security to engage Indian Coast Guard. The *Counter-terrorism Cooperation Initiative (CCI)* was signed on 23 July 2010, further engaging the two coast guards and navies of two countries to enhance exchanges on maritime security against piracy and terrorism.<sup>61</sup>

The Obama administration equally weighted the mutual relations, viewing India as a security provider in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). The US president commented that “one of the defining partnerships in the 21st century – is a priority for the US Government and for the US Department of Defense.”<sup>62</sup> Obama’s visit to India in November 2010 further enhanced the thickness of the bilateral relations as the president appreciated the shared vision of peace and stability prevailing in the Indo-Pacific region and Asia. His Defence Secretary Leon Panetta also recognized the strong strategic and defence relationship of the two countries that would be a “lynchpin” in defence strategy, balancing the two forces in the Asia-Pacific.<sup>63</sup> The same viewpoint was expressed by his predecessor, Robert Gates in June 2010 in Shangri-La Dialogue. About 35 percent of global energy resources pass through IOR and many nations are concerned to a stable and secure route. More than ninety percent of global trade by volume having 77 percent of value passes through this ocean with 100,000 ships carrying 700 million gross tons weight every year.<sup>64</sup> President Obama also welcomed India’s decision to participate in the Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) naval exercise hosted by US Pacific Command in 2014.<sup>65</sup>

Despite the American enthusiasm, the maritime relations between India and the US have not accessed a high trajectory owing to certain factors. The Indo-Iranian trade relations have become a diverging point as the US is pressurizing India to reduce them bringing to a minimal level particularly in oil imports. Hillary Clinton, the former secretary of state, appreciated India for the reduction of oil imports from Iran during her visit to India in May 2012. She

---

<sup>60</sup> US-India Military Exercises have grown dramatically: Pentagon, November 2, 2011.<<http://defence.pk/threads/us-india-military-exercises-have-grown-dramatically-pentagon.138184/#ixzz3A0ppA1wx>>

<sup>61</sup> US Departments of Defense, “Report to Congress...,”

<sup>62</sup> Embassy of India, “Brief on Indo...,”

<sup>63</sup> Hari Sud, “India and US Relation...,”

<sup>64</sup> Rani, Sudes. India-US Maritime Co-operation — Whither Bound? *National Maritime Foundation*, 2013,<<http://www.maritimeindia.org/article/india-us-maritime-co-operation-%E2%80%94-whither-bound.html>>

<sup>65</sup> The White House, “U. S.-India Joint...,”

expected further reduction of imports. On the other side, India imports 80 percent of its crude oil from Iran and depends on 12 percent on other imports.<sup>66</sup> Other divergent factor is the American export control policy and laws for transfer of high-end technology, which require multiple-levels of bureaucratic procedures while India is seeking access to high technology without constraints. These two factors have become irritants in Indo-US relations hindering the bilateral cooperation.

## **Increased Relations and Development of Strategic Partnership**

Under the new relationship of 'natural allies,' India strengthened its case for gaining cooperation in all types of energy needs, particularly in the area of nuclear energy. To materialize this cooperation, negotiations succeeded and an agreement was signed in January 2004 with the name of the "Next Steps in the Strategic Partnership" (NSSP). President Bush announced and Vajpayee endorsed it. It was to "expand cooperation in three areas: civilian nuclear activities, civilian space programs, and high-technology trade. In addition, it was suggested to expand dialogue on missile defense."<sup>67</sup> The NSS (2002) defined the contours of this partnership stating that "the US had undertaken a transformation of its bilateral relationship with India based on a conviction that US interests require a strong relationship with India."<sup>68</sup>

In the second term of George W. Bush, the strategic dialogues were taken to the next level and strategic partnership was signed on 18 July 2005 during the Indian Prime Minister's visit to Washington. India was taken as a "responsible state with advanced nuclear technology." In the joint statement, President Bush ascribed the significance of partnership for nuclear energy attributing it a source for provision of "cleaner and better environment."<sup>69</sup> This agreement ended the three decades of American opposition to Indian nuclear programme and Washington made civilian nuclear cooperation as the centrepiece of its policy. India availed of the opportunity and took full benefit of the US offer. This event shed the burdens of the past leading to a new era. Strategically, the July 2005 agreement was the most important event having far-reaching impacts. It established Indian relationship with the US recognizing it as a de facto nuclear power and there was the possibility of American favour to it for becoming a global power and permanent membership in the Security

---

<sup>66</sup> "India to cut Oil Purchases from Iran following US Pressure," *The Telegraph*, May 15, 2012. <<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/asia/india/9267337/India-to-cut-oil-purchases-from-iran-following-us-pressure.html>> (Accessed in January 2014).

<sup>67</sup> Fact sheet on the NSSP (2004), <<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2004/36290.htm>>.

<sup>68</sup> Bush, "National Security Strategy 2002...,"

<sup>69</sup> Joint Statement between President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, *White House Press Release*, Washington, D.C., July 18, 2005, <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/07/20050718-6.html>>.

Council with veto power.<sup>70</sup> This agreement removed the 30-year-old technological sanctions and provided multi-layered cooperation of powerful economy of the world. It also offered energy options in nuclear area and made it a viable source for Indian flourishing economy. Strategically, this agreement ensured India's security in its neighbourhood vis-à-vis Pakistan and China. The US amended its domestic laws and tried to accommodate India by persuading the members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to resume nuclear cooperation and trade with India. However, India was directed to cover three steps, first was to negotiate its specific safeguards with IAEA, second was for the US to persuade NSG to amend its guideline and made India an exception to its mandate, and finally, the US Congress had to pass the agreement to incorporate the IAEA and NSG requirements.<sup>71</sup> In Indian case, the most difficult step was to meet full scope safeguards' requirements that were compulsory due to India's status of non-nuclear weapon state under the rules of NPT, as it tested nuclear device after 1 January 1967 (Sec. 123 a. (2)).<sup>72</sup> In accomplishment of the agreement, the US forgot the fact that it was a direct challenge to its non-proliferation policy and did not bother to take enough guarantees from India in declaring its nuclear assets or freezing the weapons programme. President Bush's statement provided further leverage to India enhancing the fears of neighbours when he said that the US would make efforts to make India a great power. This opinion is against American non-proliferation policy and restrictions on nuclear programme as the US is taking measures to halt the nuclear weapons programmes of other states.<sup>73</sup> Marching on this path, the US is ignoring opinion of those diplomats who held numerous failed talks with India to persuade it to join the NPT or signing the CTBT. In the past, the president went to the extend stating that the US was not going to pressurize India for signing CTBT.<sup>74</sup> Furthermore, the US Ambassador Joseph called this deal as "a substantial net gain for nonproliferation, a win for our strategic relationship, a win for energy security, and a win for nonproliferation." He added that he was "convinced that the nonproliferation regime will emerge stronger as a result." A large number of American investors

---

<sup>70</sup> Lalit Mansingh, "Indo-US Strategic Partnership: Is We there Yet?", September 2006, <[http://www.ipcs.org/pdf\\_file/issue/439796419IB39-](http://www.ipcs.org/pdf_file/issue/439796419IB39-) Accessed 08-12-2009>.

<sup>71</sup> Chari, R. P. (ed.), *Indo-US Nuclear Deal: Seeking Synergy in Bilateralism*, New Delhi: Routledge, 2009.

<sup>72</sup> 42 USC 2153 a.(2). Section 4 (b) of the NNPA specifies that all other terms applied in the NNPA are not defined in Section 4 "shall have the meanings ascribed to them by the 1954 Act, the Energy Reorganization Act of 1974 and the Treaty [NPT]." S. Rept. 95-467 further clarified that under the NPT, the five nuclear weapon states are the U.S., U.K., China, the Soviet Union, and France, *U.S., Code Congressional and Administration News, 95th Cong., 2nd sess., 1978, 3, 329.*

<sup>73</sup> Chari, "Indo-US Nuclear...,"

<sup>74</sup> Rajagopalan, "Indo-US Relations...,"

have been supporting this agreement in their private meeting since its inception, as they viewed opportunity of investment in India.<sup>75</sup>

India and US have intensified and expanded their strategic consultations in current period through dialogues covering East Asia, Central Asia and West Asia. Both parties have given consent for strategic consultations in the matters of Latin America, Africa and the IOR.

## **Conclusion**

India's central place in South Asia with its strategic location and emerging economy has given it an influential status in global politics. The US kept India at its priority agenda in the post-Cold War era for strengthening its changing role as sole superpower, which was not free of challenges particularly in Asia where China was emerging as the countervailing power. The events of 9/11 pushed India further closer to the US without imposing hegemonic designs of the latter. The US engagement with Pakistan is different as the latter is compelled to work for the former's interests in a subordinate manner. Furthermore, the US policy reflects the dehyphenation of India from Pakistan in changing global environment. The strategic partnership has further strengthened the Indo-US ties as it has brought them closer to each other removing the dust of decades. India and US acknowledged and celebrated their partnership in their official circles because it has ended the legacy of suspicion and mistrust. The high-level exchanges between the two governments have indicated increasing cooperation on economic, security, nuclear technology and foreign policy areas between the US and India. The US is calculating India as a natural ally rather than a tactical partner. The Indian location at the crossroads of major sea-lanes has further strengthened this bond strengthening the US designs in the Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. India also occupies a central place in international community with its huge market and location.

On the issue of terrorism, the establishment of new agencies and invigoration of existing cooperation showed that a structure of enhanced relationship has taking roots in both places surpassing all obstacles. The issuance of policy statements of the leadership for mutual cooperation on terrorism are indicators of their similar views. Apparently, the US claims an even-handed policy towards India and Pakistan but cooperation through working groups, joint military exercises and other bodies that encompassed maritime security, intelligence sharing, trade & economic relations, defence & technology transfers, and joint counter-terrorist activities are sufficient evidences of American priority for India. The uses of Pakistan's territory, including ports and air bases, and its logistical support to US and NATO forces

---

<sup>75</sup> Paul K. Kerr, "US Nuclear Cooperation with India: Issues for Congress," *Congressional Research Service Report for Congress*, November 3, 2008, <<http://www.coherentbabble.com/CRS/CRS-OCRL33016.pdf>>

have not equated it with India. Instead of recognizing it in appropriate manner, conflicting signals are coming from Washington. There are a few differences between the US and Pakistan that surface from time to time but over all they enjoy strong relations, as the study explored their cooperation on multiple levels. India's aspiration for a seat in the UN Security Council also requires American support. Indian position is not a satellite or a junior partner that subordinates its foreign policy for securing American interests but it is working as equal partner. India's past record also rejects this notion, as it never joined American or Soviet camps to become an ally or satellite. In 1974 and 1998, India did not bother any superpower while conducting the nuclear tests. At present, India refused to send its troops to Iraq and turned down American request. About Indo-US relations, it is concluded that changing regional perspective has strengthened the relations between the two countries extending a recognition to India's large size, huge markets and strategic location ensuring that both are marching to the road suitable to their mutual interests.

