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INDIA-USA: DEFENSE RELATIONS POST 20TH CENTURY

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ABSTRACT

In an uncertain world beset by wars, environmental problems, ethnic and regional disputes, and the emergence of dictatorships, India and the United States of America stand as two of the greatest torchbearers of democracy and this is why strategic defense co-operation between the two gains significance.

Keywords: *NAM, GSOMIA, COMCASA, LEMOA, BECA, CAASTA, Indo-Pacific, Hegemony*

INTRODUCTION

Since the beginning, the history of relations between the United States and India has continuously changed, with the United States occasionally providing help to India. Relations between the United States and India were not great during the Cold War since India was adhering to NAM policy and the United States was more concerned with Pakistan's geopolitical location and advantages attached to it.

After the tragic events of 9/11, the perception that the United States was a superpower began to erode, and the tides changed. The USA began to recognise the threat posed by terrorism at that point and the

harm that terrorism had caused to India. The events of the twenty-first century, such as the United States' support of India's NSG membership, the Civil Nuclear Deal, Defence agreements, and space cooperation, to name a few, have largely improved relations between the two countries.

Today co-operation between 2 nations extend in various areas like:

- **Defense and Security**
- **Clean Energy**
- **Space**
- **Multilateral Cooperation**
- **People-to-People Ties**
- **Strategic Alignment**

DEFENSE CO-OPERATION

India and the US have developed a robust defence industrial partnership that explores potential for joint development and production of critical military assets for our two nations.

The US-India High Technology Cooperation Group (HTCG) was established in November 2002 to offer a "standing framework" for matters pertaining to high technology between the two nations. The Indian Foreign Secretary and the US Undersecretary for Industry and Security co-chaired it. The goal was to influence the legal and institutional framework between the two nations in order to direct strategic commerce in restricted goods and to foster the growth of such trade. Between 2002 and 2005, US exports to India increased from \$4 billion to \$8 billion yearly thanks to the HTCG.

The "Next Steps in Strategic Partnership" agreement, which the two nations signed in January 2004, was the clearest hint that the US-India relationship was taking a different turn. This included high-tech trade, ballistic missile defence discussions, civilian space initiatives, and collaboration in civilian nuclear activities.

Additionally, the US started to put pressure on India to sign the four foundational agreements that it believed were required to fulfil legal obligations and advance military cooperation between the US and India. In 2002, India ratified the first, known as the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA), which was a fundamental pact designed to guarantee the confidentiality of communications between the two parties. Since 2007 India is also part of US led Malabar Exercise centred around Indo-Pacific region.

The "US-India Strategic Dialogue" was started in 2010 with the goal of offering high-level direction for the US-India relationship. The United States proclaimed India a "Major Defence Partner" during the visit of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the US in 2016. India only has this status, which signifies that it would be regarded equally to the closest allies and partners of the US.

A 2019 modification to the National Defence Authorization Act spared India the punitive US Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAASTA). India avoided fines for importing Russian weapons, including the long-range S-400 surface-to-air missile system, by approving to the waiver. This reflects that USA understands India's needs and India has been able to secure its own interest in this partnership

The Basic Exchange Cooperation Agreement (BECA) in October 2020, which deals with information sharing in space and underwater domains; the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) in 2018, an India-specific version of the Communication and Information Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA); and the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA), in 2016, an India-specific version of the Logistics Support Agreement (LSA) that the US signs with other countries, which forms the basis of defense co-operation between India and USA.

Recently in November 2023, 5th 2+2 was concluded between the two wherein, The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to advancing the multifaceted defence partnership by means of extensive discussions and increasingly sophisticated military exercises.

They also committed to accelerating joint projects started under the June 2023 Roadmap for India-US Defence Industrial Cooperation and expanding cooperation in emerging domains like artificial intelligence and space. They were pleased with the speed at which collaboration in the Maritime Domain Awareness was progressing, and they anticipated finding ways to strengthen service-to-service connections and exchange technology in order to tackle a variety of maritime issues, particularly those pertaining to the underwater domain.

The Ministers reaffirmed the Roadmap for military Industrial Cooperation as a driving force behind improving supply chain resilience, fostering technology transfer, fortifying India's military industry domestically, and bolstering its capabilities. In light of this, the Ministers welcomed the start of talks for a business partnership between General Electric (GE) Aerospace and Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) to produce GE F-414 jet engines in India. The Ministers expressed excitement for the Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA) to be finalised, as it is a top priority in the Roadmap. This arrangement would enhance supply chain resilience and further integrate the defence industrial ecosystems of both nations

FUTURE PROSPECTS

The game of defence cooperation between the United States and India has no losers. The "China Factor" is what unites them and solidifies their relationship. The "Peaceful rise of China," which aims to usurp American hegemony through its revisionist inclinations, has been detected by the Americans. China is also challenging USA in the Indo-Pacific region and that is where India's geographic location comes to USA aid and to extend co-operation in the indo-pacific named such from name of Asia-pacific. This is why the United States of America requires a power that can contain China and is not hostile to USA; this is where the state model of democracy fosters confidence.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the defence ties between the United States and India have overcome past reluctance to become an essential component of their strategic alliance. Through technology transfer, joint exercises, defence cooperation, and common strategic interests, both nations have established a strong foundation for cooperation in the defence industry.

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