

# **The Emerging International Security System: Threats, Challenges and Opportunities for India**

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## **Abstract**

*This paper examines the nature of the emerging international security system and its positive and negative implications for India's security calculus. The key features of the international security system are confrontation, and cooperation and accommodation, and these often up several possibilities of threats, challenges and opportunities for India. To India's credit, despite the worsening of its geo-strategic environment, the country's policy-making structures have displayed the capacity to remain flexible and responsive to changes for furthering its security and national interests. The paper calls for having well-articulated policies and strategies that can meet not only the present-day concerns and uncertainties, but also have the capacity to meet India's future needs.*

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## **Introduction**

The world politics in the post-Cold War period has moved apace, but with markings of uncertainty and instability. Conceptions of security and stability, and offence and defence have undergone transformations. Today's international security system is characterised by the American pre-eminence and unilateralism; continuing and increased role of nuclear weapons as means of political blackmail, conflict and deterrence; role of rapid technological developments in national security management; regional security problems; and emergence of non-state actors as a source of national and international instability. The world is not the same since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 on the World Trade Center (WTC) and the Pentagon- America's symbols of power and pride. The world community is getting increasingly concerned at the threats from the non-state actors, particularly the terrorists having capabilities of carrying on transnational operations. The emergence of an international alliance against terrorism is the newest feature of the international security system, but it is not without complications. It has several implications for the security systems, both at the regional and the global level. Similarly, the recent

America-led war against Iraq has several ramifications for the international security system.

The uncertainty of the emerging international security system characterised by conceptions of both confrontation and co-operation has imparted increased significance to the management India's national security system. Strategic policies are influenced a great deal by the nature of the international security system. Policy-makers take decisions after assessing the external threats, challenges and opportunities. These change with time and environment, and hence the need for the policy-making structures to have the capacity to remain flexible and responsive to change. Threats always require immediate addressing; challenges can be dealt with over a period of time. Opportunities for furthering national interests and affecting transformation of relations in international politics do not come often; therefore, they require immediate attention of the policy-makers.

### **The Emerging International Security System**

The international security system during the Cold War was based on bipolarity and was predictable. During this period, the world survived without major wars in a highly competitive security regime between the United States and the Soviet Union. Most of the Third World aligned with either the US or the Soviet Union camp. But many of the Third World countries could not secure themselves from the threats of intra-regional rivalry as in South Asia, West Asia and the Korean peninsula. For these countries, management of national security became a highly challenging task. However, India managed its national security in a satisfactory manner during this period. Its policy of non-alignment and strategic understanding with the Soviet Union paid off.

Due to the predictability of the strategic patterns during the Cold War, India was in a position to objectively assess the intensity as well as the direction of threats to its security. That helped India in exercising proper policy postures and responses. The end of the Cold War has brought about major consequences for the international security system, and hence new policy problems for various states in the developing world. Now the

predictability of the Cold War has given way to uncertainty and complexity. Many of the strategic assumptions of the past have changed.

The end of the Cold War coincided with the emergence of globalisation of economies. New economic policies (NEP) also became a consideration in redefining and reorienting foreign and security policies. The US and other developed countries and the countries of the Third World wanted to use this economic factor for rebuilding bilateral strategic relations.

Many believed it was the beginning of a new era in which economics will precede geo-politics in determining inter-state relations. However, this model did not take roots in South Asia. Both India and Pakistan have looked towards the US and other developed nations for helping them in realising the objectives of NEP. At the level of bilateral Indo-Pak relations, competitive security and geo-politics have continued to have precedence over economic factors in the formulation of their foreign and security policies.

For India, disintegration of the Soviet Union has meant uncertainty on several aspects viz., supply of weapons systems, supply of spare parts, diplomatic support on Kashmir and other politico-strategic issues in and outside the United Nations, and as a counterweight to the US in South Asia. However, this has also provided India with an opportunity to reorient its defence and foreign policies.

There are three broad perceptions of emerging international security:

- In the nuclear age, security is mutual and dependent on accommodation, and not confrontation. The former Soviet Union and the US and its European allies activated this perception in 1987 with the INF (Intermediate Nuclear Forces) treaty and later the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). The trend has continued with the recent Russia-US treaty on strategic arms reduction.<sup>1</sup> Both the US and Russia have broad understanding that arms control, particularly in the nuclear field, is in the interest of enhancing their mutual security.

- The post-Cold War period international system is also confrontationalist and anarchic in nature. Certain states are aiming to maximize their relative power positions over other states. At the same time there are states that are striving for survival. The US has unilaterally decided for National Missile Defence (NMD) and the Theatre Missile Defence (TMD) systems. The ABM (Anti-Ballistic Missile) treaty signed between Russia and the US in 1972 came to an end with the US unilaterally withdrawing from the treaty on June 13, 2002. This is seen as a case of 'offensive realism' or maximising power to which others will respond with 'defensive realism' or increasing power for survival.<sup>2</sup> The NMD and the TMD will in all likelihood generate an arms race along the action-reaction process. Russia and China will react with their own measures for defending their security interests and power status. The US adoption of pre-emptive strike as a legitimate method of self-defence against rogue states or enemies has already motivated other countries, including India, to adopt similar postures against their perceived threats.<sup>3</sup> The Iraq war 2003 has seen the precedence of unilateralism and redundancy of the United Nations in managing the issues of international security. It also has highlighted the confrontationalist relationship between the US and its European allies-France and Germany-on the one hand and between the US, and China and Russia on the other.
- In the post-Cold War period, the concept of balance-of-power has become more prominent at the regional level. During the Cold War period, the US had a direct role in balancing the Russian power. Now in the post-Cold War period it has been suggested that Soviet power can be balanced at the regional level without direct US involvement.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, in other regions too, hostile powers can be checkmated through the balance-of-power logic. Two Asian powers, China and India, have attracted the attention of the US policy-makers. The US is in a position to exploit the situation of adversarial interstate relations in South Asia through its regional version of balance-of-power. China can be counter-balanced by Russia and also India. Pakistan and also China can be used to balance India. India is placed in this difficult geo-strategic environment, hence there are limitations for its policy-making in the post-Cold War period. India has however, so far played its cards well. It

has tried to make best use of whatever opportunities are there for it to further its security interests.

These perceptions of emerging international security provide us with a rationale for accommodation or confrontation in an anarchic world order. These perceptions can be further elaborated by looking into the nature of the emerging international security system characterised by unilateralism, nuclear proliferation, threats from non-state actors, rapid technological developments, and intra-regional hostilities.

### *The US Pre-eminence and Unilateralism*

Just when the Cold War was beginning to end, middle-level countries aspired for enhanced manoeuvring power and strategic autonomy in world politics. Realisation of these political goals was dependent on diffusion of power among several countries. A multi-polar world would have provided an ideal situation. But the US-led Operations 'Desert Storm' and 'Desert Shield' against Iraq in 1990-91 in the Gulf War demonstrated the rise of the US as a sole Superpower. The manner in which the US bypassed or used the United Nations, and the European allies who cooperated with the US-led military operation, spelt the threat of unilateralism, particularly to the countries that had strategic relations with Soviet Union during the Cold War. The entire Third World felt insecure due to the end of bipolarity and emergence of unilateralism in US foreign and security policies. Robert Jervis predicted that the end of Cold War and bipolarity would lead to increased conflict in areas having politico-strategic rivalry and disputes.<sup>5</sup>

The early 1990s was a period of dilemma for India. It felt threatened by the US preponderance and North Atlantic Treaty Organisation's capacity to project and use power in Third World countries even after the end of ideological conflict with the Soviet Union. India's difficulties increased further due to the uncertainty of Russian military and diplomatic support. The US pressure on India for signing the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) started increasing. It is significant to note that India acquired nuclear weapons during the early 1990s<sup>6</sup> and Sino-Pak

nuclear collaboration was a motivating factor in India's nuclear effort. But it is very difficult to substantiate whether the 1991 Gulf War and the threats of US preponderance had anything to do with the Indian nuclearisation.<sup>7</sup> However, policy-makers always keep in view the emerging nature of the international system while taking a step that has global strategic implications. India's position on NPT and later the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) also reflects this reality.

In the post-Pokhran II period, India as a state with nuclear weapons is more assured of itself while dealing with the US. Even the US has somewhat changed its perceptions towards India's legitimate role in the regional and global strategic environment. India sees an opportunity for itself in the emerging world order. It is seeking a new cooperative and even strategic relationship with the US. The Report of the Group of Ministers on National Security has observed: "US pre-eminence in the global strategic architecture is unlikely to diminish in the foreseeable future. Meaningful, broad-based engagement with the United States, spanning political, economic and technological interests and commonalities, will have a positive impact on our external security concerns with a resultant albeit less visible impact on our internal security environment. Conversely, an adversarial relationship with that state can have significant negative repercussions across the same broad range of issues and concerns" (emphasis added).<sup>8</sup>

From the above observation of the GoM's report, it is clear that an adversarial or confrontationist attitude towards US unilateralism is not in India's interest. This perception has guided India on the issues of the NMD and the TMD and more recently on the war against terrorism in Afghanistan and the war against Iraq. India's policy-makers have taken these developments as an opportunity to build strategic relations with the US. However, a futuristic approach on defence and security requires a deeper scrutiny of these issues and their impact on the arms race and nuclear proliferation and also on regional or Indian security.

The US launched the war against Iraq in March 2003 after Russia, China and France fiercely opposed its resolution in the UN Security

Council, compelling the US to withdraw the resolution seeking the UNSC mandate for attacking Iraq. The US unilateral action against Iraq has undermined the importance of the UN as a forum for addressing the issues of international security through cooperation. The US policy also causes security concerns for the weak regimes in the developing world, particularly the ones having adversarial relations with the US. India's policy on the Iraq war has a mix of both principles and pragmatism. India wanted that use of force for disarming Iraq must be backed by the UN. But it has not gone overhand on the US war considering the growing relationship between the two countries. The idea behind this flexibility was "to remain firm on the side of peace but not to let differences with the US come in the way of strengthening the 'strategic partnership' with it."<sup>9</sup>

The 21st century is termed as the century of ascendance of Asian power. Some scholars have viewed increase in Asian power as a challenge to the US unilateralism and Superpower status. The Asian challenge to the US dominance is multi-dimensional having economic, political and military aspects. This view is based on the assumption of the relative decline in the US and Russian power and increase in Asian power, particularly that of China, Japan and India. According to one perception, this provides an incentive for a realignment of interests and allegiances, with the United States and Russia coming together to contain the new Asian centres of world power.<sup>10</sup> The US has politico-military wherewithal to balance on its own the growing power of Japan and India. But it will need strategic partners to regionally balance China. Here, India's, and also Russia's, importance as strategic partners of the US increases. But the situation is far from final.

Some political analysts foresee a strategic storm surfacing in Asia. There are fears of renewal of Cold War in Asia and 'at the core of the Cold War in Asia is the US strategy to contain Asian centres of power and influence.'<sup>11</sup> The US containment strategy or unilateralism faces a serious challenge from China's increasing power and influence in Asia and beyond. Such a scenario of conflict and new power equations in Asia creates policy dilemmas for India.

What should be the strategy or best option for India to maximise its interests? According to Professor S.D. Muni, "a strategy of forging differential and issue- based coalitions with the major concerned players in Asia is the best option for India to deal with the unfolding strategic reality in Asia at present."<sup>12</sup> According to Air Commodore Jasjit Singh, "India's strategic interests would be served better through sustaining a non-hegemonic polycentric world order which leaves it with greater flexibility to pursue its national interests."<sup>13</sup> In fact, a strategy of issue-based cooperation or coalitions in a polycentric world order fits well with India's goal of increasing its strategic autonomy.

### *Role of Nuclear Weapons*

Despite the end of the Cold War, states continue to see a role for nuclear weapons in the international security system. The Report of the Group of Ministers observes: "Despite the end of the Cold War, nuclear weapons continue to be legitimised by treaties like the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The US, European, Russian etc., doctrines stress the value of nuclear weapons in national and collective defence strategies."<sup>14</sup> India cannot afford to be blind to the nuclear realities. One, there has been proliferation of nuclear weapons in the post-Cold War period. India and Pakistan have declared themselves as nuclear weapon states. Apart from that, North Korea, Iraq, Iran and Libya are believed to be vigorously carrying on nuclear weapons programmes. Two, the US has unilaterally decided to abandon ABM treaty, and go ahead with NMD and TMD. More importantly, it has also formulated a nuclear doctrine that envisages use of nuclear weapons against states.<sup>15</sup> Three, during the war against terrorism in Afghanistan, it has been highlighted that even non-state actors plan to have nuclear devices to use them against states. In fact, US President George W. Bush in his speech on June 1, 2002 highlighted the danger of terrorists having Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) capability and the US strategy to strike pre-emptively against such dangers. In a curious development just ten days after this speech, on June 10 the US officials arrested an Al Qaida suspect at Chicago airport with plans to



detonate a 'dirty bomb'. The challenge for states is to control these WMD with terrorists.<sup>16</sup>

India's policy-makers cannot be oblivious to these developments and need to prepare an appropriate strategy to deal with WMD. In January 2003, the Indian government formalised the country's nuclear doctrine and command and control structure.<sup>17</sup> Now, the no-first-use (NFU) policy stands qualified. India will not adhere to NFU against non-nuclear states if they attack India or its forces anywhere in the world with biological or chemical weapons.<sup>18</sup> By this qualification India has not only extended the scope of nuclear strikes, but in a way has conferred on itself the option of pre-emption in certain circumstances.<sup>19</sup> The unrestrained Pakistani behaviour during Operation Parakram and the menace of non-state actors must have been the major considerations while qualifying the NFU.<sup>20</sup>

In India's threat perception, major threats to its security come from the continuous proliferation of nuclear weapons and missiles in its neighborhood.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, after the Kargil conflict, the concept of nuclear deterrence as a factor of military and political restraint has come under scrutiny. Apart from the strategic role of nuclear weapons, policy-makers in India face a challenge of maintaining a psychological advantage of military superiority over Pakistan—an advantage somewhat distorted by Pakistan's nuclear capability. Broadly, India sees a two-fold role for nuclear weapons. One, nuclear weapons are not for war fighting, but for deterrence. Two, nuclear weapons are also a political instrument. The US, Russia, China and Pakistan emphasise 'blackmail' and even 'hegemony' in the political role of nuclear weapons. On the contrary, India emphasises 'counter-blackmail' and 'counter-hegemonism'. Backed with nuclear power, India seeks to play a more influential role as a democratic balancer and stabiliser in Asia.

At present India's nuclear strategy and posture are largely influenced by the policies of Pakistan and China. The combined threat of China and Pakistan has to be met both on the defence and diplomatic fronts.

Alliance against Terrorism

Transnational terrorism is being perceived as a major threat to international peace and security after September 11. It is the first time that a terrorist attack has been perceived as a war against a state and the state has responded with war. The US-led war against terrorism in Afghanistan has brought to the fore the nature of threats from non-state actors and the need to combat through collective or individual efforts.

The Security Council Resolution 1373 highlights the nature of the threat and means to tackle it. It says that there is "a close connection between international terrorism and transnational crime, illicit drugs, money laundering and illegal movement of nuclear, chemical, biological and other deadly materials."<sup>22</sup> In other words, terrorist groups are well equipped to resemble national armies. They are believed to have the capacity to wage a nuclear, chemical or biological war against a targeted state. Resolution 1373 unambiguously defines the means to combat the threat. It reaffirms "the need to combat by all means, in accordance with the Charter."<sup>23</sup> All means include: (a) the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence and (b) the need to enhance the coordination of national, sub-regional, regional and international efforts to strengthen a global response to the threats to international security from non-state actors.<sup>24</sup> This provides a broad framework within which nations are going to tackle transnational terrorism through military or non-military means.

The US-led war in Afghanistan and the emergence of an alliance against terrorism has introduced a new feature in the international security system. One region that is going to be affected the most is South Asia. The US war against terrorism in Afghanistan has thrown up new possibilities of challenges and opportunities for India's policy-makers. These challenges and opportunities must be comprehended keeping in view the larger US geo-strategic goals in Asia, particularly for containing Iran and Iraq and also possibly Russia and China. India should also examine the possibility of prolonged US presence in Afghanistan and its fallout on Indo-Pak relations. The increasing importance of Pakistan in the US security calculus after September 11 is a matter of concern for India. India believes that the US will not help Pakistan on the Kashmir issue as well as its (Pakistan's)

desperate quest for strategic parity with India. In any case, September 11 has "provided India with a rare chance to work with the US in changing Pakistan's national course towards political moderation, economic modernisation and regional harmony."<sup>25</sup> Pakistan's transformation on this scale will certainly bring a qualitative change in Indo-Pak relations. That will do away with many of the concerns in India's security policy.

### *Rapid Technological Developments*

Technological developments are acquiring increasing importance in security policy due to their scope of penetration and utility as means of offence and defence. The rapid technological developments underway will not only facilitate threats by reducing a country's reaction time but also add new dimensions to threats and challenges, such as the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) and offensive /defensive information warfare.<sup>26</sup> The RMA is a military concept linked to the fusion of technology and military force for the purpose of a swift and decisive victory. Along with the RMA, the concept of asymmetric warfare is becoming popular among the strategic thinkers. The RMA and asymmetric warfare act in an interactive manner, and the importance of the latter has become more pronounced due to the technological advantages over the weaker adversary; for instance the US-led war against Iraq. Both of these are likely to change the nature of future warfare and strategic affairs. They essentially reflect the (incomparability of) abilities of the US and NATO to conclude a war with minimal collateral damage and casualties.

The concepts of the RMA and asymmetric warfare also reflect the revolution in strategic affairs having not only the military dimension, but political too. Lawrence Freedman has explained the importance of the political dimension of the revolution in strategic affairs.<sup>27</sup> According to him, the end of the Cold War has heralded a revolution in political affairs, reflecting a situation wherein major powers appear less likely to go to war with one another, but they are more likely to intervene in conflicts involving weak states, militia groups, drug cartels and terrorists. The cumulative effect of these two revolutions (in military and political affairs) has resulted

in a more broad-based revolution in strategic affairs rather than just military affairs.

India's perception of threat from the rapid technological developments can be summed up thus: "The revolution in Information Technology (IT) which is sweeping the world has deepened the process of globalisation. The role of media in creating, shaping and changing perception will continue to expand. In the military sector, the technology-driven Information Warfare (IW) and the RMA will have a dramatic impact in the coming decades. Developments in communication and space technologies are shaping everyday life and economy in a far more fundamental fashion than is ordinarily realised."<sup>28</sup>

The revolution in IT has distorted the distinction between internal and external security. A person or a group, say terrorists, can interfere and create problems of security for a country operating from another country. The growth of fundamentalism, cross border terrorism, the narcotics-arms nexus, and non-state actors thrive on the IT.

The field of military-related IT has witnessed good progress in India. India has established two major space systems-the Indian National Satellite (INSAT) system and the Indian Remote Sensing Satellites (IRS) system-that form important elements of national infrastructure.<sup>29</sup> The INSAT system, commissioned in 1983, is a multipurpose satellite system for telecommunication, television broadcasting, business communication, mobile communication, search and rescue and meteorology. The data from IRS satellites is used for several applications covering agriculture, water resources, urban development, mineral prospecting, environment and forestry, drought and flood forecasting and ocean resources. Both the systems can be used for strategic intelligence and military applications and have a close relationship with national security. Keeping this in view, India has prepared its national remote sensing data policy. According to this policy," India is developing high-resolution imaging satellites which will have strategic value and take care of the national security interests."<sup>30</sup> The space communication systems can have significant battlefield applications in planning, deployment of forces, and offensive and defensive operations.<sup>31</sup>

After the Kargil conflict, there have been extensive deliberations among the Indian Air Force, the Defence Research and Development Organisation and the Indian Space Research Organisation on space-based electronic intelligence.<sup>32</sup> India might soon develop a dedicated satellite exclusively for military missions.<sup>33</sup> Incorp. India has done well in the development of space systems compared to its main military rivals-Pakistan and China and its capabilities to build supercomputers and a vast information technology infrastructure further provide India's policy-makers several leverages over its immediate challengers.

### *Regional Security in South Asia*

The South Asian sub-system in the international security system has provided main challenges and threats to India's national security and defence. The region, despite several commonalities, has witnessed "interdependence of shared rivalry rather than the interdependence of shared interests."<sup>34</sup> India's concept of national security and defence policies have been primarily concerned with regional threats. Its defence policy and posture have evolved keeping in view, the predominance of external military threats from Pakistan and China.

India's defence policy has been influenced by a number of regional factors such as: Chinese and Pakistani aggressions; politico-military doctrines of both Pakistan and China; elements of political dissonance between India and her neighbours; Pakistani pursuit of acquiring nuclear weapons, latest weapon technologies and equipment; and arms sales policies of great powers. India's threat perception has also been influenced by the link that has existed between the global power and local (India-Pakistan) rivalries. This linkage has been an important factor in determining the course of political and strategic issues, such as the Kashmir issue, arms race and nuclear proliferation in South Asia. The US and China have played a significant intrusive role in South Asian security environment. India has faced challenges of the US and China supporting Pakistan's military programmes. In the recent times, India has been more concerned at Pakistan-China military collaboration.

India has a strategic balance against Pakistan, but imbalance continues with China. It is believed that India's nuclear deterrent is credible against Pakistan, and not China. Yet it can be said that ambiguity about the quantitative and qualitative aspects of India's nuclear capability will create psychological fear for China or any other nuclear weapon state to launch a nuclear strike.

China has played an intrusive role in South-Asian politico-strategic issues with the objective of keeping India under constant strategic pressure. The process of normalisation of Sino-Indian relations, which began with Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China in 1988, and the end of Cold War have not diminished Pakistan's value in China's strategic calculations. China is believed to be working towards not only creating Pakistan as a viable counterweight to India's power in South Asia, but to tilt the nuclear balance in Pakistan's favour.<sup>35</sup> India fears that Pakistan's capabilities in nuclear warheads and missile delivery systems are being beefed up with Chinese and also North Korean help.<sup>36</sup> It believes that "the asymmetry in terms of nuclear forces is strongly in favour of China which additionally has helped Pakistan to build missile and nuclear capability."<sup>37</sup> Some reports have speculated over the Pakistani ballistic missile superiority, which may have left India militarily vulnerable.<sup>38</sup>

India has been concerned over China's support to Pakistan on the Kashmir issue also. China's Kashmir policy has been drifting slowly to a position of evenhandedness since the mid-1970s. Before Pokhran-II, particularly after Rajiv Gandhi's visit, China's policy was hardly distinguishable from neutrality as it was no more willing to side with Pakistan on the issue. It adopted a policy of 'careful neutralism' on Kashmir.<sup>39</sup> Its emphasis now is on the resolution of the problem bilaterally through negotiations. Samina Yasmeen finds inconsistency in China's Kashmir policy. She argues that China's South-Asian policy has been part of its broad anti-Soviet counter-encirclement strategy. As the threats from Russia in the post-Cold War period have diminished, China's South Asian and Kashmir policies have also witnessed change.<sup>40</sup> China's position now accepts that Kashmir is a bilateral problem between India and Pakistan and

it needs to be resolved through dialogue. However, there is no reason to believe that Beijing has surrendered its options vis-à-vis the Kashmir issue. In the overall framework of India's security, Beijing's posture on the Kashmir issue-though a low profile one at present-is of considerable significance for regional stability.

India has viewed China as a long-term security challenge. In fact, India has challenged Chinese nuclear hegemony in South-Asia by declaring itself a nuclear weapon state after the Pokhran II Shakti nuclear tests. Now, contends to become a pre-eminent power in Asia like China. According to Barry Buzan, India's transformation to a pre-eminent or great power status "does not depend on all-out rivalry with China; it can also achieve this status while cooperating with China."<sup>41</sup> However, India's desire to play a role, on its own or with others, for strategic balance in Asia is in direct conflict with China's ambition of making Asia as its area of influence. Both India and China have become more suspicious of each other's long-term security agenda. India suspects that "China's policy vis-à-vis India will be not necessarily to resolve, but keep differences within manageable limits."<sup>42</sup> Similarly, India cannot be oblivious to China "rapidly modernising its Armed Forces and building political and military bridges with a large number of countries in our neighbourhood."<sup>43</sup>

India's defence and security policies seek to deal with the Chinese and Pakistani threats and challenges on both military and diplomatic fronts. Often, Indo-Pak conflict formation is de-escalated or managed through diplomatic means, mainly through the US' good offices. India has military superiority over Pakistan and is capable of winning a war on its own. But India's success against the Chinese threats both on the diplomatic and the military fronts is suspect. India sees an opportunity in the intensifying rivalry between the US and China. The Sino-US rivalry has further intensified after China's vehement opposition to the US attack on Iraq in March 2003 without UN Security Council approval. Pakistan has also sided with the Chinese on the Iraq War issue.<sup>44</sup> As a result, India and US are likely to come closer on issues of strategic cooperation. It is believed that the US strategic partnership with India can countervail the Chinese threat. But the

Indian policy-makers will have to weigh the pros and cons of such strategies.

It has been suggested that India must dovetail military capabilities with long-term political objectives. These views have led to speculation whether India has an ambition for creating an area of influence. Speculations about India having an objective of creating asymmetrical power relations have also led to the concept of India's 'extended power posture' that includes South-East Asia, the West-Asia and the Indian Ocean. Notwithstanding the various views about the *raison d'être* of India's military programme, security from external threats has so far been the single most important reason for its defence preparedness.

As India's power status is increasing, it is inevitable that it would like to use the influence of its military capabilities to further other political objectives in its foreign and security policies. These political objectives are: autonomy of decision-making; enhancing its manoeuvrability in international politics; to be admitted into the management of various multilateral nuclear, missiles and arms control issues; and play an influential role as a democratic balancer and stabiliser in Asia.

At a conceptual level, India's area of influence is not confined to South Asia. A number of Indians today envisage an extended South-Asia as India's strategic frontier or area of influence. This area would include the Persian Gulf, Central Asia, Afghanistan, Iran, China, South-Asian countries, Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar and northern Indian Ocean. In future, India's policies will be formulated keeping in view the threats and challenges to its security in this larger area of influence.

## **Conclusion**

The importance of national security management in India has increased a great deal over the years because of the continuity and multiplicity of external threats - both military and non-military. Despite the increase in its military power as a result of nuclearisation, the strategic balance in 'extended' South Asia remains unfavourable to India. The worsening geo-strategic environment and the demands of strategic



decisions for dealing with threats and challenges have added to the task of India's policy-makers. India is feeling the pressure for having a well-articulated policy that can meet not only the present-day threats and challenges, but also has the capacity for meeting future needs. Threats and challenges from the emerging international security system compel India to achieve better political and strategic manoeuvrability both at the regional and the global level.

In the context of the emerging international security system, determining the relative importance or primacy of one factor in decision-making is not a very difficult proposition. The regional security environment in South-Asia primarily influences India's policy-making and the regional security environment still provides the gravest threats and challenges to its security. The military threats due to the offensive and intrusive *raison d'etre* of Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme and its military cooperation with China remain unchanged. But there are positive signs as far as external threats of non-military nature are concerned. Pakistan's game plan on state-sponsored terrorism has considerably weakened. Also the LTTE (Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam) movement has weakened and now the LTTE is willing for an internal settlement with the Sri Lankan government rather than fight for separation. This will have a favourable impact on India's security management, particularly in South India. The Maoist movement in Nepal is a matter of concern, but it has its limitations in threatening India in a serious manner.

The emergence of an international alliance against terrorism has brought positive results for India's regional security environment in South Asia. Some of the threats that India has so far fought on its own have also threatened the US or the international community. Post-9/11, India has got a rare opportunity to work with the rest of the world against terrorism. Good results of the international fight against terrorism have already started showing for India in its management of the Kashmir problem and putting pressure on Pakistan to change its policies on supporting and abetting terrorist outfits. The end to state-sponsored terrorism against India can really transform India's security management concerns and even lead to a

political process between India and Pakistan for resolving the bilateral issues in an amicable and equitable manner.

### References/End Notes

1. The treaty was signed in Moscow on May 24, 2002. According to Article I of the treaty, both US and Russia shall reduce and limit strategic nuclear warheads, so that by December 13, 2012 the aggregate number of such warheads does not exceed 1700-2200 for each party. The treaty emphasises the desire of the two countries to establish a genuine partnership based on the principles of mutual security, cooperation, trust, openness, and predictability. For details see, Text of the US-Russia Treaty on Nuclear Arms. Strategic Digest. May 2002, 32(5) 738-739.
2. Morgenthau maintains that states have an innate will to power and are inherently offensive in their outlook. While Kenneth Waltz maintains that states merely want to survive and are driven to maximize security for defensive purposes. Both Realists emphasize the role of power in an anarchic world order. See Hans J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. 1973. Alfred Knopf, New York; and Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*. 1979. Addison-Wesley; Reading, Mass.
3. Striking a parallel with Iraq. *Hindustan Times*. New Delhi. April 8, 2003.
4. The idea of regional balance against Russia by aiding the Ukraine in a classic balance-of-power logic has come from Henry A. Kissinger and Zbigniew Brezinski. See Dallin, Alexander, *America's Search for a Policy Toward the Former Soviet Union*. *Current History*. October 1992, 321-326.
5. Jervis, Robert, *The Future of World Politics: Will it Resemble the Past?* *International Security*. Winter 1991-92, 16 (3) 39-73.
6. For details see, Raj Chengappa, *Weapons for Peace*. 2000. HarperCollins; New Delhi. The book reveals that India completed weaponisation in May 1994. Former Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao and Dr Abdul Kalam confirmed to the Kargil Review panel that weaponisation was completed in 1992-94, quoted by K. Subrahmanyam in *From Indira to Gowda: It was Bomb All the Way*. *The Times of India*. New Delhi. April 17, 2000.
7. Eliot Cohen has observed that the American show of military power during the Gulf War created an incentive for nuclear proliferation. He also says that increased instability in certain conflict-prone areas of the world in the coming years may see the use of an atomic bomb as a weapon of war. Quoted in Robert J. Lieber, *American Hegemony, Regional Security and Proliferation in the Post-Cold War International System*. *Contemporary Security Policy*. April 1996, 16 (1) 1, 4.
8. *Reforming the National Security System: Recommendations of the Group of Ministers*. February 2001. Government of India; New Delhi. p. 7, para 2.5.
9. K.K. Katyal, *India's stand on Iraq*. *The Hindu*. April 7, 2003 at <http://meadev.nic.in/Opn/2003apr/07hin.htm>
10. George Liska visualized the US strategy along these lines just when President Gorbachev was drawing the curtain on the Cold War. See his *From Containmentment to Concert*. *Foreign Policy*. Spring 1986, (62) 3-23.
11. For details see, S.D Muni, *The Cold War in Asia: India's Options*. *Strategic Analysis*. March 1997, 19 (12) 1599-1612.
12. *Ibid*. p.1609.
13. Singh, Jasjit, *India's Defence Spending: Assessing Future Needs*. 2000. Knowledge World; New Delhi. p. 171.
14. *Reforming the National Security System*, no.8, p. 7, para 2.6.

15. "Emerging Bush Doctrine Reshaping U.S. Strategy" at [www.stratfor.com/standard/analysisview.phd?ID=203273](http://www.stratfor.com/standard/analysisview.phd?ID=203273).
16. Uday Bhaskar, C., Strategic Stability: Arms Control Regimes post-9/11. The Times of India. New Delhi. June 25, 2002.
17. As for command and control structure, a National Command Authority (NCA) and Strategic Forces Command (SFC) have been established. NCA has two bodies-political council and executive council. The Prime Minister will head the former and he will authorise the use of nuclear strike after taking advice from the executive council. The SFC will be the custodian of all nuclear weapons and delivery systems.
18. "India's Nuclear Command in Place," Hindustan Times. January 5, 2003.
19. In fact, striking a parallel with the US strikes against Iraq, India's External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, observed that India too had a case for a pre-emptive strike against Pakistan for the latter's sponsorship of terrorism against India. See, Striking a parallel with Iraq. Hindustan Times. New Delhi. April 8, 2003.
20. In fact, due to these developments there was an increasing pressure on the government from official and non-official constituencies to scrap the doctrine of NFU. The third NSAB too suggested for scrapping NFU and resuming nuclear testing.
21. Reforming the National Security System, no.8, p. 7, para 2.6.
22. Security Council Resolution 1373 (September 28, 2001), in Strategic Analysis. December 2001, 25 (9) 1149.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Raja Mohan, C., U.S. and Indo-Pak Relations, The Hindu. New Delhi. February 14, 2002.
26. Reforming the National Security System, no. 8, p.6, para 2.3.
27. For details see, Lawrence Freedman, The Revolution in Strategic Affairs, Adelphi Paper 318. 1998. Oxford University Press for The International Institute for Strategic Studies; London.
28. Reforming the National Security System, no. 8, p. 7, para 2.8.
29. <http://www.oosa.unvienna.org/natact/2000/india.html>
30. Spy satellite project takes shape, The Times of India, at [http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/cms.dll/html/uncom/articleshow/art\\_id=569105569](http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/cms.dll/html/uncom/articleshow/art_id=569105569)
31. Nair, KPS, Remote Sensing and Its Implications in Future Battlefields. IDSA Weekly Fellows Seminar. March 2002.
32. Spy satellite project takes shape, no.30.
33. Ibid.
34. Buzan, Barry and Gowher Rizvi (eds.), South Asian Insecurity and the Great Powers. 1986. St. Martin's Press; New York. pp. 7-8.
35. According to an assessment of the U.S. intelligence officials, Pakistan's nuclear arsenal is bigger than India's and also it has more accurate and effective delivery systems. For details see, "Pakistan's N-might bigger than India's, says US," The Times of India. New Delhi. June 8, 2000. This assessment may be motivated and inaccurate. However, this shows that how critical can be the Chinese help to Pakistan's nuclear and missile capabilities vis-à-vis India and tilting the balance against India.
36. Reforming the National Security System, no. 8, p. 10, para 2.21.

37. Ministry of Defence, Government of India, Annual Report 2000-2001, para 1.11.
38. Sawhney, Pravin K., Pakistan scores over India in ballistic missile race. *Jane's Intelligence Review*. November 2000, 12(11), 31-35.
39. Gordon, Sandy, South Asia After the Cold War: Winners and Losers. *Asian Survey*. October 1995, 35 (10) 881.
40. Yasmeen, Samina, The China Factor in the Kashmir Issue. In G.C. Raju Thomas, Ed. *Perspectives on Kashmir: The Roots of Conflict in South Asia*. 1992. Westview; Boulder, CO p. 320.
41. Buzan, Barry, South Asia Moving Towards Transformation: Emergence of India as a Great Power. *International Studies*. 2002, 39 (1) 16.
42. Ministry of Defence, no.37, para 1.12.
43. *Ibid.* para 1.11.
44. Pakistan Prime Minister, Mir Zafarrula Khan Jamali visited China on March 24-26, 2003 and during the visit the leadership of the two countries opposed the US military action against Iraq and called for its immediate end. "Pakistan-China Agree to Have Close Contact on Iraq Crisis" at <http://paknews.com/top.phd?id=1&date1=2003-03-25>

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