

India-US Relations: Deepening Strategic Partnership Revisit for the 21st Century

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Abstract

India-US relations have been amicable since their inception, but it's important to acknowledge America's historical inclination to assert dominance over economically and politically developing countries, India included. However, in the post-Cold War era, India pursued a path of self-reliance, leading to increased engagement with the US across various areas. The two countries bolstered their mutual strategic partnership in multiple areas of cooperation, emphasizing development and achieving new milestones. As India's economic prowess grew, it strategically explored new pathways for growth between the two nations, aiming to set a global example of partnership in the 21st century. This paper seeks to delve into the evolving strategic partnership between the two countries since the post-Cold War era and its potential to pave the way for new areas of development in the 21st century. The heightened cooperation, particularly in security, energy, and economic-technical domains, has established various dimensions of the strategic partnership, warranting thorough examination.

Keywords: Self-reliance, Strategic, Partnership, Cooperation, Dominance

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Introduction

The formulation and execution of foreign policy are integral to the progress and prosperity of any nation. It is, therefore, imperative to analyze the dynamic relationship between India and the United States. In recent times, there has been a significant shift in their bilateral ties. Despite experiencing fluctuations in the past, the strategic partnership between the two nations has evolved towards greater cooperation. Notably, during the Cold War era, their relationship was characterized by a lack of complete cooperation. The current state of affairs between India and the United States presents a complex scenario, given the formative nature of recent years for both countries across various domains. Over time, there has been a mutual increase in interest between India and the United States, leading to collaborative efforts in the realms of security, energy, economics, culture, and strategic cooperation.

After gaining independence, India sought to establish global strategic partnerships. However, the nation encountered numerous diplomatic and military obstacles in fostering collaboration with neighboring and other nations. The United States expressed keen interest in India's economy, with a particular focus on its economic reform efforts. President Clinton emphasized the pivotal role of India's economic reform in driving growth in the bilateral and strategic relationship, stating, "it is the economic reform of India that has become the engine of growth in the bilateral and strategic relationship. India's economic program has unleashed the US's expanding trade and investment ties" (Tripathi, and Tripathi, 2008, p.141).

In today's world, both nations are aiming to strengthen their collaboration through strategic partnership and defense cooperation. The potential areas for strategic cooperation mainly include the defense sector, military, trade, economic maritime, and science and technology. It's worth noting that the United States supported India in achieving

nuclear deals, despite opposition from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). However, this achievement raises questions about the feasibility of attaining a nuclear-free world. Therefore, a comprehensive study is essential to examine the various aspects of cooperation and the challenges faced by both countries.

The article examines the strategic partnership and cooperation between India and the United States in various areas including defense, trade, economic relations, energy collaboration, counter-terrorism, and response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is crucial to evaluate how these two nations can effectively engage in foreign relations and cooperation amidst the evolving global landscape.

Background

The two countries share certain commonalities, yet exhibit fundamental disparities in their historical and cultural contexts, as well as their internal and external dynamics. India and the United States both hold prominent democratic and republican identities on the global stage. After the Independence in 1947, India was made officially a non-aligned country and America was not happy with India's non-alignment policy. The Cold War, period was determined by three major factors; One is, India's non-alignment policy, Second; India's tilt towards the Soviet Union, and Third; India's adoption of the Socialist model economic model for economic development. (Jain, 2016, p.75). These factors raised concerns among policymakers in the United States regarding India's alignment with the Soviet Union. Conversely, India perceived the United States as being biased towards Pakistan and favoring Central-Asian interests. Consequently, the strain in their relations was primarily due to their conflicting perspective and

divergent approaches towards vital issues. (Tripathi, and Tripathi, 2008, p.113). The only exceptional period of cooperation between India and the US was during the early 1960s. There was a very good rapport between the American President, Kennedy, and the Indian Prime Minister Nehru a very popular leader of the time both in India and in an international context. As China happened to be a communist country, the US supported India during the Indo-Sino war in 1962. The rift between the two nations started having roots in 1965, the year of the Indo-Pak war and it went on increasing from then onwards. The Indo-US relationship was at its worst during Bangladesh's liberation in 1971. The US not only blindly supported but also even threatened India by sending its nuclear-capable seventh fleet to the Bay of Bengal. At that time, the issue of Kashmir, the Pro-Pakistan stand of the United States, India's non-alignment policy, its friendly relations with the Soviet Union, and India's refusal to sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty or Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty had been some factors between the two countries.

In the 1980s, India saw threats from extra-regional superpowers particularly posed by the United States, with India decrying US military moves in the Indian Ocean region. India has always been concerned about US military aid to Pakistan. In 1981, it was the time of Republican President Reagan. When he came to power, the new government had a clear policy towards South Asia. He gave indirect military assistance to anti-Soviet Afghan guerrillas and renewed full economic and military assistance to Pakistan. On military assistance diplomacy, as

“Mikhail Gorbachev instituted changes in Soviet policies, including on Afghanistan, India's relations with the US improved marginally. US arms supplies to India, unheard of since 1962, resumed on a small scale between 1986 and 1988. In 1988, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi made a historic visit to China in an attempt to begin the process of normalizing relations between the two Neighbours. India seemed to be

experimenting with positive diplomacy as a means for resolving long-running disagreements. This was also reflected in India's spell of logistical support for American military operations in the 1990 Gulf War." (Mukherjee, and Malone, 2009, p.1059)

Post-Cold War era

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union in 1991, India seized the opportunity to extend its reach to the Western world and enhance its relations with the West. Subsequently, the growing interdependence between India and the United States has significantly strengthened bilateral and multilateral ties, proving to be mutually advantageous (Jain, 2016, p.21). Following the Cold War and the ascension of Narasimha Rao as Prime Minister and Manmohan Singh as Finance Minister in 1991, India's economic liberalization played a pivotal role in attracting major global economic powers, particularly the United States. During this period, the United States emerged as an appealing and potential partner for India.

However, the high expectations were soon dashed. In 1993, nuclear non-proliferation and the Kashmir issue became the center of the new foreign policy. At this time, "Washington's top priority concerning South Asia was preventing a major war between Pakistan and India and restraining the regional nuclear arms race." (Vermani, 2007, p.168). Another one, the "nuclear tests conducted in May 1998 drew a sharp reaction from the United States, leading to a temporary disruption in the thawing Indo-U.S. relations, and the imposition of a broad range of U.S. restrictions on India."(Kumar, 2009).

Following the nuclear test, Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott engaged in nine rounds of meetings with India's then Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh to mitigate the dangers stemming from both countries

going overtly nuclear. These discussions led to a shift in U.S. policy on nuclear issues in the region. The earlier position of the Clinton administration was to “cap, reduce, and roll back the nuclear programs of both countries” (Gupta, 2005, p.04). In the 1998 situation, C. Raja Mohan pointed out that:

the tests of May 1998 marked the beginning of the end of non-proliferation disagreements between the two countries. As long as India remained undecided about what it wanted to do with nuclear weapons, it was natural for the United States to do everything to prevent India from becoming a nuclear weapons power. (Mohan, 2003, p.89)

The evolution of strategic and diplomatic engagement between India and the United States has been notable, particularly from the Obama administration to the Trump administration and the Biden administration. The focus on bilateral security and defense cooperation, economic ties, and strategic positioning vis-a-vis Asia and China has been crucial in shaping the relationship between these two major democracies. The continuous effort to enhance cooperation in areas such as security, human welfare, arms control, trade, and economic ties reflects the growing importance of the Indo-US partnership on the global stage.

Deepening the U.S.-India Partnership

The establishment of a strategic partnership serves various objectives in line with the respective countries' aims. When examining the strategic relations between India and the United States, two essential parameters must be considered:

Interdependence, in this context, prohibits the use of military force between closely interconnected countries. For instance, the interdependence between China and India does not preclude the use of military force against each other. On the other hand, in the case of complex interdependence between India and the United States, the use of military force is impermissible for resolving their political and strategic disparities (Jain, 2016, p.15).

Therefore, these parameters offer valuable insights into the assessment of a strategic relationship between India and the United States.

Over the past 40 years, the primary point of contention between the United States and India has been India's nuclear programs and the US support for Pakistan's nuclear initiatives, particularly as they pertain to India. India's reluctance to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) (Raghu, 2007) can be attributed to the exigencies posed by having two adversarial nuclear-armed neighbors, namely China and Pakistan. It is imperative to recognize that India's strategic partnership with the US should not be misconstrued as an unequivocal convergence of perspectives on global issues or a willingness to conform India's policies exclusively to accommodate US interests. Notably, India's assertion of strategic autonomy has faced censure from advocates of robust Indo-US relations, who perceive it as rooted in India's obsolete Non-Aligned Movement stance.

In 2004, the term "Strategic partnership" was first used to describe the India-US relationship. Even as early as 1948, the Truman Administration referred to a "Natural Partnership" with India. However, in recent decades, the full potential of this natural partnership has not

been realized. With the appointment of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in India, there is renewed hope for a stronger, more multifaceted relationship, with economic, political, and military dimensions all holding equal importance. While there is no official strategic agreement in place, the cooperation between India and the US is tantamount to a "global strategic partnership." Both nations have committed to enhancing their relationship in defense and technology, trade and economy, civil nuclear cooperation, counterterrorism, and other areas. The collaboration between two countries can manifest in various forms, ranging from bilateral agreements and contractual cooperation to equity alliances. Presently, there exists substantial cooperation between both nations, particularly in the realms of increasing bilateral trade and investment, collaborating on global security matters, and integrating India into decision-making processes concerning global governance. This is evidenced by enhanced representation in trade and investment forums such as the World Bank, IMF, and APEC, as well as India's admission into multilateral export control regimes including the Nuclear Suppliers Group, MTCR, Wassenaar Arrangement, and Australia Group. Additionally, joint-manufacturing initiatives facilitated by technology-sharing arrangements serve as significant milestones, indicative of the rapid progress and deepening of US-India relations. Notably, the recent signing of the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement between India and the United States, and the declaration of India as a Major Defense Partner of the United States, (Times of India, 2016 underscore the strengthening of this strategic partnership. These developments underscore critical issues within the Indo-US relationship.

Expanding Defense and Technology Cooperation

Defence is the main pillar of strategic relations between India and the United States, If the nuclear deal was the showpiece of the new relationship, then strategic in the sense of defence relations were central

to the new engagement. In the past, the US had agreed to “help India become a major world power in the 21st century,” a phrase that was to be repeated numerous times in the months preceding and following the signing of the Defence and Strategic Agreements (Raghu, 2007, p.8) and US administration spokesmen repeatedly clarified that they “fully understand the implications, including military implications, of that statement” (Tellis, 2005, p.14) .

Today, India-US defence relations are based on belief in freedom, democracy, and the rule of law and promote security interests. The major interests included in defense ties are maintaining security and stability, avoiding violent religious extremism, preventing the huge spread of mass destruction weapons, and securing the free flow of commerce via land, air, and sea lanes. (India Study Channel Report, 2012) India’s formal cooperation with the US in the area of defense started in January 1995, when the Agreed on defence relations between the Indo-US was signed. This led to the establishment of a Defence Policy Group. This group worked as an apex institutional dialogue mechanism for Defence Cooperation between India and the United States. In June 2005, a New Defence Framework Agreement for the US-India defence relationship was signed, and the Civil Nuclear Cooperation in July 2005. This document focused on defense trade, joint exercises, personnel exchanges, collaboration, and cooperation in maritime security and counter-piracy operations, exchanges (Karat, 2014) between each of the Services, etc. The “US-India defence relationship has grown from solely military-to-military links into a mature partnership that encompasses dialogues, exercises, defence sales, professional military education exchanges, and practical cooperation.” (Bishoyi, 2011, p.67)

In 2015, India and the United States renewed this Defence Framework Agreement for the next 10 years. In another Military field, India made a military acquisition worth US \$ 13 billion from the United States. Both countries had conducted joint military exercises. India and the US signed the New Framework for India-US Defence Relations in 2005 to Intensify joint military exercises and cooperation in maritime security. India has strengthened, deepened, and revised its defense cooperation agreement signed with the USA in 2005 and extended in 2015. As a point of Security,

India is concerned by China's position on disputed territories and by the growing nexus between Beijing and Islamabad. New Delhi feels that the presence of the United States in South Asia would help maintain the balance of power in its favour. The Modi government also knows it cannot aggressively pursue military modernization without access to advanced US weaponry and technology (Kumar, 2016).

Therefore, Modi's focus was on defence with military modernization.

Exploring Indo-US Trade and Economic Relations

The economic and trade relations between India and the United States have consistently strengthened over time, playing a significant role in developing the Indo-US relationship. This heightened interest in economic cooperation in India can be attributed to various factors. The economic progress between India and the United States demonstrates positive developments in the economic-trade Relations. A new US financial and economic engagement focusing on macroeconomic, financial, and investment-related issues was inaugurated in New Delhi in April 2010. This initiative was led by the Finance Minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, and the US Treasury Secretary, Timothy Geithner. (Syed, 2012, p.02). Today, economic and trade relations

increased between countries from \$5.9 billion in 1990 to \$100 billion in 2016. Now India is targeting to increase its bilateral trade with the US to \$500 billion. During Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's visit to the US in 2014, both countries set a target to increase bilateral trade in goods and services to \$500 billion (Syed, 2012, p.3).

Now, the US is the largest foreign investor in India, the US accounts for about half of all foreign equity. Much as “exports to the US are important for India, the US also needs the Indian market in a global market that is increasingly becoming competitive.” (Vinod, p.3) In the area of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) there has been substantial two-way growth in recent years. Both US investments in India and Indian investments in the US have seen dramatic increases in recent years. As per Indian official statistics,

the cumulative FDI inflows from the US from April 2000 to December 2015 amounted to about \$ 17.94 billion constituting nearly 6% of the total FDI into India, making the U.S. the fifth largest source of foreign direct investments into India. In recent years, growing Indian investments in the US have been a novel feature of bilateral ties. According to CII and Grant Thornton survey released in August 2015, 100 Indian companies have made \$ 15 billion worth of tangible investments across 35 states, creating more than 91,000 American jobs. (Ministry of External Affairs Report, 2017)

With the explosive growth in the diffusion of knowledge across international boundaries, with the advances in information technology, both India and the US stand to gain the coming decades with greater

integration of their two economies. Today, India is anticipated to emerge as one of the three leading economies globally, while the United States is expected to retain its status as a major economy with elevated levels of GDP per capita for many years ahead. The two countries should start preparing now for the future when these two economies will have common political and social goals can become one of the major alliances shaping the future evolution of international political and social order (IDSA Policy Report, 2020).

Now we talk about the H1-B visa issue because this issue has been made recently debatable between Indo-US. H1-B Visa is a non-immigrant Visa that is designed to allow U.S. employers to employ foreign nationals in specialty occupations in the United States of America for a specified period. People from outside the US, and those who are looking for employment need to have an H1-B Visa under the Immigration and Nationality Act. From the US side, H1-B Visas, are “predominantly, Used by Indian IT Professionals, as part of President Donald Trump’s ‘Buy American, Hire American’ initiative’ (The Hindu, 2018). The result of the amended policy will be negative for India. The “H1-B Visa regime to thrive was that Indian IT workers offered a source of cheaper labour than American workers. These meant companies could derive a competitive edge by hiring Indian workers.”(Mehtar, 2017) After this, as a “consequence of Modi’s leadership and his conviction, along with the demands of the changing regional balance of power, India has significantly expanded the scale and scope of its bilateral engagement with the United States.”(Pant, 2017, p,146)This evolving relationship is essential for understanding the implications of the H1-B visa discussions.

Revamped US-India Energy cooperation

Energy and climate cooperation is making significant progress between India and the US. This sector offers a vast untapped potential for

investors in hydroelectricity, oil, natural gas, and coal. Currently, the US is the second-largest energy consumer in the world, and India is expected to become the third-largest consumer soon. Despite the large consumption base in the US, India has significant growth potential due to its low per capita levels of energy consumption, which are about ten times lower than in the US. This difference in current versus future consumption becomes less significant when we consider the benefits of bilateral collaboration, based on commonalities (Tongia, 2015, p. 53). President Obama's recent 30% reduction plan notwithstanding, India faces pressure to increase energy access and consumption to fulfill its economic development commitments in the short run, especially those with binding targets and penalties (Tongia, 2015, p. 53).

The growth dynamics in India present mutually beneficial opportunities for US-India energy collaborations. While US energy demand remains relatively stable, India's total energy demand is projected to increase by about 7% annually. India's ambitious targets for renewable energy (RE) require a 25% annual growth in RE through 2022. In contrast, California's goal of achieving a 50% share of renewable energy by 2030 necessitates only about 5% annual growth. Enhanced performance and decreasing costs can drive the adoption of renewable energy, but accessing global technology and capital markets can expedite this transition. It's important to note that this is not a handout, but rather a business transaction. India and the US are already collaborating on smart grid initiatives, and India is interested in expanding its use of natural gas, a more flexible and cleaner fuel source. (Gross, Tongia and Victor, 2017)

In 2009, Pace convened seven U.S. government agencies to collaborate with India on a wide range of clean energy research and deployment

activities. Subsequently, the Joint Clean Energy Research and Development Center (JCERDC) was established through a bilateral agreement between India and the US in November 2010. Both countries are strengthening their cooperation and dialogue on climate change through a high-level Climate Change Working Group and a Joint Working Group on Hydrofluorocarbons. In November 2014, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was finalized between the US Exim Bank and the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) to provide US\$1 billion in financing for India's transition to a low-carbon economy. Furthermore, a new US-India Partnership for Climate Resilience has been established to enhance capacity for climate adaptation planning, along with a new U.S.-India Climate Fellowship Program aimed at building long-term capacity to address climate change-related issues (Ministry of External Affairs Report, 2017, p.8).

Strategy Against the Anti-Terrorism Cooperation

India and the United States have agreed to work together to combat terrorism, marking the first such collaboration between the two nations. Both countries recognize that terrorism emanating from Afghanistan and Pakistan is affecting the entire South Asian region. The India-US relationship on terrorism has evolved since the 9/11 attack, with both countries firmly opposing global terrorism. The India-US Cooperation on Counter-Terrorism was launched in 2010, to improve bilateral and strategic ties and strengthen capabilities to combat terrorism. This includes training and cooperation between Specialist Counter Terrorism Units, such as the National Security Guard, and their US counterparts. The cooperation involves information sharing and capacity building. Additionally, a new Homeland Security Dialogue was announced during President Obama's visit to India in November 2010, which aims to deepen operational cooperation, technology transfers, and capacity building in the fight against terrorism. (Syed, 2012, p.3)

The counter-terrorism threats between the United States and India have been of critical importance. Tulsi Gabbard, the first Hindu lawmaker in the US Congress, has emphasized that security and counter-terrorism are crucial areas of partnership between the two countries. In fact, the number of military engagements and exercises between the two nations surpasses any other partner in the region and is expected to keep growing. (Economics Times, 2018). In recent years, security cooperation between the US and India has expanded, with counterterrorism being an important component of that cooperation. The India-US Joint Working Group on Counterterrorism, which was established in 2001, has facilitated the exchange of intelligence on terrorist financial operations. It has also supported joint training in border management, surveillance techniques, and terrorist incident response. The Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) Program has enabled American agencies like the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to train numerous Indian security personnel in counterterrorism activities. (Kaura, 2017, p.2)

The investigation to identify the perpetrators of a certain issue between the two countries continues. Speculation suggests that the Indian Mujahideen might be the possible culprit. The Indian Mujahideen is one of the militant groups in India, along with the Students Islamic Movement of India and Harkat ul Jihadi al Islami, that has linkages with Lashkar-e-Tayyaba, a Pakistan-based militant group. Lashkar-e-Tayyaba poses one of the greatest threats to American and Indian interests in South Asia. After the 2008 Mumbai attacks, the U.S. engaged in active shuttle diplomacy to reduce tensions between the two nuclear-armed neighbors. Another major attack on the scale of Mumbai 2008 that originates in Pakistan could result in calls from the Indian public for retaliation. Such a move by “India could adversely affect U.S.

counter-terrorism efforts in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) as Pakistan would most likely divert important assets and troops currently deployed in the FATA towards the Indian border. Although the U.S. has played an important role in Indo-Pak crises in the past, there is no guarantee that it will have the same mitigating effect in the future.” (Latif, 2011)

Now, India and the US intelligence services have worked together on various regional terrorism threats, including al-Qaeda, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, Jaish-e Muhammad (JEM), the Haqqani Network, and ISIS. These threats have been discussed at the highest levels of the Indian and US defense ministries. In February 2015, India officially banned ISIS and associated organizations. In September 2015, during a meeting between Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and then US Secretary of State John Kerry, the two sides decided to make their relationship a defining counterterrorism partnership for the 21st century. In 2016, the annual Yudh Abhyas military exercise focused on counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations in mountainous regions. (Kaura, 2017, p.2) Therefore, both countries are cooperating on relevant counter-terrorism issues.

Combating the COVID-19 pandemic

The United States has provided substantial assistance to India in its efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Both countries have collaborated to exchange medicines and vaccines to support each other. The US has contributed over \$200 million to India for COVID-19 relief and response efforts since the pandemic began, including emergency supplies worth more than \$50 million. Moreover, the US has provided training for more than 218,000 frontline health workers in infection prevention and control, benefiting over 43 million Indians (Report, 2021).

During this challenging time, India maintained its health supply chains and supplied critical medicines and personal protective equipment to

the US in 2020. India provided nearly two million masks to the city of Philadelphia. In response, the US reciprocated by providing vaccine and pharmaceutical components during the second Delta wave in India in 2021. This demonstrates India's reliability as a supply chain partner of the US, even in difficult circumstances. (Business Standard, 2022) On the other hand, the

concerned business community is also stepping up efforts to help any country in its fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. Uber partnered with Flipkart and Big Basket to ensure the delivery of essential items amid the nationwide lockdown in India. In India, Pfizer has donated more than 40,000 N95 masks. PepsiCo India has committed to providing 25,000 COVID-19 testing kits and over 5 million meals to families affected by COVID-19. GSK Pharma has announced that it will provide 40,000 Augmentin Duo, 3000 Augmentin IV 300mg, 3500 PPE kits, and 2 Proton Plus critical care ventilators. Gilead Sciences has announced the donation of 1.5 million doses of COVID-19 drug remdesivir. (Parpiani, 2020).

Bilateral Ties and Issues

In September 2014, Prime Minister Modi decided to visit to agree on a bilateral summit meeting with US President Barack Obama in Washington. During his visit to America, “the two heads of state even penned an editorial together in the *Washington Post*, calling themselves ‘global partners’ and their partnership one that would define the twenty-first century.” (Kumar, 2016, p.10) and “on a later visit to the United States in June 2016, Modi called upon Obama as a ‘friend’ with whom

he shares a ‘special wavelength’ (The Hindu, 2017). This Partnership has shown great engagement in the Indo-US strategic relationships. Modi’s government has also pursued three bilateral agreements: (A) LEMA; (B) CISMOA; and (C) BECA etc.

Logistic Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMA) - will allow both countries to access fuel and supplies from each other’s bases, making it easier to coordinate military activities. The agreement would help India carry out operations in the Indian Ocean and expand its maritime reach in the Asia Pacific.

Communication and Information Security Memorandum (CISMOA)- will enable the countries to share confidential intelligence in both peacetime and war using advanced encryption technology.

Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) - BECA would provide India with topographical and aeronautical data as well as products aiding navigation and targeting. (The Hindu, 2018)

When Trump came to power as US President, the new administration boldly decided toward a strong partnership between India and the USA. Both Indian Prime Minister Modi and US President Trump have “pivoted their politics on a hybrid of religious identity and the promise of economic betterment, defined more precisely as job creation. The growth of bilateral cooperation in recent decades has involved a movement of US jobs to India and Indian workers to the U.S.” (The Hindu, 2017). With the anticipated re-election of Donald Trump as President of the United States in 2024, it is likely that significant benefits will accrue to India. The longstanding friendship between President Trump and Prime Minister Modi is well-documented, in contrast to Vice President Harris's previous criticisms of Modi on

various issues. This dynamic suggests that a strategic partnership between Modi and Trump could yield fruitful outcomes. During “Trump’s first term, the Quad initiative was promoted as a counterbalance to China. A second term for Trump could result in a heightened focus on Quad initiatives, thereby enhancing India's role as a pivotal player in maintaining stability within the Indo-Pacific region. By increasing military cooperation, the United States and India can collaboratively address China's assertive policies, thereby underscoring their commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific.”(Indian Express, 2024)

Conclusion

India-US relations have significantly strengthened due to increased cooperation and consultation between the two countries. Economic collaboration between the US and India is progressing rapidly and is expected to substantially expand in the upcoming years. The current phase of the Global Partnership reflects the alignment of interests between the two nations. Both countries are engaging in humanitarian efforts and fostering people-to-people connections. Despite facing several challenges, mutual cooperation has the potential to greatly benefit the relationship. It is hoped that both countries will further advance their strategic partnership, counter-terrorism measures, energy and economic ties, civil nuclear cooperation, and promote democratic values with harmony.

The mutual partnership between India and America has fostered trust between the two countries within the global world order. Amidst various power conflicts, both nations have played a crucial role in preventing military confrontations by serving as mediators. This has been evident in issues such as the Ukraine-Russia military conflict, the Israel-

Palestine military conflict, refugee crises, and terrorist activities. Recently, the US expressed support for India as a strong candidate for permanent membership in the United Security Council (India Today, 2024). India's potential for permanent membership is attributed to its economic and technological capabilities, as well as its democratic and pluralistic approach, which America has endorsed. A stronger India would greatly benefit the US. As a result, both countries have maintained warm relations in the hope of leveraging their strategic partnership to shape a new world order in the future.

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