



Delhi Policy Group

Advancing India's Rise as a Leading Power



DPG POLICY BRIEF

American Diary: Reflections on the State of World Order and the Future of the US-India Strategic Relationship

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Joe Biden meeting in Tokyo on May 24, 2022 during the QUAD Leaders' Summit. Source: MEA, India.

US President Joe Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese attend the QUAD Summit in Tokyo on May 24, 2022. Source: MEA, India.

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NOTE: This policy brief includes (i) an assessment of the prevailing opinion in the US on the nature of the world order and relations with India, drawn from extensive meetings and interactions with US government officials and Think Tanks held by the DPG Senior Faculty in Washington D.C. from June 13-17, 2022 (Chapter I); and (ii), key presentations made by the DPG Senior Faculty in its structured dialogues with US Think Tanks during this same period (Chapters II and III).

Chapter I: American Diary

by

Hemant Krishan Singh

That a world order which was already transitioning is traversing through extraordinarily volatile and unpredictable times may prove to be an understatement, with only extremes in view when there is need for moderation.

The US/West-Russia-Ukraine saga is not as one-sided as the West contends. Its many complexities include the West's failure to accommodate Russia within the European order, civilisation and security architecture even after the end of the Cold War in 1991. There was time, it was not used. Europe will remain scarred by bitter hostility at its heart, as the protagonists escalate to win rather than end the war.

There is a growing belief in the US that the strategic diminishment of Russia has already been achieved, even in the event of a stalemate in the war. US domestic politics will not allow acceptance of Vladimir Putin. To disrupt the Russia-China partnership, the US approach is to break either China's strategy to dominate East Asia or Russia's ambition to dominate the former Eastern Europe. From Europe to East Asia, US alliance partners are increasingly being engaged in reinforcing that US effort.

The revival of the West's unity and euphoria over its unprecedented unilateral coercive measures imposed on Russia, with uncertain basis in international law and undermining some of the pillars of rules-based order, has bred a sense of overweening hubris in the US-led West's entitlement to manifest destiny.

This is propelling an all-out global power play to return the world to the West's triumphalist unipolar moment in 1991, which itself did not last long. There is a near neo-colonial denial of independent agency to all other powers and nations to put their own interests before those of America and the West. There will of course be consequences, as devastation caused by sanctions rampages through developing nations even as the developed West uses its trading and financial muscle to corner scarce commodities. This is not a major consideration for the West at the moment. Neither is resort to multilateralism. This will only add to the further marginalisation and irrelevance of an unreformed UN and key multilateral institutions, while eroding the role of the G20 in guiding the global economy. The West's global security and economic policy coordination will be limited to NATO and G7.

The US and India once again find themselves at a crossroads. The low hanging fruit phase is over, now it is time to deal with the harder realities. America is known for straight talk, but in these vexed times reality checks are not that welcome anymore. Argumentation is one-sided. There is some enthusiasm about India in the Biden administration but mostly doubts, caveats and apprehensions in the US strategic community, the main commonality between them being that India must be kept on the side of US-led democracies. But the Ukraine conflict has served a useful purpose: the US has learnt that India will go its own way on its critical national interests and the bilateral strategic partnership has to be shaped around that reality.

There is recognition in the Biden administration of the need to move beyond Ukraine and maintain the momentum of a robust partnership with India for the 21st century. For India, this can only come with balanced and mutual interests, full reciprocity, respect for independent policy making, building trust, and approaches driven more by strategic convergences than transactions. In this process, there also needs to be greater clarity regarding the mutual expectations and obligations of the two sides as partners, not allies.¹ That will be difficult, given the mindset on the US side.

There is a mixed offering that the US may extend to India on the bilateral front. For instance, there is willingness to invest in becoming a reliable security partner and to cooperate on military capacity building in important areas such as underwater domain awareness and combat aircraft engines, but there is no interest in the Indian Ocean. The US focus is only on the Asia Pacific, on both sides of the political aisle.

On defence industrial cooperation, there is still a hiatus between India's desire for technology transfer, co-development and domestic production, and what the US government and defence OEMs are willing to offer.

India's participation in the recently launched Indo-Pacific Economic Forum (IPEF) is being welcomed, and there is anticipation about the pillars India will join. There is also some receptivity towards restoring GSP for India, as it is the only US leverage in trade negotiations with India. Amidst the complexity of this long troubled trading relationship, India's new orientation of concluding select bilateral FTAs evokes interest, but the US is not currently in the mode of entering into new trade agreements.

¹ "Both sides need this relationship; we both need to focus on making it work", Walter Russell Mead, The Wall Street Journal, June 7, 2022.

The Quad partnership is being enthusiastically embraced by the Biden administration, with the view that among the architectures of US engagement in the Indo-Pacific, the Quad offers the most promise, has received the most attention, and has delivered the most results while enhancing dialogue among the four partners to deepen habits of cooperation. The Quad will remain informal, take decisions collectively and focus on delivering outcomes. It will remain a non-military endeavour, that part will only be partially reflected in EX MALABAR. The Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA) initiative launched at the last Quad summit seeks to marry capabilities in the region, and the intention is to advance its concepts across the wider region. It is being seen as an important foundation for scaling up to an overall, shared maritime strategic picture. IPEF has also been strongly pushed as a regional component on the economic side, alongside the Quad.

But the devil still lurks in the detail. Even beyond Ukraine, divergences run deep and what the US publicly asserts and what it does may not always align owing to fundamental differences of perception with India regarding the nature of global order. The US goal is a world order underwritten by US power and a strong thrust for democracy as a counter to autocratic order. India's vision of multipolarity is very different from the limited US vision of "multipolar allies". Making some commonality out of this difference will need frank conversations and mutual understanding.

So, the central challenge to the US-India relationship going forward will be the manner of accommodation of multipolarity, which the US will not engender given that its intent is to preserve its own global primacy and interests. India and the US may be able to work together on the evolution of the international system, but the result will remain uncertain.

There is considerable dichotomy between the US and India on China as well, which will persist. There is some convergence but also several limitations, and the US approach to China is simply not the same as India's.

In sum, the way forward in this relationship, even as it is in the vital interests of the world's most powerful and largest democracies, will not be smooth or easy. Diplomacy, on both sides, will be hard pressed to overcome daunting challenges over the foreseeable future.

Chapter II: India and the US: Again at a Crossroads

by

Hemant Krishan Singh

Democracy

The US and India, two great and raucous democracies, are running in different political cycles. In the US, ideological progressivism driven by urban elites prevails, crowding out room for dissent. In India, there is authentic heartland driven nationalist welfarism and a new focus on the accumulation of national power.

India does not evangelise democracy, the power of its example does. Over the past 75 years, India's success as a developing democracy has given meaning to "democracy delivers", contradicting China's claim that its authoritarian model is superior.

Over the same period, the democracy versus authoritarian card which is currently in vogue has seldom, if at all, been called in India's favour, even after the end of the Cold War in 1991.

As an ancient Asian civilisation, India derives its foundational values from its own traditions of universalism and pluralism, not from the West.

India is an Asian nation and not an adjunct of the West.

It is untenable to suggest that the West has a sole monopoly over democracy, and then go on to conclude that by the West's presumed yardsticks, all non-Western nations fail. These ideas are throwbacks to times past.

India will handle its own issues as a democracy, just as the US handles its own. Finger pointing between them only brings a smile to authoritarian powers.

India Today

India is today a stable democracy with a strong leadership and growing self-confidence. It is also the world's fastest growing major economy. India's economy is more formalised and better integrated. From nationwide application of modern digital economy tools to expanded social security coverage and economic infrastructure, there is major progress. This should be welcomed by our Western partners.

External Posture

Recent years have witnessed stronger articulation of India's strategic interests and foreign policy.

The outlook has been ambitious yet pragmatic, better aligned with national public welfare and the growth of India's comprehensive national power, and demonstrably more capable of delivering regional public goods and net security from South Asia to the Indian Ocean and India's wider neighbourhood. India's growing contributions to global welfare, development and security find little recognition in the self-absorbed West.

India maintains a diversity of strategic partnerships, balancing its national values and core interests. These partnerships are differentiated, calibrated to deliver mutual benefit, and reciprocal. They are driven largely by realism, not ideology.

India's deepest and most consequential partnership is with the US, based on shared democratic values and convergent interests. This emanates from a mutual understanding that India will make its own judgements and decisions on core national interests. Both sides are equally committed to build on recent momentum and take relations forward with a strategic orientation.

To paraphrase India's External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar, we greatly value our trusted partners, but no one has a veto over our choices.

The Indo-Pacific is India's historical space. Without India, there is no Indo-Pacific, only the Asia Pacific. China prefers the latter, which excludes India. So does Russia.

Challenges in Asia

There is unrestrained great power assertion for dominance in both Asia and Europe. While developments in Europe are recent, Asia has been experiencing authoritarian assertions for a decade, with resort to military and coercive power to achieve unilateral objectives. Unlike what we see in Europe today, the response of the West to "enemies of freedom" in Asia has been feeble. Western nations have instead prioritised relations with China, and some have even welcomed the Belt and Road Initiative, China's economic and strategic instrument for dominance over both continental Asia and the maritime Indo-Pacific.

Irrespective of the outcome of the conflict in Europe, the future of world order will be decided in Asia, which lies at the heart of global economic and geopolitical power rebalancing.

India remains firmly focused on the challenge posed by China in Asia.

India and the US

India-US relations are bound by a common interest in maintaining a stable equilibrium in the Indo-Pacific, for which they are partners in “shaping the strategic environment around China”.

India does not expect the US to underwrite its security, but the US must not undermine it and should work with India to augment it. Here, we expect the US approach to be driven by convergent strategic interests, not mere transactions. We are still waiting to see what the US can contribute to India’s military potential. Much has been spoken of, but the US has not been forthcoming in the sharing of critical technologies. Trust, reliability, and predictability remain important factors to be reconciled – on both sides.

Finally, India and the US also need to evolve greater clarity regarding their mutual expectations as partners, not allies. This is not an aspect that can be ignored any longer if relations are to proceed along a steady path.

The Quad Factor

The Quad is the third element in the hierarchy of regional security balancing architecture, after US alliances and AUKUS, but it is the only one with an Indo-Pacific remit.

India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi has repeatedly said that the Quad is here to stay as a force for global good.

The Quad agenda covers vast areas of practical cooperation to deliver tangible benefits to its members and the Indo-Pacific. It has recently added some important security dimensions (IPMDA as an integrator of regional maritime domain awareness capabilities, and standard operating procedures for delivery of HADR). The military element remains latent, visible only in EX MALABAR, and is likely to remain so.

While there is a broad convergence of interests among Quad partners, priorities and perceptions diverge. US interests lie primarily in maritime East Asia. India’s security challenges range from continental Asia, where they have grown

manifold since the US departure from Afghanistan, to the Indian Ocean where the presence of China's PLA Navy is rapidly increasing. This is at a time when India is already dealing with China's attempts to change the status quo by force in the Himalayas.

Quad pronouncements against "coercive, provocative and unilateral actions that seek to change the status quo" cover only the East China Sea and the South China Sea, which does not include India's areas of concern. The Quad will need to find better ways to align respective security threat mitigation strategies.

US Posture in the Indo-Pacific

US attention has been riveted mainly to Europe, but there is now also a renewed focus on the Indo-Pacific. Reassuring allies and partners through "Integrated Deterrence" and diplomatic leveraging will require to be backed up by the credibility of US power, particularly at a time when uncertainty looms over the US domestic scene.

The newly announced IPEF, which India has joined, could become an instrument of economic alignment among like-minded countries. India can gain from moving closer to global best practices in a flexible framework, while retaining recourse to national decision making.

The Global Scene

Developments in Europe have had a severe negative impact on India's security and strategic interests in Eurasia, on the Indian economy, and on its defence preparedness.

There is a marked tendency in the West to declare that issues are of global concern requiring a global response, only when its interests are involved. Nations across the world are then pressed to bandwagon. If they maintain an independent stance, they are denounced as not "democratic".

Challenges to political independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity need to be resisted everywhere, not just in Ukraine. The freedom of sovereign choice belongs to all nations, not just Ukraine.

Wars in Europe have been created by rival nations in Europe for the last century. These are not wars against global civilisation but within the European civilisation, for imposing dominance and over security architecture. This is not the first war in Europe since WWII. That was the Balkan wars in the 1990s, during which the EU and NATO were party to the dismemberment of the

former Yugoslavia into seven countries, including one which has never existed and another which waited decades for the EU to authorise its name.

That is quite apart from the wars waged by the US and the West in recent foreign interventions, some of which have ended in ignominious retreats and left behind devastated and disrupted societies.

India does not condone Russian aggression or the waging of armed conflict. It does not support great power struggles for dominance and spheres of influence. It is also not a participant in the West's unilateral sanctions on Russia.

India's choice is clear: end the fighting and resort to diplomacy and negotiations. It is for the protagonists to decide whether they want to win the war or to end it. What is the West's end game here? Perpetual hostility in the heart of Europe? Erasure of Russia? There are few answers as a great power proxy war continues.

The West is scrambling to secure supplies of energy, commodities and food as its economies are sapped by high inflation. But the impact on the developing world has been simply devastating and that toll is mounting.

India's concern is also with the immense collateral damage being inflicted on the international trading and financial order, and the further marginalisation of international institutions, from the unreformed and ineffective UN to the G20 as the premier vehicle for global economic coordination. The West's focus is not on re-energised multilateralism, only on assuming the centrality of its own alliances (NATO) and the exclusive G7 club of advanced economies. How does this help revive world order?

This is a moment for serious reflection and moderation to slow the trend towards the fragmentation of a world order already in transition, not for unrelenting escalation. But there appears to be no such will, except to overcome the adversary.

If moderation prevails, this juncture will not be misconstrued by the West as another opportunity to return to the triumphalist unipolar moment of 1991, which itself did not last long. The push for global Western dominance will alienate nations across the globe and will run against the inevitability of power rebalancing and continuing progress towards multipolarity.

India has no difficulty with acknowledging the global pre-eminence of the US and attaches the highest importance to the sustained development of its

strategic relations with the US. But it will persist along its chosen path of exercising independent judgement based on national values and core interests. It will also hold on to its advocacy of a multipolar Asia and eventually a multipolar world order based on genuine, reformed and effective multilateralism.

Chapter III: Positioning the US as a Credible and Alternative Supplier of Defence Equipment to India

by
Arun Sahgal

General

Post the Russian invasion of Ukraine and India's stand on the crisis, there is growing awareness in the US that India's stand on Russia is dictated by its core strategic concerns rather than the binary of US/Western values and concept of rules based order. Consequently, there is a growing recognition within the US establishment to take a long view on India as a key strategic partner for maintaining balance and stability in the Indo-Pacific.

There have been remarks and suggestions, at the official, Track 1.5 and Track 2 levels, that the US must step in as a credible alternative defence supplier to wean India away from its Russia dependency and help boost Indian defence capabilities to meet the medium-term Chinese challenge, as also India's emergence as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean and South Asia.

It is in the above backdrop that I will analyse the state of India-US defence cooperation, as also focus on ways forward to enhance bilateral defence cooperation.

I will cover three specific areas:

- Define the key determinants of the relationship, in terms of "Convergences" and "Differences in Perspectives".
- Second, and an important issue of discussion, will be the "Mismatch in Expectations".
- Lastly, I will define the "Opportunities" that need to be seized to propel the relationship forward.

I. Key Determinants Defining the Relationship

Convergences

India's growing power and influence both in the Indian Ocean and South Asia against the China challenge is central to the US-led Indo-Pacific strategy.

Multi-domain coercion by China, together with the challenge posed by Pakistan and the Sino-Pak collusion, will persist in the medium term, and Indian military power will be central in meeting these challenges.

In this scenario, US regional interests require India as a credible military partner in any Indo-Pacific regional architecture led by the US, including the Quad. Towards this, US military equipment and technological support, backed by foundational agreements, helps in strengthening India's dissuasive posture.

Flowing from above, mutual dependence defines a strong US-India defence partnership as an important pillar of bilateral relations.

Differences in Perspectives

Despite these convergences, there are differing perspectives on certain key issues which need to be flagged.

First, there are concerns that an outright defence and security partnership with the US tends to draw India into the vortex of big-power competition, which could result in India becoming a subordinate actor to the US, a Cold-War style frontline state. China's assertions along the LAC are in part attributable to the growing India-US strategic partnership.

Second is the issue of operational priorities. The focus of the US and its allies is on East Asia-Western Pacific. The Indian Ocean or South Asia, though strategically significant, are not primary areas of security concern. Resultantly, India must bear the burden of its continental and maritime challenges largely "stand-alone", with only a marginal degree of support from the US and its regional allies.

Third, there are concerns that despite growing tensions in US relations with China and the robust posture adopted by the Biden Administration, bilateral relations will continue to be driven by a mix of cooperation, competition, and avoidance of conflict. This is likely to create a 'commitment dilemma' for the US in terms of active support for India, which the Ukraine situation can exacerbate. Therefore, the factor of 'assurance' from the US and QUAD needs to be viewed distinct from any 'commitment', particularly as the US approach is likely to be centred on harnessing allies and partners to meet the primary challenge essentially in the East Asia/Western Pacific theatre.

Furthermore, a new trend is discernible. A State Department-led bilateral engagement is overshadowing the vital defence pillar. Instead of being the "Spinal Cord", it is increasingly seen as "overburdened and over-emphasised".

Further, in the larger context of Defence cooperation, there prevails a dichotomy in the priority of domains for capability development. For India, continental challenges will remain uppermost in the short to medium term. The US expectation on the other hand is for prioritising resources and capabilities in the maritime domain.

Lastly, there are major differences over India's existing defence procurement priorities and relationships, particularly those related to Russia. The reality, however, is:

- a. 60% of India's inventory is of Russian origin, comprising almost all capital equipment. Added to this are licensed manufacturing facilities that have developed, including a very substantial defence eco-system based on MSME vendors and the private sector.
- b. Nevertheless, there has been 37% drop in Russian arms imports in the period 2017-2021, with major procurement, refurbishing and overhaul projects like Kamov K-26 helicopters and SU-30MKI fighters being cancelled.
- c. India's main arms suppliers other than Russia are France, the US and Israel. The driving rationale for these contracts is capacity and capability enhancement through technology induction and product indigenisation under the policy of "buy global, make local".
- d. It is important to underscore that India is working towards "Atmanirbharta" (self-reliance) which has also been spurred by an uncertain global environment. This includes a large "negative" import list.
- e. While this may be construed as protectionism by the US administration or the major US defence OEMs, it is in fact India's quest to become part of the global supply chains of these arms majors, as also to strengthen its own 'Defence Industrial Base' and ancillary eco-system. This, instead of being viewed negatively, can be leveraged to strengthen mutual support between our defence industries.
- f. It is this pattern of relationship which in the long run will serve as a motivation and a deciding factor to shift the preference towards acquisitions from the US. As Secretary of Defence Austin Lloyd said at a press conference during his visit to India in March, 2021, "It would be prudent on the part of the US to let the Indian armed forces get used to the operational benefits and ease of use of US origin systems, till these become

acquisitions of choice, rather than being forced on India by US pressure which in any case would be most counterproductive". This in my view perhaps most appropriately describes the way ahead.

II. Mismatch of Expectations

Let me turn to the mismatch in "expectations" of the two countries.

US Industry Expectations

- a. India's quest for self-reliance and call for localisation of the manufacturing base is seen as a 'restrictive' practice by the global defence industry. In their perception, numbers are simply not adequate to warrant relocation of existing facilities to India.
- b. There is a strong push to make India shift the bulk of its defence reliance away from Russia following developments in Ukraine and US sanctions – an option that India finds neither practical nor desirable. If at all, it must be an incremental process. The talk of a \$ 500 million US support fund to start the process is a non-starter.
- c. Perception in the US that MDP status should automatically ensure more (and preferential) orders for US industry and DTTI should provide a route for 'non-competitive' market access (overcoming bureaucratic obstacles and inefficient procedures).
- d. Despite the two sides having signed the ISA, there is continuing concern over technology security in Industry-to-Industry cooperation. Reluctance to onshore manufacturing to India remains.
- e. Constraints in processing acquisition and technology transfer requests with the US government, unless projects are aligned to 'Mission Oriented Cooperation'.
- f. Aversion to offsets persists [despite the threshold being raised from Rs 300 Cr (\$ 45 million) to Rs 2000 Cr (\$ 3 billion)].
- g. Long and time-consuming Indian acquisitions process with inadequate budgetary allocations. Substantive allocation of Capital budget for local industry acquisitions (68%) is seen as a major constraint.
- h. India's inability to finalise the 'Strategic Partnership Model' and uncertainty over its policies.

Indian Concerns

- Concern over not getting access to technology or even localisation of production for major acquisitions (which is considered a legitimate buyers' expectation).
- Despite growing emphasis on technology cooperation as expressed at the April, 2022, 2+2 meeting and the Modi-Biden Summit, there is little prospect of tangible gains in access to technology from the US. On key technologies like GE Engines, the US is willing to scale up technology transfer, but it will still be partial, not 100%. Instead of the strategic construct of relationship, a largely transactional bias prevails.
- Unlike the expectation of the US administration and industry, in India's perception interoperability is not confined to operating 'common platforms'. It is a function of the 'military manifestation of political intent/proximity'. Platforms are relevant too, but not the only means of developing interoperability.
- In American thinking, "technology will come as we go by". India's concerns are "in absence of any commitment on technology transfer, how do we bank on the US?"
- Quest for developing indigenous capability (Make in India). Creation of a defence industry eco-system and its integration into global supply chains are central to defence partnership. The bottom line is that "all acquisitions/technology transfers must support the indigenous defence eco-system".
- US conventional arms transfer policies continue to be restrictive, despite India being able to overcome several licensing and clearances hurdles post the signing of enabling agreements. The spirit of the Major Defence Partner (MDP) has not fully percolated to the State Department. (Draft Bill HR 6506, extending the provisions of MDP to the State Department under Title 22, which was introduced in July 2018 but lapsed in January 2019 with the end of the 115th Congress, would have been helpful).
- Uncertainty continues over the threat of secondary sanctions (e.g., CAATSA), resulting in lack of trust.

- India too on its part has restrictive domestic compulsions of adherence to cumbersome procedures to maintain transparency, financial probity and stand scrutiny before democratic oversight.

Areas of good progress: several 'building blocks' are now in place

- Enabling Agreements: Signed LEMOA (2016), COMCASA (2018), BECA (2020).
- India accorded Strategic Trade Authorisation (STA) Status-1 (enabling access to advanced technologies and allowing controlled items to be exported without transaction-specific license) - 2018.
- Industrial Security Annexe (ISA) to General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA-2002) - signed 2019.
- On the Indian side, while the guidelines for Strategic Partnership Model and Terms of Reference (TOR) have been finalised, implementation remains a hurdle.
- Allocation of a 'non lapsing' defence budget is being contemplated and the budget allocation process is being refined to mitigate uncertainty of financial support.

III. Opportunities

- Opportunity now exists for Industry-to-Industry engagement at different levels: Major Industry/OEM level, for manufacturing in India, including in the newly emerging defence industrial corridors; and with start-ups, MSMEs and Innovators in emerging and critical technologies.
- All major acquisition projects must come with a localisation plan, under the "buy global make local" programme. This will provide the requisite incentive. Proposed contract for 114 MRFA fighter aircraft, that includes 18 off the shelf, 36 in CKD/SKD kits and 60 to be locally manufactured with an Indian partner, is a major opportunity which the American defence industry should consider.
- Make a start in co-design and development of certain emerging niche technologies, for which areas could include quantum computing, long

range precision strike and ISR, not so much in terms of hardware but creating seamless information support systems.

- US industry could now create a defence eco-system in India by sourcing products for global supply chains, beyond the mandatory 'offset' discharge period. Similar opportunity exists for creating global maintenance hubs, as discussed on the sidelines of the recent 2+2 dialogue.
- DTTI remains a silent enabler and there is need to support it. Proposal for setting up a 'Defence Industry Consultative Committee' is a welcome step. Creation of demonstrable symbols of defence cooperation is an urgent requirement.
- DTTI can also be suitably modified to serve as a mechanism for our bilateral, trilateral, and Quad technology cooperation.

Conclusion

Given the convergences in evolving a strong strategic framework to meet the China challenge, the two sides must evolve a comprehensive roadmap of defence cooperation, based on a balanced appreciation of each other's interests and requirements.

The framework, once created, should enable joint threat assessment, operational planning, capability development, and burden-sharing.

Lastly, despite the growing convergence in our relations, the reality is that India cannot afford another relationship of 'sole dependency'. Diversified defence partnerships with a growing emphasis on self-reliance has to be the norm.



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