

## ***Looming US Retreat under Trump: Implications for Asian Security***

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Donald Trump's presidency and its consequent policies have spurred a series of geopolitical developments upending America's core beliefs about globalization. Trump's unilateral disruptions on various occasions, turning America's back on globalization, have impacted the global economy, security, trade, climate, and polity in almost equal measure. However, the most severe implications of the Trumpian retreat from globalization could be for Asian security, an area where the USA has commanded a dominant influence since the end of the Second World War. Even as a transactional foreign policy approach has started to flow from Washington, Asia's notion of collective security under the US umbrella faces an uncertain future. This process has been hastened by China's growing assertiveness in the Asia-Pacific, particularly in the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

The Trump Administration has withdrawn from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Paris Climate accord, and threatened to withdraw from the WTO, sabotaging any semblance of future trade or climate security. As the USA under Trump aims to boost domestic growth, the security dilemma of the Asia-Pacific is gradually transitioning into the IOR via the Indo-Pacific. A certain alliance restructuring and lack of emphasis on traditional security priorities by Washington has potentially created a security imbalance in Asia that needs to be restored. It is here that India, as a strong regional power and with its calculated bonhomie with the USA, could play the role of an Asian balancer. With a potential pan-Asian role depicted by its net-security-provider role, India is poised to fill the void that has been partially created by the American retreat vis-à-vis collective Asian security.

For a substantial period of time, the world order associated itself with the narrative of decline of nation states and a simultaneous rise in globalisation. As the forces of globalisation gathered momentum, such

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notional assertions started to assume authentic designs. The intensive and rapid nature of the processes of globalisation even churned the idea of a possible withering away of traditional nation states. However, it seems that both nation states and globalisation have remained critical to the current world order as major countries have reasserted the centrality of power and control in the nation state. As nation states consolidate their inward-looking orientation through rising protectionism, anti-immigration postures and even xenophobia, the time is perhaps right to assess the impact of the global retreat of globalisation.

Questions about the retreat, and even demise, of globalisation began to be asked at the end of the first phase of globalization; 1870 to 1914. The backlash against globalisation was intensified by the Great Depression and saw paralysed global trade. But globalisation, particularly augmented by economic integration, witnessed a bolstered return with the ideas of European integration and Southeast Asian integration through EU and ASEAN in the second half of the twentieth century. John Whalley of the University of Ontario raised<sup>1</sup> an extremely important question in 1999, when globalisation still seemed like an unstoppable force gathering steam: would there be a redefinition, a resurgence of sorts, in the idea of nation states as a consequence of globalisation? With a wave of detractive attitudes of countries towards globalisation, supported by a host of populist leaders across the world, Whalley's concerns are gaining ground in present times. The USA under Trump has been at the helm of the rising global tirade against globalisation. As such, the fundamentals of globalisation seem challenged, if not shaken, in the wake of the global retreat from globalisation led by the USA under the Trump administration.

### **Donald Trump and Globalisation**

The 2008 financial crisis, somewhat reminiscent of the Great Depression in the USA, made America cautious going forward, even as job loss and low growth rates dogged the nation. Underlying this transformation was a simmering frustration among Americans about domestic companies manufacturing abroad, the loss of jobs to skilled foreign migrants in the USA and consequent anti-immigration sentiment, and perhaps even strongly about American expenditure abroad in various forms: wars, military bases, foreign aid, and other missions – all quintessentially validating the anti-globalisation narrative. Donald Trump managed to tap into this sentiment, and later converted

it into votes. Indeed, he looks on the road to secure a second term of Presidency.

Both economy and trade, the two basic variables of America's globalisation outreach, stood challenged in the face of a looming structural upending that the Trump Administration promised. Such threats made the world feel more nervous for two reasons: first, the threats to globalisation were flowing from the supposed guardian of globalisation; and second, that any snapping of global trade and economic linkages at a time when the world stands more connected than before would be highly detrimental. Donald Trump and globalisation have represented two contrarian ends of a spectrum since he embarked on his electoral campaign running up to the election results in January 2017.

Trump's emphasis on pulling out of some of major global negotiations, threatening to deport illegal immigrants in the USA, questioning traditional US policies towards other countries, and threats to American companies that were manufacturing in Asia and abroad symbolised Trump's crusade against globalisation. More specifically, the USA under Trump pulled out of global climate change commitments; the Paris Climate deal<sup>2</sup>; promised to build a wall on its border with Mexico to stop immigrants from entering the USA illegally;<sup>3</sup> promised to expand the border tax for American companies manufacturing abroad;<sup>4</sup> pulled America out of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP); questioned<sup>5</sup> the viability of a US alliance with Japan and South Korea, two of US' strongest allies in the Asia-Pacific region; threatened to walk out of the WTO; escalated trade wars with China and India; differed with the EU on trade matters and seems to be preparing to leave the reins of Afghanistan in the hands the Taliban through a Faustian bargain. All of these moves carry significant repercussions for America's global relations, particularly Asian security.

### **Retreat of Globalization and Asian Security**

Through the post-War phase of the twentieth century, the USA made sure that its Asian connections were well established. Assuring a series of alliance partnerships across Asia, the USA established a labyrinth of relations that thrived on the twin mutuality of trade and security. Particularly, the Asia-Pacific emerged as the pivotal node of America's Asia relations. In the perpetuation of globalisation that was led by the USA, Asia remained an important spot. What followed were developments in the global order, ushering

the Asian domain into what is now being touted as the Asian century. Asia continued to be central to America's global relations. It is natural, then, that a retreat from globalization would have serious implications for America's relations in Asia, and for Asian security. In the same breath, it has been widely perceived that Trump's revisionist designs on globalisation and his seeking to reevaluate the open global economic order would have serious implications for the political and security domains in Asia.

### **The Asia-Pacific**

America's turning back on globalisation under Trump has led to the growing belief in the possibility of weakening, or even an end, of America's security alliances across the world, especially in Asia. Trump has threatened a revision of USA's ties with Japan and South Korea, and asked the countries to pay more for the American guarantee of security. Even Macron's France, a key trans-Atlantic ally, is not off Trump's radar. By making its security alliance rescindable with two of the most significant countries, Trump has thrown a spanner in USA's designs for creating the strategic augmentation in the Asia-Pacific to effectively tackle the rising Chinese challenge.

In the century that has been labelled as the 'Asian Century', America's relations with the countries of Asia have come to rest primarily on the twin pillars of economics and security. The Trump administration's strategic myopia has been evident in its attempt to decouple trade and security rationales in Asia. As such, a part of the reason why the erstwhile Obama Presidency endorsed the TPP was the much needed resuscitation of USA's security agenda in the Asia-Pacific: rebalance. Resultantly, Trump's decision to pull out of the TPP resulted in an unintended erosion of trust and reassurance among USA's allies in the Asia-pacific, affecting its relations with regional countries much beyond trade.

Starker strands of the chinks in America's Asian security armour began to be visible with Donald Trump rather nonchalantly proposing to withdraw US military support from Japan and South Korea, and even exhorting them to acquire nuclear weapons, thus hinting to end its extended deterrence.<sup>6</sup> A waffling and uncertain support from Washington to its allies in the Asia-Pacific created an unprecedented regional dilemma for US allies in the region, particularly in the face of a rising and assertive China. Such dithering paved way for at least two security implications: first, a weakened regional security resolve of the USA diminished the extended deterrence that it provides in the

region. Second, more importantly, is that it generated the strategic rationale for both South Korea and Japan to go nuclear amidst a shrinking US nuclear umbrella. This does not augur well for the security environment and stability of the Asia-Pacific region, particularly when both South Korea and Japan have been assessed as the most potent nuclear threshold states.<sup>7</sup> These states have depicted commendable nuclear restraint despite the possession of significant nuclear capabilities with military potential, and thereby have also been the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel in so far as achieving global nuclear disarmament is concerned. Exhorting nuclear threshold countries to acquire nuclear capabilities for defence would not only undermine the USA's extended deterrence in the Asia-Pacific but could also throw the strategic balance of the whole Asian domain out of gear.

The pre-eminence of the USA, backed by the US military support, has been the key differentiating character of Asia-Pacific security when compared to other regions of the world. It is the USA's avowed commitments to defend its allies in the region, even using nuclear weapons if need be, that has held up stability in the region. However, a non-committal attitude from none other than President Trump himself has had the American allies in Asia scramble in strategic disbelief for a home-grown readiness. Extended deterrence, both conventional and nuclear, today stands challenged in the face of a revocable rhetoric from Trump. The regional lack of confidence in the USA has also gained ground amidst increasing North Korean belligerence and consequent doubts among US allies about their security guarantor's willingness to risk its own security for its allies. More recently, North Korea has not only countered US rhetoric by conducting nuclear and missile tests with impunity but has sought<sup>8</sup> military 'equilibrium' with the USA. The ensuing environment that has had the Korean Peninsula sitting on a vulnerable nuclear edge threatens to destabilise or even obliterate the whole region.

As the USA intends to fold its nuclear umbrella under Trump, there is a looming threat over entire East Asia whose security has been almost fully guaranteed by American strategic forces — through its deployments in the homeland or from the sea aboard Trident ballistic missile submarines. This twin system of land-maritime security guaranty has become the mainstay of American strategy to protect its allies against regional and extra-regional threats, especially since the USA withdrew nuclear weapons from the region in September 1991.<sup>9</sup> American security assurance in the Asia-Pacific is probably at an all-time low, with successive instances of test-of-credibility for US security guarantees in the region. First, the number of American security forces in the Korean peninsula is probably at its lowest in a long

time. Second, repeated missile tests by North Korea, recent missile flights over Japan, along with successive threats of nuclear strikes on Guam islands, opposition to the installation of Terminal High Altitude Area Defence (THAAD), and defiant nuclear explosions backed by cascading anti-US rhetoric by the North Korean regime have all contributed to the mitigation of the perceptive credibility of the US security guarantee in the Asia-Pacific, in turn, denting its much acclaimed extended deterrence to the region.

The American stance on various aspects of Asian security under Trump has also questioned the potency of America's offshore balancing<sup>10</sup> in the region. When the Obama administration emphasised reviving its pivot to Asia policy, the underlying strategy was a shift from burden sharing to burden shifting. In this regard, in a January 2012 essay<sup>11</sup>, Professor Christopher Layne claimed that the "Offshore balancing is a strategy of burden shifting, not burden sharing. It is based on getting other states to do more for their security so the United States can do less." As such, the grand strategy of the USA as outlined by the Obama administration was undergirded by offshore balancing which focused on withdrawing, or downsizing, its forces in Europe and the Middle East and, instead, concentrating its military power in East Asia. As an offshore balancer, the USA intended to reposition military forces in Guam, Hawaii, and San Diego. From a strategic standpoint, these locations would put US forces beyond the range of most Chinese counter-intervention threats as well as would increase the onus on regional allies, like Japan, South Korea and Australia, to do more in the region. Trump's policies in the region hit at the root of this formative strategy by threatening to withdraw American support to two of the strongest allies of the USA in the region. To the extent that offshore balancing is a strategy that can allow the USA to preserve its interests at home and abroad, without weakening its relationships with allies, it stands challenged in the Asia-Pacific with the Trump administration's retreat on globalisation.

The American alliance structure in the Asia-Pacific seems caught in a web of uncertainty with the Philippines distancing itself from the USA, and Japan and South Korea sparring openly. Some hopes of sustaining the USA's predominance in the Asia-Pacific through its alliance structures have now surfaced, with the country deciding<sup>12</sup> to sell sophisticated weapons and newer technologies to thwart an ever increasing North Korean and Chinese threats in the region. This effort to boost offshore balancing through the sale of sophisticated weapons to allies is a strategy that cuts both ways. Any attempt to change the security and stability status quo of the Asia-Pacific region by the USA is likely to be responded to in equal measure by North Korea and China.

### **The Indo-Asia Pacific: Reversing Anti-Globalization Sentiments**

The American retreat on globalisation and interconnectedness in the Asian domain also threatens to destabilise the Asian order. The Indo-Asia Pacific region resides at the heart of America's new found connectivity in Asia, even as the region has come to straddle two growth epicentres in Asia: the Pacific and the Indian Oceans. Under the Obama administration, the Indo-Pacific became the fulcrum of US policy in Asia as the USA tried to balance its Asian strategy between the Pacific and the Indian Oceans. The US strategy in this regard became clearer with the Obama administration's focus on including some of the Indian Ocean littoral countries in its Asian rebalance. The US-India Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region<sup>13</sup> outlined by President Obama and Prime Minister Modi in January 2015 became the next step in enhancing clarity in the USA's Asian outlook.

Amidst such commitments, a change of guard in the USA came with its own set of apprehensions for India in particular, and Asia in general. Trump administration's silence on its Asian strategy for a long time created room for speculations, among which the USA's retreat from economic connectivity with Asian countries, along with substantial cuts in military commitments, were discussed and debated. Trump administration's rather long silence on a substantive Asian strategy going forward also led to its Asian allies and partners preparing for any kind of eventuality. Donald Trump's initial instincts, in so far as America's involvement in Asia was concerned, was to withdraw. This was highlighted through his repeated warnings to both Japan and South Korea to fend for themselves, through sanctions on Iran, the intended pullout from Afghanistan, and the uncompromising stand on its own trade interests. Further, President Trump spoke his mind when he acknowledged<sup>14</sup> that his initial instinct was to withdraw US troops from Afghanistan in his outline of his US South Asia policy. Clearly, coming on the back of a spirited championing of America's withdrawal from Afghanistan, the American retreat from its purposes of strategic connectedness to Asia was destined but for the President's advisers and now a failed deal with the Taliban

Gradually, the assessment of the inevitability of Asian connectivity in US strategy has seeped in among the policy makers of the Beltway. The region of the Indo-Pacific has come to gain centrality<sup>15</sup> in US policy discourse. At least two decisions by the Trump administration have sought to relocate its Asian impetus. The Trump administration has resuscitated the 'New Silk Road' initiative, and the Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor (IPEC) linking South and Southeast Asia.<sup>16</sup> Through the IPEC, the USA seeks to "create new energy

linkages, open up trade and transport corridors, streamline customs procedures and border crossings, and connect entrepreneurs and businesses throughout South Asia and beyond.”<sup>17</sup> The revival of two major infrastructure projects is also being seen as counter moves to Chinese land-maritime westward expansion through its Silk Route Economic Belt and the Maritime Silk Road.

The westward expansion of China poses newer challenges to both extra regional powers like the USA and regional power like India. As such, the Indo-Pacific region has provided reasons for India and the USA to locate their joint rationale for maritime cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. Towards enhancing cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region, both India and the USA have pledged to maintain peace and stability in the region through a “2+2” ministerial dialogue, a format of engagement that India seeks to extend to other Indo-Pacific countries like Japan. Trump has also reinforced energy relations with India with the first-ever shipment of American crude oil to India from Texas having already taken place.<sup>18</sup> In the last two years, energy import from the US has also reduced trade deficit for the US with India. Complementing the US desire for strong ties with India in the Indo-Pacific region, India has held that “One of the main challenges confronting the world today is the evolving situation in the Indo-Pacific. Strong India-US partnership is critical for peace, stability, and prosperity in this region.”<sup>19</sup> The mutual flow of perceived benefits from cooperation in the Indo-Pacific is quite apparent from the rhetoric of the leaders of both countries. India seems rightly placed to fill the void that America’s possible retreat from Asia might create in the future. However, turning away from these assessed strategic gains will be difficult for the USA if it wants to continue to wield influence and power that has remained unchallenged until recently in this part of the world.

So, it turns out that a complete turning of its back on Asia seems close to impossible for America under Donald Trump, notwithstanding his promises, instincts, and political rhetoric. The snapping of trade and military ties with countries in Asia for the USA would only mean a debilitating US trade and security situation in the future which would be paving the way for a rapidly rising China amidst its inward-looking national policy orientation. In current times, when the USA’s growing competition and conflict with China is being increasingly assessed<sup>20</sup> from the Thucydides’s Trap angle, bolstering its economic and military ties with Asian partners, both old and new, should be a priority for the USA. Any retreat on its connectivity, trade or strategic ties to Asia by the USA will not only be tantamount to ceding international strategic space to its arch-rival China but letting other powers lessen their power and influence deficit with itself.



### **Restructured Asian Connectivity: Towards a New Regional Order in Asia**

As a result of the aforementioned realisation, the Trump administration should halt its retreat-from-Asia agenda. Its retreat from Afghanistan, which is on the cusp of materializing, is likely to increase Asian instability, and will increase spill-over security risks for India. Furthermore, the Trump administration should realise the unviability of snapping trade, connectivity, and strategic ties with its existing and potential partners in Asia.

Under Donald Trump, the USA seems to be moving towards setting a new and rapidly changing world order, primarily being driven by growth centres in Asia. As such, its relations with China, Japan, South Korea, and India remain critical in its rehashed relationship network with Asia. As the balance of power in Asia assumes an asymmetric shift favouring China, the USA has felt a definitive urge to restore the balance of power in its favour through newer partners, initiatives and, above all, challenging postures. It is within these paradigms that the USA since the Obama administration has been working towards a kind of restructuring in its Asian power relations. This restructuring has created space for new dimensions in USA's power relations with Asian countries. In this context, India has gained a new position in the USA's strategic handbook: Major Defence Partner (MDP). The MDP status of India has been variously assessed, the most prominent being the creation of a new space for the country in America's global parameters of gauging its proximity with countries around the world.<sup>21</sup>

American restructuring of relations with Asian countries is also depicted through the growing sophistication of its strategic ties with countries like Japan, South Korea, Australia, and India. However, the common strand running through USA's Asian restructuring is to strengthen collective security and gain an upper hand over China. Amidst the looming Chinese presence across Asia, the USA understands the risks and futility of resisting Chinese advance in Asia alone. Chinese military modernisation and its simultaneously rising bellicosity have also had a substantial affect on the nature of US' altered ties to Asia. In many ways, America's strategic restructuring in its Asian relations has been to counter Chinese strategies such as 'salami slicing', 'Anti-Access Area Denial (A2AD)', the creation and subsequent militarisation of islands in the South China Sea, and increasing submarine presence by China outside its conventional sovereignty limits, the nine-dash-line, among various other surreptitious moves. The USA's offshore balancing finds its place within the paradigm of counter measures

that the USA seeks to take to retain an upper hand vis-à-vis China. Besides reformulating alliances and partnerships, sustaining dominance in Asia has required the USA to reposition its forces in Asia in a manner that puts American forces out of China's counter-intervention moves.<sup>22</sup> As a result, alliance and partners remain as critical to sustaining US dominance as the strategies themselves, although both strategies and partners are evolving in the current order.

### **Conclusion**

The American war on globalisation resulting in tendencies of retreat from Asia might slow the process of global economic and political connectivity; but it cannot end it completely as other countries in the lower rungs are waiting for the right opportunity to take the mantle into their hands. Donald Trump's possible Asia retreat could leave substantial room for a new regional order in which major Asian countries will share the erstwhile burden of the USA in the region, and even globally. This could be most noticeably visible in the stepping up of both India and China in Asia, thus reshaping the security role and intent in the Indo-Pacific.

### **Notes :**

- <sup>1</sup> Whalley, J (1999), *Globalization and the Decline of the Nation State*, background Paper in International Conference on Federalism Mont-Tremblant, October 1999, retrieved from <http://www.forumfed.org/libdocs/IntConfFedBk99/ICFE9911-int-Whalley-bg.pdf>
- <sup>2</sup> Vitali, Ali, *Trump Pulls U.S. Out of Paris Climate Agreement*, NBC, retrieved from <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/trump-pulls-u-s-out-paris-climate-agreement-n767066>
- <sup>3</sup> 'Trump says Mexico wall doesn't need to cover the whole border', *The Guardian*, retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/jul/13/mexico-border-wall-trump-plan-wont-need-full-border>
- <sup>4</sup> 'Trump vows 35% tax for US firms that move jobs overseas', *BBC News*, retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-38202721>
- <sup>5</sup> Clarke, Toni, 'Trump questions NATO, support for South Korea and Japan ahead of Nuclear Security Summit', *Business Insider*, retrieved from <http://www.businessinsider.com/trump-questions-nato-support-for-south-korea-and-japan-ahead-of-nuclear-security-summit-2016-3?IR=T>
- <sup>6</sup> Beauchamp, Zack, 'Trump's comments on Japanese nukes are worrisome — even by Trump standards', *Vox*, retrieved from <https://www.vox.com/2016/3/31/11339040/trump-nukes-japan-south-korea>

- <sup>7</sup> Rublee, Maria Rost, 'The Nuclear Threshold States: Challenges and Opportunities Posed by Brazil and Japan', *Nonproliferation Review*, Vol. 17, No. 1, March 2010.
- <sup>8</sup> Christine Kim and M. Nichols, 'North Korea says seeking military 'equilibrium' with U.S.', Reuters, September 15, 2017, retrieved from: <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-northkorea-missiles/north-korea-says-seeking-military-equilibrium-with-u-s-idUSKCN1BP35B>.
- <sup>9</sup> John R. Haines, 'Donald Trump Folds the Nuclear Umbrella: Is American Extended Deterrence Passé?' E-Notes, Foreign Policy Research Institute, April 1, 2016, retrieved from: <https://www.fpri.org/article/2016/04/donald-trump-folds-nuclear-umbrella-american-extended-deterrence-passe/>
- <sup>10</sup> Offshore balancing has been defined by John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt as "preserving U.S. dominance in the Western Hemisphere and countering potential hegemonies in Europe, Northeast Asia, and the Persian Gulf" and encouraging "other countries to take the lead in checking rising powers, (the US) intervening itself only when necessary."
- <sup>11</sup> Layne, Christopher, 'The (Almost) Triumph of Offshore Balancing', *The National Interest*, January 27, 2012, retrieved from <http://nationalinterest.org/commentary/almost-triumph-offshore-balancing-6405>
- <sup>12</sup> Andrew Buncombe, 'Donald Trump: Japan and South Korea can buy 'substantially' more sophisticated US military equipment', *Independent*, September 05, 2017, retrieved from: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/donald-trump-japan-south-korea-military-equipment-us-buy-sell-north-korea-nuclear-threat-missiles-a7930526.html>
- <sup>13</sup> 'US-India Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region' Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, January 25, 2015, retrieved from: [http://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/24728USIndia\\_Joint\\_Strategic\\_Vision\\_for\\_the\\_AsiaPacific\\_and\\_Indian\\_Ocean\\_Region](http://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/24728USIndia_Joint_Strategic_Vision_for_the_AsiaPacific_and_Indian_Ocean_Region)
- <sup>14</sup> Ron Elvin, 'Combating His Instinct, Trump Commits U.S. To Another Tour Of Duty In Afghanistan', August 22 2017, retrieved from: <http://www.npr.org/2017/08/22/545159766/combating-his-instinct-trump-commits-u-s-to-another-tour-of-duty-in-afghanistan>
- <sup>15</sup> 'A Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Seapower', March 2015, retrieved from: [https://www.uscg.mil/SENIORLEADERSHIP/DOCS/CS21R\\_Final.pdf](https://www.uscg.mil/SENIORLEADERSHIP/DOCS/CS21R_Final.pdf)
- <sup>16</sup> 'To Counter China's OBOR, US Revives Two Infrastructure Projects in Asia', *The Wire*, May 24 2017, retrieved from: <https://thewire.in/139714/obor-china-us-india/>
- <sup>17</sup> Lalit K. Jha, 'US Hopes Indo-Pacific Economic Corridor Will Improve Connectivity in South Asia: US Official', *The Wire*, September 07 2016, retrieved from: <https://thewire.in/64668/us-hopes-indo-pacific-economic-corridor-will-improve-connectivity-in-south-asia-official/>

- <sup>18</sup> 'India, US pledge to maintain peace across Indo-Pacific region', *The Indian Express*, August 2017, retrieved from: <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/modi-trump-agree-to-enhance-peace-across-indo-pacific-region-4798156/>
- <sup>19</sup> 'To counter China, India eyes partnership with US for stability in Indo-Pacific region', *The Economic Times*, July 31 2017, retrieved from: <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/sushma-swaraj-snubs-china-stresses-on-ties-with-us-for-stability-in-indo-pacific-region/articleshow/59851265.cms>
- <sup>20</sup> 'Thucydides's Trap', Belfer Center, Harvard Kennedy School, retrieved from: <http://www.belfercenter.org/thucydides-trap/overview-thucydides-trap>
- <sup>21</sup> Vivek Mishra, 'MDP Tag: India Is Now More Than a Friend, Less Than an Ally for US', *The Quint*, retrieved from: <https://www.thequint.com/voices/blogs/major-defence-partner-status-friend-ally-of-india-united-states-ties-ashton-carter-barack-obama-donald-trump>
- <sup>22</sup> Chris McLachlan, 'The Political Perils of Offshore Balancing', *The Diplomat*, October 21, 2014. retrieved from: <http://thediplomat.com/2014/10/the-political-perils-of-offshore-balancing/>

