

## ***India-China-Pakistan Triangle: The US Factor***

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### **Concept of Trilateral Relations**

It is not uncommon among scholars of international politics to analyse issues and events in a trilateral perspective. There are several ways one can devise triangular units of relationships. Member countries of the conceptual triangle can transcend geographic regions or sub-regions. The functional issues that may be considered in the analysis can range from economics to politics to strategic considerations. A brief classification of such triangles can illuminate the concept better.

To start with, trilateral relations may comprise two informal strategic partners and their common enemy. The Sino-Soviet collaboration against the US during the first cold war and the US-China teamwork to counterbalance the former Soviet Union during the second cold war provide a fine illustration<sup>1</sup>. The US-South Korea alliance against North Korea is yet another case in point. The China-Pakistan partnership against India can also fit into this pattern of triangles. Secondly, a triangle may consist of three countries forming a strategic alliance. The conclusion of the ANZUS Treaty by Australia, New Zealand and the United States is one such illustration<sup>2</sup>. Thirdly, trilateral cooperation among three major powers supposedly seeking to balance against the unilateralism of a superpower has also been witnessed in recent years. Member countries of such a triangle are not bound by a formal agreement; they maintain cooperative relations with the unilateral power in selected areas, while trying to combine their political weight from time to time to prevent or discourage unilateral actions by the superpower. The Russia-China-India triangle provides such a triangular model of relationship<sup>3</sup>. A fourth model may consist of an external power seeking ties with two regional rivals to achieve its diverse policy goals, though the regional rivals seeking closer ties with an external power may be guided by different sets of interests. The complex US-India-Pakistan relationship is a suitable example of this model<sup>4</sup>. Another type of triangular relationship may be born out of an

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external power's attempt to resolve a conflict between a state and a non-state entity aspiring for statehood, as for instance, the US efforts to resolve Israel-Palestine disputes. Last but not least, scholars have espoused the India-China-US triangle as a unit of analysis in recent years<sup>5</sup>. In this analysis, China, emerging as a rival superpower views the budding Indo-US ties with suspicion, while India and the US share common perceptions about the uncertainty surrounding China's evolution as a new global power. At the same time, China and India have been moving ahead with cooperation in multiple fields, including a robust growth in trade ties.

The present article has a limited scope. It has made an attempt to examine a significant triangle of complex relationships comprising three nuclear powers of Southern Asia – India, China and Pakistan.<sup>6</sup>

### **India-China-Pakistan Triangle**

India, China and Pakistan constitute a major strategic triangle in the geopolitics of Asia. The salient features of this triangle are striking. To begin with, India is the most influential developing country in contemporary world politics; China is the most formidable communist power in the existing hierarchy of major powers; and Pakistan is the mightiest among the countries of the Islamic world. Secondly, all these countries maintain arsenals of nuclear weapons and missiles, India and Pakistan being de facto nuclear weapon powers while China is a recognized one with a permanent seat in the UN Security Council. Thirdly, each country of this triangle shares mutual borders, segments of which are disputed and in some cases the disputed areas are large enough to be considered territorial disputes. Fourthly, all three consider themselves as members of the developing world, even though China and India are the world's fastest growing economies, while Pakistan remains in the economic backwater of Asia. Fifthly, two sides of this triangle, China and Pakistan, share a history of hostility with the third side that is India. Last but not least, nowhere else does one find three nuclear weapon powers sharing borders and longstanding animosities with one another. This aspect of the triangle is particularly crucial, considering that China and Pakistan have had a record of initiating armed conflicts with another nuclear weapon power after going nuclear – China against the former Soviet Union over the Usuri River dispute and Pakistan against India in the Kargil misadventure.

Moreover, the relations among these countries have developed in inimitable traditions. India and Pakistan have rarely interacted in a non-hostile political atmosphere as a result of a historical legacy marked by the bloody upshot of

India's partition and birth of Pakistan. While there were four wars and intermezzos of pause in their hostilities, they are yet to make good in establishing cordial and cooperative political ambience for the bilateral relationship to flourish in constructive directions. After the founding of the People's Republic of China, India and China had a very decent and respectable commencement of bilateral relations based on the principles of Panch Sheel. Nevertheless, border disputes, reciprocal distrust and fallout of the Chinese intervention in Tibet eventually headed the two nations toward a border war in 1962 that in turn engendered an era of non-cooperation stretching up to the second half of the 1980s. Given their discordant relationships with India, a natural alliance against India developed between China and Pakistan and the two allies described this relationship as an "all-weather friendship". The Sino-Pak strategic collaboration comprised, among other things, Chinese arms transfers to Pakistan and collaboration in certain WMD programmes. Some economic contents in the Sino-Pak cooperation also had strategic essence, particularly China's port modernization and road construction activities in Pakistan.

Successive governments in Islamabad, military or civilian, cultivated Beijing in ways that would insure Pakistan's Kashmir policy from perceived threats from India, in other words, deterring India from either unifying Kashmir or striking back against Pakistan's policy of sponsoring militancy and insurgency in Jammu and Kashmir. By ceding a portion of Kashmiri territory to China for building the Karakoram Highway and allowing Chinese investments and other activities in Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir (POK), Pakistan virtually turned it into a zone where no war would be possible without provoking Chinese participation.

While it never openly and militarily assisted Pakistan during India-Pakistan wars, China received rewards for extending political/psychological support to Pakistan in the form of territorial gifts or other economic opportunities. The ascent of India as a major military power, a prominent global actor, and an economic powerhouse, has pushed China and Pakistan to further fortify their ties. But China seems to have played a smart noncommittal game and simultaneously sought to better its relations with India, making Pakistan anxious at times and inducing it to give China more concessions at other times.

India perceives China to be a near-term challenge and China looks at India as a potential rival in the longer run, yet both are now proficient trading partners and share common interests on scores of international issues, such as environment, piracy, international crime and terrorism. India-Pakistan relations, on the other hand, are outright antagonistic. For Pakistan, India is an enduring enemy; while India looks at Pakistan as a recurrent troublemaker.

It is clear that this triangle represents a very complex set of co-relations and linkages. Hordes of changes have occurred in the dynamics of their triangular ties since the end of the cold war. During the cold war China used Pakistan as a strategic asset to box India in a bilateral muddle. Pakistan developed strategic ties with China with a hope to play the China card because of the unreliability and uncertainty surrounding Washington's support against India. On the other hand, India deftly used the Soviet card as an assurance against excessive Chinese snooping in South Asian affairs and to balance its non-strategic relationship with the US. Multifaceted cooperation, competition and conflict have engulfed this triangle since the termination of the cold war.

Pakistan may realise that it cannot aspire for absolute parity with India, but still does not refrain from contesting Indian interests and policy at every twist and turn of international developments. China is not India's role model, but New Delhi surely endeavours to develop competence to thwart China from casting its shadow over India. China has been ineffective in using Pakistan for containing India in South Asia. The new focus of China now seems to be to prevent the India-US strategic partnership from becoming an anti-China bulwark.

### **Perceptions in Washington**

The United States has always been a significant actor in the region, but has become an even bigger stakeholder in Southern Asian stability since the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, D.C. on 11 September 2001. During the cold war, the US perceived Pakistan as a strategic asset and turned it into an ally against Soviet expansionism. Washington initially viewed China as a Soviet ally, but eventually played the China card to hold back the spread of Soviet influence in Asia and elsewhere. Non-aligned India was neither with the US nor against the US throughout the cold war even after signing the treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union. But India's non-alignment was viewed as an "immoral" policy by some US officials, who believed India's subsequent political and strategic tilt towards Moscow to be India's collusion with America's principal adversary. Even so, there was no direct enmity between the US and India.

In the years following the termination of the cold war, the broad domestic political orientations of China, Pakistan and India have stayed unchanged. China has continued to be a single Party state, Pakistan's flirtations with democracy have been short-lived with persistent dominance of the Army in decision-making; and India has kept evolving as a dynamic, buoyant and

resilient democracy. The economic profiles of these three countries, however, have undergone incredible transformations. China has achieved remarkable economic growth. India too has been one of the fastest rising new markets in the world. Pakistan, on the contrary, has not fared that well. The changes in the military profiles of India, Pakistan and China have been more striking. China's military modernization has qualified it as a power that can hit targets in continental United States, not to speak of US bases and installations in other regions of the world. India and Pakistan have acquired the status of de facto nuclear weapon powers.

These and other important regional developments have brought about extensive changes in American perceptions. The economic opportunities in China and India, for instance, have attracted extraordinary US commercial interests. As the global economic centre of gravity shifts away from Europe and Americas and towards Asia and the Pacific, China and India draw more and more US attention and engagement. China becomes annually richer by billions of dollars by selling its products in the American market. India-based multinational companies have begun to invest in the US as much as American investors have done in recent years in India.

Nonetheless, enormous economic exchanges have not generated an affirmative and constructive spectacle of China in the United States. On the contrary, China's possession of massive amounts of US treasury bonds has raised new concerns, even as the computing of numbers has made China the largest banker of the United States. Increased Chinese leverage over EU member countries has further multiplied US apprehension over its effects on transatlantic ties.

India's impressive economic performance, coupled with its stable polity and military prowess, on the other hand, has contributed to an optimistic image of the country among American policymakers. The US decision to establish a strategic partnership with India has been influenced by India's rising international weight and strength and partly by new US disquiet over an assertive China.

But for the terrorist strikes against New York and Washington in September 2011, Pakistan would still be mired in huge problems amid international isolation. The US-led sanctions following the Chagai series of nuclear tests had bitten the country's economy to the extent of threatening its solvency. Pakistan would have faced further sanctions from the US and its allies for its role in the nuclear black market that was discovered in 2004. Whether China would have lent substantive support to such a Pakistan is doubtful, though debatable.

9/11 brought a short-term boon from the heavens for Pakistan. Though the US bulldozed Pakistan to yet again become the frontline ally against al Qaeda terrorism and Taliban regime in Afghanistan, it blessed Pakistan with billions of dollars of assistance. No doubt, some Pakistani leaders argue that their renewed alliance with the US was the by-product of US pressure, but Pakistan opted to receive massive military and economic assistance; the unhappy alternative was to face continued political isolation and economic downturn. It willingly compromised its traditional policy of backing the Taliban regime and also chose to keep the clandestine linkages with the Taliban leadership by allowing them shelter in Pakistani territory. Pakistan's half-hearted support to the US-led war against international terrorism, its double game of joining the US-led war and maintaining covert connections with the Taliban and select terrorist networks, have contributed to the recent fissures in the alliance.

Following is the digest of the current American perception of Pakistan, India and China.

### ***Pakistan***

- Pakistan is a military-dominated polity where even during brief experiences of democratic rule, the Army has continued to influence decision-making.
- It is the only Islamic country with nuclear weapons and missiles, where the safety of the nuclear arsenal is in question. The spread of Islamist extremism within the country and the recently discovered Khan network's role in advancing horizontal proliferation through a nuclear black market endanger US national security interests and defy US non-proliferation policy.
- It is the hotbed of international terrorism and Islamist extremism and is directly responsible for regional instability.
- It is a strategically located country that needs to be engaged to contain and combat the combination of terrorism and nuclear proliferation.

### ***India***

- India, in contrast, is a successful and exemplary democracy in the developing world.
- It is an economic powerhouse and the second fastest growing economy

in the world.

- It is a responsible *de facto* nuclear weapon power with a good track record of non-proliferation.
- Non-aligned India has been moving in a positive and welcoming direction to be a weighty “strategic partner” of the United States.
- At the same time, India aspires to be an autonomous centre of power in the global power structure and is averse to an alliance relationship with any single country, including the United States.
- India’s international role and influence has come out of its narrow confine in South Asia, spread to the whole of the Asian continent and is fast expanding to other parts of the world.
- Nonetheless, India does not pose a danger to US national security interests and merits American support to materialize as a truly global power.

### *China*

- China is seen by many American policymakers as the newest significant player in international economics and politics.
- It is not yet regarded as a rival to US power and influence in the globe, but is feared as an embryonic adversary and fast emerging competitor for global influence.
- China is treated as a significant partner that can play a vital role in maintenance of the international trade and investment regimes, yet is dreaded as the one that may seek to undermine US interests and even international interests to protect its domestic constituency and national interests.
- More significantly, there are anxieties in Washington’s policymaking circles that the rise of China could dent US hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region, as is clearly indicated by China replacing the US as the leading trade partner of several Asian countries, including Japan, South Korea and India.
- China’s growing economic presence in Latin America and slowly emerging political influence have created concerns in the US. While China contends that its trade and investment ties are linked to its energy requirements, Washington has warily watched China’s closer political

ties with Cuba, Nicaragua, Bolivia and Venezuela and its arms transfer to anti-American regimes in the region.

- There is, moreover, certain amount of disquiet that China has developed leverage over regimes that are unfriendly or outright hostile to US policies. Pakistan, Syria, Iran and North Korea could fit into this category.
- The relative decline of the US political and economic role around the globe and rapid growth of China's economic clout have created apprehensions that a new kind of ideological competition may ensue in the future between the Chinese model of authoritarian capitalism and American style of commercial capitalism. The ongoing crisis in the Euro zone has reinforced this view.

The foregoing summary makes it abundantly clear that Pakistan is seen as an unreliable but indispensable strategic ally in the ongoing war against terrorism and religious extremism. China is viewed as a key economic partner, whose cooperation is essential for tackling domestic economic problems and managing global economic stability, but China's economic success enables it to compete for more space and voice in global decision-making that would almost certainly undercut the favourable international status quo currently enjoyed by the United States. Americans perceive India as a low-cost strategic partner that would decide the level and quality of its support to US national security policies from an *a la carte* menu.

### **US Strategic Games**

The US approach towards Southern Asia's three nuclear weapon powers has been determined by the abovementioned perceptions. A broad synopsis of US relations with these countries is essential before we analyse the impact of the US factor in the triangle. The United States, being a global power, engaged itself in the region on the basis of global political and security considerations. The impact of US policy on China, India and Pakistan was thus intricate, particularly in its bilateral equations with these three countries. During the decades of the 1950s and '60s, India and Pakistan were low-priority countries, although the US roped in Pakistan in its cold war alliance system and, by implication, undermined India's non-alignment.

US policy towards China, on the other hand, has been influenced by the larger international balance-of-power calculus. In the backdrop of an anarchic global order and the ostensible challenge of Soviet-led communist expansionism in the Asia-Pacific, the US reversed its policy towards Japan and established

an alliance relationship with Tokyo. The USSR and China, two World War II allies, swiftly metamorphosed into America's adversaries and America's central enemy, Japan, became an ally!

When a rift occurred in Sino-Soviet relations, American troops in Vietnam got stuck in a quagmire, and Japan emerged as an economic competitor, the Nixon-Kissinger duo devised a new balance-of-power calculation. This culminated in Sino-US détente in late 1960s and early '70s. Indian interests did not figure at all in American strategic computations at this time. Sino-Indian and Indo-Pak hostilities were kept in the background and the Nixon Administration built bridges to Beijing in the wake of shifting global and regional balance of power in the Asia-Pacific. However, India soon figured in US thinking, when New Delhi and Moscow inked a treaty of friendship and cooperation enabling Soviet influence to penetrate into South Asia—a region where only the US influence prevailed since a bilateral alliance with Pakistan was carved out in the 1950s. During the 1970s, as Soviet-India relations solidified, so did Washington's closer security relations with China.

Sino-US détente and Indo-Soviet cooperation overshadowed the events in the region during the 1970s and Pakistan was virtually neglected and allowed to repent over its follies in former East Pakistan. But the moment the Soviet military intervened in Afghanistan in December 1979, Pakistan was back on the chessboard of big-power rivalry and became the linchpin in the new American cold war game. Throughout the 1980s, China and India were secondary players in the matters of peace and conflict in the region.

However, seen from a larger perspective, during this decade Pakistan, the US and China were strategic collaborators and India and the Soviet Union were strategic partners. The triangle of China, India and Pakistan at this time looked like a cold war chessboard, where an intricate pentagonal power game was played.

Afghanistan was the last battleground of the superpower cold-warriors. It was a ten-year-long warfare and by the early 1990s, the global strategic landscape was ready to transform beyond strategic analysis and political imagination. By this time, the economic growth of China had galloped ahead; Japan's economic performance had begun to move in a downward spiral, and by December 1991, the main adversary of the US and China, the Soviet Union, imploded into fifteen different independent republics.

The decade of the 1990s, seen from certain perspectives, rendered the global balance-of-power concept almost redundant. The US being the only surviving superpower had none to balance its capabilities. The American

policymakers naturally sought to craft new national security strategies to deny or delay the emergence of a rival global power.

The global systemic transformation was bound to impact the Southern Asian strategic triangle. The strategic relevance of Pakistan faded away, China's earlier strategic weight waned and, more significantly, the perception of India as a Soviet ally also vanished. Moreover, India's economic liberalization generated new thinking in the US and gave rise to a novel rationale for more intimate Indo-US associations. But economy was not the only determining factor in American rethinking on policy towards India. There was also new strategic thinking. It was signalled by President Bill Clinton's Treasury Secretary Ronald Brown's visit to New Delhi, which was soon followed by Defence Secretary William Perry's trip to India and the conclusion of an "Agreed Minutes of Defence Cooperation". What was unthinkable during four decades of the cold war materialized in a few years after the Soviet disintegration.

Interestingly, Washington's relations with Beijing during the 1990s carried little strategic content. The US-China relationship became largely transactional, focused on the expanding Chinese market. This was in marked contrast to the Clinton Administration's nurturing of a new security relationship with India. Yet another contrasting development was to be witnessed in Washington's Pakistan policy. It featured US non-proliferation-related sanctions, making the earlier strategic alliance obsolete.

Another startling development was the entry of India and Pakistan into the informal nuclear club of the world and Washington's unforeseen response. US sanctions against India and Pakistan were expected, but just in a couple of years, President Clinton was ready to more deeply engage India and push Pakistan towards further strategic seclusion. President Clinton visited India in March 2000 and laid the foundation of a new partnership with nuclear India that would eventually assume strategic significance.

In sum, the first post-cold war American presidency laid the foundation of a deeper economic engagement with China, kept Pakistan internationally isolated, and crafted a new structure to nurture a strategic partnership with India. The structure turned out to be durable as Clinton's successors embraced it and moved it further ahead.

At one stroke, delivered by the 9/11 incident, US engagement with China, India and Pakistan began to transform yet again. Pakistan returned as a frontline US ally in the war against terrorism. The upward moving graph of US-India relations touched new heights, with President George Bush and Prime Minister

Manmohan Singh signing a civilian nuclear cooperation agreement; and defence sales, high-level official contacts and joint military exercises became a routine affair. Bush's National Security Strategy underlined the need to assist India in playing a major role in global affairs. During the eight years of the Bush Presidency, the US efforts signified a positive rapport with Pakistan, now designated as major non-NATO ally, and India became the new-found strategic partner of the United States. President Bush carried on closer economic engagement of China, but candidly portrayed China as a strategic competitor. Notwithstanding the nuanced American debate painting China as a potential threat, a new challenger or an emerging rival, some in the US as well as India underscored the importance of US-India strategic partnership in the light of the uncertain rise of China.

The image of China as a challenger to the US did not change substantially after Barack Obama assumed the office of the President. The deepening US-China economic differences over currency and trade issues, political differences over human rights and Tibetan issues, divergences over sovereignty issues in the South China Sea, arms transfer to Taiwan and several other policy variances signal that the notion of "China threat" would not disappear from the American discourse. Ever since Obama entered the Oval Office, relations with Pakistan began to sour, even as the Af-Pak strategy extended the US anti-terror war zone to Pakistan's border regions. The widening US-Pakistan differences over issues related to drone attacks, suspension of US assistance, US Navy Seals operation killing Osama bin Laden, Raymond Davis's arrest and David Headly's trial, and last but not least, the ISI connection with the Haqqani terrorist network, will continue to bedevil US-Pakistan ties and undermine trust between the alliance partners.

Obama's India policy is in stark contrast to his approach towards China and Pakistan. Obama walked several steps ahead of Bush to uplift relations with India and promised Washington's support to other Indian aspirations, such as permanent membership in the UN Security Council and international non-proliferation regimes. These are mere promises, but the significance of such overt political postures should not be underestimated. It is true that the implementation of the 123 Agreement still remains a distant dream; it is also factually correct that India's position on the issues of Palestine, Iran, environment and several others makes Indo-US relations far from being rosy. But in comparative terms, the US-Pakistan trust deficit and budding US-China strategic rivalry are markedly distinct in character from US-India political differences.

### **Concluding Observations**

China, Pakistan and India all have sought closer ties with the United States. The US provides one of the largest markets for Chinese, Indian and Pakistani exports. The US is also one of the largest sources of foreign investment for all the three countries. Ethnic communities from all these countries have a large presence in the American society, constituting a bridge in the relationship. Thousands of students also go to the US for higher studies, return to their respective countries and become part of the constituency that has some bearing on the relationship with the US. Thousands of Americans live in India and China as part of the diplomatic communities and businessmen and investors and several thousand Americans regularly visit these countries as tourists.

Pakistan, on the other hand, has looked upon the US as a powerful external ally with the expectation that it would extend support to its national security policies and initiatives in exchange for Pakistan's commitment to US policies. Despite the US refusal to back Pakistan's India policy, Islamabad has desisted from closing the alliance with the US, benefiting from massive US assistance. Pakistan has traditionally adopted a policy of strategic alliance with the US and all-weather friendship with China as a means of seeking parity with India. While Pakistan's aspiration has remained a pipedream, it has brought military dividends, encouraging Islamabad to move in undesirable directions. Otherwise, Pakistan offers little to the US in terms of economic benefits. It has only successfully used its strategic location to reap military and economic rewards from the US.

Ironically, India's relation with the US during the cold war was one between two "estranged democracies".<sup>7</sup> There was economic and cultural cooperation between the two, but acute differences over political and security issues created enormous roadblocks for Delhi and Washington to optimize their relations. Political-security differences and India's socialism-inspired economic policies set limits to economic cooperation and technology transfers between the two countries.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and India's concurrent economic liberalization removed the main hurdles in Indo-US cooperation. As a bipartisan consensus emerged in the US favouring better relations with India, the two most powerful political parties in India, the BJP and the Congress, did not shy away from launching a new kind of strategic partnership with the US. It has included arms purchase, technology transfer, military exercises and even development of joint military doctrine. With the solitary exception of the Left political parties in India, there was broad consensus in the rest of the spectrum

of Indian political opinion to forge closer security ties with the US. Closer interactions with the US indubitably allowed India to sit around the big table to discuss major global issues. India did not have this status earlier; China was already at the global high table and Pakistan does not qualify yet. But the expansion of the Indian economy and enhancement in military capability have enabled and inspired India to seek an autonomous status in global decision-making process. India shuns the idea of an alliance relationship with any single centre of power, even if it is the United States. At the same time, India understands that cooperation with the US is a force multiplier. The mistrust and misunderstandings with the US had to be buried or resolved to facilitate India's role in world affairs. The Indo-US strategic partnership undoubtedly has limitations, but it springs from an intense Indian desire to maintain its freedom of foreign policy decision-making.

Unlike Pakistan and India, China has experienced both inimical and friendly relationship with the US. The Chinese military fought against the US military during the Korea War and assisted the North Vietnamese military against the US during the Vietnam War. But Chinese strategic thinkers, including Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai, thought it wise to establish security ties with capitalist America after their relationship with the fellow communist regime in Moscow turned sour and hostile. Deng Xiaoping walked extra miles to modify the socialistic economy of China to accommodate selected capitalist modes of production and distribution. Deng Xiaoping also considered it prudent to confide in US President Jimmy Carter his intention to invade a fellow communist country, Vietnam, in 1979.

When the Soviets were bogged down in Afghanistan in the 1980s, China focused on its own economic growth by expanding trade and investment ties with the United States and almost all of its capitalist allies in Europe and Asia. Beijing carefully nurtured its relations with the US to bolster its economy and subsequently technological and military capabilities. It is noteworthy that by the time the Soviet system collapsed, China had become strong and stable enough to aspire for an equation with the US that was once enjoyed by the Soviet Union. A new term - G-2 - entered the dictionary of international politics. While some traditional differences between Washington and Beijing did not disappear, China had succeeded in weakening the US position over all these issues and in making the US a stakeholder in China's economic growth story.

Among the three countries in the triangle, it is China that has come out relatively more successful in using its America policy to bolster its status in the global hierarchy of power. But the future is likely to be favourable to India. The US will view India as a partner and China will most likely be a competitor

and at worst a rival. Chinese analysts appear concerned that the Indo-US strategic partnership is aimed against China. There is also a view that by establishing closer ties with India, the US has been able to weaken the Russia-China-India strategic triangle<sup>8</sup>. Nonetheless, India is unlikely to take sides in any future Sino-US conflict. Nor is India going to accept the G-2 concept where India's emerging global role would be overshadowed. India will most likely remain non-aligned in any future Sino-US cold war, but will work against the emergence of a G-2 world<sup>9</sup>.

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Enormous literature is available on this theme. Research on this issue continued even after the collapse of the Soviet Union. See, for instance, Feng Shaolei. 2010. 'China-US-Russia Trilateral Relations under the Context of International Configuration in Transition', Report of the Director of the Centre for Russian Studies, East China Normal University, November, [Online: web] URL: [http://vid-1.rian.ru/ig/valdai/Ch-US-Ru\\_Trilateral.pdf](http://vid-1.rian.ru/ig/valdai/Ch-US-Ru_Trilateral.pdf). Also see Bobo Lo. 2010. 'Russia, China and the United States: From Strategic Triangularism to the Post-Modern Triangle', Proliferation Papers, Winter, [Online: web] URL: [www.ifri.org/downloads/pp32bobolo\\_1.pdf](http://www.ifri.org/downloads/pp32bobolo_1.pdf)
- <sup>2</sup> Many research papers and scholarly articles have been written on ANZUS. To understand the deeper goals of ANZUS and its relevance in the post-cold war era, see Siracusa, Joseph M. 2005. 'The ANZUS Treaty Revisited', *Security Challenges*, vol. 1, no. 1. Also see Rudd, Kevin. 2001. 'ANZUS and the 21st century', *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, vol. 55, no. 2.
- <sup>3</sup> For an analysis of the theoretical and empirical aspects of the Russia-China-India triangle, see Pant, Harsh. 2006. 'Feasibility of Russia-China-India "Strategic" Triangle: Assessment of theoretical and empirical Issues', *International Studies*, vol. 43, no. 51. [Online: web] URL: <http://isq.sagepub.com/content/43/1/51>
- <sup>4</sup> Many scholars have written on the India-Pakistan-USA triangle. A recent writing can be found in Singh, Jaswant. 2010. 'The India-Pakistan-U.S. Triangle', CASI Working Paper Series, no. 10, 3 June. CASI stands for Center for Advanced Study on India of the University of Pennsylvania.
- <sup>5</sup> See, for instance, Raja Mohan, C. 2011. 'India, China and the United States: Asia's Emerging Strategic Triangle', *Strategic Snapshot*, no. 8, Lowly Institute for International Policy, MacArthur Foundation, February. Also see Garver, John W. 2002. 'The China-India-U.S. Triangle: Strategic Relations in the Post-Cold War Era', *NBR Analysis*, vol. 13, no. 5, October. NBR stands for the National Bureau of Asian Research.
- <sup>6</sup> Significantly, in March 2011, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace organized a nuclear policy conference that focused on two "triads": India-Pakistan-China and China-US-Russia. [Online: web] URL: [http://carnegieendowment.org/files/Two\\_Triads-India-Pakistan-China\\_and\\_China-US-Russia.pdf](http://carnegieendowment.org/files/Two_Triads-India-Pakistan-China_and_China-US-Russia.pdf)

- <sup>7</sup> US diplomat Dennis Kux has rightly used a widely accepted phrase to describe India and the United States as “estranged democracies”. This term figures in the title of his monumental diplomatic history book: *India and the United States: Estranged Democracies, 1941–1991* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1992).
- <sup>8</sup> Zhang Guihong. 2003. 'U.S. Security Policy Toward South Asia After September 11th and its Implications for China: A Chinese Perspective', paper published by the Stimson Center, Washington, D.C., January.
- <sup>9</sup> A somewhat complex cold war between the US and China is currently afoot. For details, see Mahapatra, Chintamani. 2011. 'Complex Cold Warriors: US-China Relations and Implications for India', *Journal of Defence Studies*, vol. 5, no. 3, July.

