

The U.S. “Pivot” to Asia: Impact on Indian Foreign and Security Policies

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IN JANUARY 2012, the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) released a new strategic plan titled, “Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense,”¹ putting forward key American security goals for the coming decade. While U.S. military forces will continue to be involved in security missions around the world, the Pentagon document was notable for the assertion that the U.S. “*will of necessity rebalance toward the Asia-Pacific region*” (italics in original) (p.2). This doctrine has been widely described as a U.S. “pivot” toward Asia and within China views about the American move have ranged from seeing a fresh U.S. attempt at a containment strategy to calling for calm while continuing to pursue its national interest.²

The domestic American context of the rebalancing is just as significant—the rebalancing is prompted as much by economic motives as it is by military ones—and this is something that even Chinese commentators have noted.³ The desire to “protect” the U.S.’s “economic vitality” (p.1) and the reference to not just the “changing geopolitical environment” but also to “changing fiscal circumstances” (p.1) in the U.S., underline economic motives as

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a major underpinning for the “new strategic guidance” (opening note, U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta). The stress on differentiating between “investments that should be made today and those that can be deferred,” and on reducing the costs of manpower, overhead, and healthcare among other things (p.7) underline the seriousness with which American defence planners view their country’s economic situation. Indeed, the document puts it quite strongly when it says, “[t]he balance between available resources and our security needs has never been more delicate” (p.8).

Further, with the Asia-Pacific region expected to continue as the engine of the world’s growth, it also provides the means for the U.S. to climb out of its present economic difficulties and hence, it makes eminent sense for the U.S. to remain engaged in the security realm in the region. Thus, as U.S. President Barack Obama’s speech to the Australian parliament in November 2011 and the stationing of U.S. troops in Darwin, made clear, budget reductions would not come at the expense of the American presence in the Asia-Pacific region. If anything, this presence would actually be strengthened.⁴ Despite mandated reductions in federal spending, including defense spending, it was as Obama put it, his administration’s intent to do so “responsibly.”⁵

CHINA AND THE U.S. REBALANCING TOWARDS ASIA

NO EXAMINATION of the impact of the American strategic guidance document on India’s foreign and security policies can be complete without also understanding how New Delhi perceives China’s place in the document and without examining some major American policy pronouncements made previously and taken much note of in Indian strategic circles.

Is China the major factor of the U.S. rebalancing towards Asia? One Indian defence analyst has gone so far as to say “China has emerged more pointedly and intensely in United States strategic cross-hairs.”⁶ This might be a bit of an exaggeration for there does not appear to be a time in the recent past that China was not a significant focus of the U.S. security establishment, no matter how preoccupied it was with the wars in Iraq or Afghanistan.

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Indeed, a “pivot” by definition is a move of considerable speed and such moves at least in major security establishments around the world are not executed overnight. Rather than a “pivot” therefore, “rebalancing” would be the more accurate expression and it is a move that has been in the works for some time. Even as the Obama administration has sought to engage China and came to office with a far less animosity in

its views of China than the previous George W. Bush administration, it has nevertheless, sold arms to Taiwan, conducted naval drills with its allies and partners close to Chinese waters, and declared freedom and security of navigation and respect for international law in the South China Sea, an American “national interest.”

It was Secretary of State Hillary Clinton that made the last statement at an ASEAN meet in Hanoi in July 2010.⁷ A few months later, in a speech in Hawaii in October 2010, she went on to confirm that the U.S. aim was “to sustain and strengthen America’s leadership in the Asia-Pacific region and to improve security, heighten prosperity, and promote [its] values.”⁸ By definition, “to sustain and strengthen” implies that the U.S. is already present in the region. However, to highlight the element of “sustain”-ing—indeed, the title of the January 2012 DoD document itself starts with “Sustaining”—also suggests that the U.S. has been facing difficulties in continuing its presence or in key areas of operations in the region. Multiple reasons such as the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the global economic crisis of 2008 come to mind. In this sense, a “return” to Asia could conceivably be justified in as much as it suggested fresh attention to challenges to the U.S. role in the region and acknowledgment that Washington needed to do something about it. In the American view, the only obvious course of action is one of “strengthen”-ing its leadership.

Clinton also noted that the Obama Administration had from the start “been intent on strengthening our leadership, increasing

our engagement, and putting into practice new ways of projecting our ideas and influence throughout this changing region.”⁹ Later, she would write an article in *Foreign Policy* unambiguously titled, “America’s Pacific Century.”¹⁰ Surely, there were enough pointers to the coming rebalancing of American priorities towards the Asia-Pacific.

Let us examine the DoD document itself. The Defence Secretary highlighted six missions “most important” to protecting American national interests: “defeating al-Qaeda and its affiliates and succeeding in current conflicts; deterring and defeating aggression by adversaries, including those seeking to deny our power projection; countering weapons of mass destruction; effectively operating in cyberspace, space and across all domains; maintaining a safe and effective nuclear deterrent; and protecting the homeland” (opening note, U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta). One could argue that, except for the first and the last of these missions, the U.S. can read an active challenge of varying degrees on each of the other—China is seen as capable of getting North Korea to behave more responsibly and to give up its nuclear brinkmanship¹¹; Chinese attacks on U.S. installations are frequently highlighted in the American media and indeed receive much attention in the new document itself; and the U.S. nuclear deterrent is surely no longer only primarily aimed at the successor of the Soviet Union but certainly takes into account a growing Chinese military capability.¹²

It is openly stated in the new document that “China’s emergence as a regional power will have the potential to affect the U.S. economy and our security in a variety of ways” (p.3). It also declares that “the growth of China’s military power must be accompanied by greater clarity of its strategic intentions in order to avoid causing friction in the region” (p.2). There are several suggestions implicit in this statement, which are in the same vein as Secretary Clinton’s Hanoi statement—that it was China that was creating tensions in the region, that it must be prevented from doing so and that the U.S. had every interest in preventing China from doing so.

One of the potential causes of friction as well as one of the “ways” that the U.S. will use are both hinted at on the same page when it says *[t]he United States will continue to lead global efforts with capable*

allies and partners to assure access to and use of the global commons, both by strengthening international norms of responsible behavior and by maintaining relevant and interoperable military capabilities (italics in the original) (p.3). Later, China is clubbed with Iran, a considerably smaller military power, to make the point that U.S. adversaries will pursue asymmetric strategies to counter U.S. power projection (p. 4). Capabilities to counter anti-access and area denial are a major American concern as is evident from the document.

Given its economic travails it is perhaps not surprising that the DoD document argues that American deterrence goals might be achieved with “*a smaller nuclear force*” (p.4). Any sustained reduction in the number of American nuclear weapons is also likely to raise questions and concerns about the size of China’s own nuclear arsenal¹³ and perhaps bring also India, Pakistan and North Korea under focused attention in any global disarmament effort.

Meanwhile, at least one Chinese scholar has suggested that the U.S. strategy is less about containment than it is “rebalancing” itself and really an expression of American smart power or smart diplomacy.¹⁴ Indeed, Obama himself refers to looking to the new strategy document for providing “a smart, strategic set of priorities.”¹⁵ Another Chinese writer put it that, despite its declared intention of “not show[ing] weakness and stand by to watch (sic) China expanding its power in Asia..., the United States is neither able to conquer China by force of arms nor able to contain and blockade China by economic measures.”¹⁶

Given its challenging economic circumstances and the difficult legacy of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and still continuing challenges from the same wider region in the form of Iran and Pakistan, it also seems unlikely that the U.S. will go out of its way to pick a fight with China. It is also important to remember that Chinese Vice-President Xi Jinping was slated for a visit to the U.S. in the month following the release of the new strategic guidance document and it is unlikely that Washington would deliberately try to offend their high-profile visitor by means of the document.¹⁷

Nevertheless, for most Chinese scholars and for the general public in the country, the American pivot to Asia easily fits into fears and suspicions of American ill-intent towards China. In fact,

the references in the DoD document to improving cooperation with American allies and partners—“to pool, share, and specialize capabilities as needed to meet 21st century challenges” or “Smart Defense” (p.3)—actually suggest that American stress on alliance- and partnership-building and -strengthening will only increase. And since most of these American allies and partners are in China’s neighbourhood, it is not surprising that Beijing should worry.

INDIA AND THE U.S. REBALANCING TOWARDS ASIA

IN THE STATE of complex interdependence that exists between China and the U.S., New Delhi cannot afford to see the American strategy document as only a China-centric document. This would risk it missing out on key security implications—both positive and negative—for India. The Indian foreign policy establishment must consider well both American weaknesses and promises on the one hand and Chinese fears and the potential of Sino-Indian concerns on the other. In other words, India will interpret the U.S. rebalancing towards Asia from the prism of its own national interests.

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For a variety of reasons, India is one of the potential major partners that the U.S. requires in order to successfully implement the proposals in the strategic guidance document. The DoD document talked about “the arc extending from the Western Pacific and East Asia into the Indian Ocean region and South Asia” and specifically highlighted the fact that “[t]he United States is also investing in a long-term strategic partnership with India to support its ability to serve as a regional economic anchor and provider of security in the broader Indian Ocean region” (p.2).

However, there are several areas of differences, even potential friction between the U.S. and India that cannot be glossed over.

Terrorism

THE DoD document identified the “primary loci” of terrorist threats as South Asia and the Middle East. However, by being in a hurry to quit Afghanistan and having clearly announced 2014 as an exit date, the Americans have increased Indian concerns about stability in its neighbourhood. The American drawdown has not been designed to take into Indian interests and nor can it be said that Indian interests or views on the AfPak situation were brought on board by the Americans in any significant manner through the duration of their stay so far in Afghanistan. Afghanistan remains beset by conflict and a weak central government and a return of the Taliban with support from Pakistan’s intelligence and military services cannot be ruled out. The consequences for India are not likely to be good, unless New Delhi itself can adopt the American framework of “good Taliban” and “bad Taliban” and open a channel or channels of communication with the major sections or factions, as the case may be, of the Taliban. Still, it should be obvious to all concerned that New Delhi will be in a very difficult situation post the American drawdown with both its economic investments in Afghanistan and its political investment in the Hamid Karzai government at stake.

Further, the U.S. strategy paper goes on to say that “[f]or the foreseeable future, *the United States will continue to take an active approach to countering these threats* by monitoring the activities of non-state threats worldwide, working with allies and partners to establish control over ungoverned territories, and directly striking the most dangerous groups and individuals when necessary” (italics in original) (p.1). The question for New Delhi especially is of American sensitivity to Indian interests.

Will the American exit from Afghanistan lead to a possible reduction of dependence on Pakistan and will it mean that the U.S. will find more avenues of cooperation with India, specifically? While the U.S. has become increasingly critical of Pakistan in the recent past, this has been largely in response to solid evidence of Pakistani complicity in sabotaging American and ISAF operations in Afghanistan. Where Pakistani provocations against India were concerned, the situation has been by and large been one of pressuring India to keep the peace and all through, the Americans

have continued to support the Pakistani government and military through economic and military aid.¹⁸ Further, talking about “striking” against its opponents, will the U.S. countenance any similar moves by India when the latter’s interests are at stake?

Military Cooperation

THE U.S. strategy review also notes that, “[a] reduction in resources will require innovative and creative solutions to maintain our support for allied and partner interoperability and building partner capacity” (pp.4-5). This suggests an emphasis on concluding agreements on inter-operability with potential partners and on sales of American military equipment. In this context, it is worth recalling that in 2010, India refused to sign the Logistics Support Agreement (LSA)—allowing the use of each other’s bases—and the Communications, Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA) with the U.S.. The Indian Ministry of Defence and the Indian navy and air force chiefs were adamant that there was little to be gained by such agreements with the Americans and that they might even offend more important defence partners such as the Russians.¹⁹

Since the Next Steps in Strategic Partnership (NSSP) initiated between India and the U.S. in 2004, defence cooperation has been a major part of the agenda of Indo-U.S. relations with American defence manufacturers competing and lobbying for a slice of one of the fastest growing defence markets in the world.²⁰ While there were some major acquisitions through the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) process, by and large, India’s Cold War-era suspicions of the U.S. run deep in sections of the military, civilian bureaucracy and political establishments, recalling the decades of American sanctions and unfriendliness. India has therefore, so far refused to invest either economically or politically in major defence agreements with the Americans. The refusal by India to even include an American aircraft in the final shortlist for its Multi-role Medium-Range Combat Aircraft (MMRCA) in 2011 is the latest instance of a major letdown for the U.S. in terms of its defence industry expectations from India.²¹

The DoD document’s emphasis on humanitarian and disaster relief operations (p.5), however, is potentially a more

likely and successful area of cooperation between the U.S. and Indian militaries, even if the “other operations” referred to here, among which is responding to “mass atrocities” (p.5) might be a trickier issue to deal with. Cooperation in this last aspect looks inconceivable at least in the short run. Where such incidents might occur in India’s immediate neighbourhood, the U.S. might, where it has no direct stakes, defer to either Indian interests or to India’s own response capabilities.

China

NEITHER THE U.S. nor China should make the mistake of assuming that there is a natural Indo-U.S. coordination possible with respect to China. Indeed, the U.S. and India have some very different reasons to be worried about China. For India, these concerns about China are for the moment primarily tied to the boundary dispute, the growing trade deficit and the rise of Chinese economic and political influence in South Asia. Nevertheless, the understanding at least in informed circles in India is that the likelihood of any outbreak of conflict with China is extremely low.²² For the U.S., the DoD document paints a very different set of priorities vis-à-vis China. For Washington, the threat of Chinese military action especially against U.S. military assets or Chinese anti-access and area denial operations that restrict American freedom of operation in the Asia-Pacific region appear to be the more important concerns.

Washington has historically paid little attention to the Sino-Pakistani nuclear weapons and missiles ties which together with Pakistan-sponsored terrorism has contributed the most to the deterioration of India’s security environment. And it continues to pay far too little attention to the Chinese role in propping up the Pakistani military—the most important component still of the Pakistani state—with aid and weapons sales. The strong Pakistani military continues to both undermine civilian authority and hence any prospects for democracy in Pakistan as well as continues to foster anti-India activity. Indeed, the U.S. itself is complicit in such a role as stated above and as long as these trends continue, New Delhi will be unwilling to completely trust the U.S. and to side with it against China.

After all is said and done, China is a near neighbour for India while the U.S. can only be a distant partner. No matter, the reference to expanding American “networks of cooperation with emerging partners throughout the Asia-Pacific to ensure collective capability and capacity for securing common interests” (p.2), India is well aware that it has to move far more carefully vis-à-vis its bilateral relationship with China than the U.S. has to.

India also remains suspicious of both American and Chinese intentions when it comes to issues where the two sides might have common interests. New Delhi, is for example, unlikely to forget in a hurry the brief talk of a “G-2” early in the Obama administration that appeared to suggest that the problems of Asia and the world could be jointly managed by the U.S. and China.²³ Indeed, a foreign policy strategy document released early in March 2012, by some Indian intellectuals and strategists titled, “Non-Alignment 2.0” hinted that suspicions of the U.S. role remained high even as it highlighted methods to deal with a Chinese military provocation.²⁴

Meanwhile, on the positive side of the balance for Indo-U.S. relations, the implicit suggestion that India is one of the “emerging partners” for the U.S. is a useful forward movement from India’s point of view. This is because it reiterates the view that India is a crucial component of the Asia-Pacific region and by extension of East Asia from the American point of view.²⁵ India has been particularly unhappy with the Chinese reluctance to allow the expansion of the ASEAN+3 to give way to the East Asian Summit (EAS) process and American initiative and support would be welcome to New Delhi.²⁶ The Chinese position is a particular sore spot for India since a JACIK (Japan, ASEAN, China, India and Korea) grouping has been shown to a far more trade-creating and mutually beneficial grouping than just the ASEAN+3.²⁷

In her Hawaii speech, in fact, the U.S. Secretary of State Clinton had declared the “two core principles that the Obama Administration will take in its approach to the EAS—first, ASEAN’s central role, and second, our desire to see EAS emerge as a forum for substantive engagement on pressing strategic and political issues, including nuclear nonproliferation, maritime

security, and climate change.” These are areas where India can agree wholeheartedly with the U.S..

The American position on respecting international law on the high seas represented both in the strategic guidance document and Secretary Clinton’s statement in Hanoi in 2010 is also something that has strong support from New Delhi. This identity of interests was evident during the *INS Airavat* incident in 2011. The *Airavat*, an Indian Navy vessel returning from a port call in Vietnam, was reportedly accosted by a Chinese vessel over radio asking it to leave ‘Chinese waters.’²⁸ The incident drew much attention in the Indian media—perhaps unnecessarily so, for such incidents of rival navies tailing each other or making such claims are fairly common on the high seas. Nevertheless, it was also an opportunity for New Delhi to say its own piece about supporting the freedom of navigation “in international waters, including in the South China Sea,” and calling for international law to be respected by all parties.²⁹

Ambitions of its Own

INDIA NEEDS THE U.S. to be a pivotal player in Asia but not necessarily its “pivot.” That role by rights belongs to China and India by virtue of their having the largest populations and economies in the continent by a considerable distance over other Asian nations or even other regional groupings. In other words, India has ambitions of its own in Asia with or without any U.S. rebalancing towards the region. There are two kinds of possibilities here.

One, informed by a history of past American unreliability, New Delhi will play hardball with the U.S. in matters that are important to U.S. economic and security interests—such as the awarding of defence contracts, for example. It will also not necessarily believe that reliance on the U.S. is good for India’s China policy but rather seek to develop its defence policies tailored to its own requirements vis-à-vis China and to develop an independent dynamic in its engagement with the Chinese security and foreign policy establishments. One prominent Indian analyst speaking following the announcement of the new U.S. strategic review called for an Indian balance-of-power arrangement against China in which he suggested that India “be the pivot, and the U.S. do its bit as the offshore balancer.”³⁰

A sustainable Indo-U.S. partnership is unlikely without unambiguous American acceptance of key Indian goals such as a permanent seat on the UN Security Council and without a more open and liberal policy of technology transfer to India. In other words, the success of the U.S.'s rebalancing efforts in Asia incorporating India will depend on whether Washington can inject elements of greater equality in the bilateral relationship and sensitivity to Indian security concerns. While India's patchy record on joint naval exercises with the U.S. is likely to improve, these are likely to be within limits and unlikely to take an overtly anti-China posture even when these exercises might be held in the East China or South China Seas. If anything, a greater Indian (and Japanese) naval engagement with the U.S. might be necessary to temper any American ambitions to "contain" China.

In a second scenario, India could see itself as not just an emerging economic power but also as an emerging ideational power capable of spreading and promoting democratic ideas and international norms like the U.S. has. In its reference to the "Arab Spring," the DoD document hopes that it "may result in governments that, over the long term, are more responsive to the legitimate aspirations of their people, and are more stable and reliable partners of the United States." Clearly, promoting democracy and partnership with governments that share similar values with it are important goals of American foreign policy. In his speech to the Australian Parliament, Obama had pointed out that "certain rights are universal... These are not American rights, or Australian rights, or Western rights. These are human rights."³¹ As a democracy, India too shares in this sentiment and there is hope and expectation on both sides that India and the U.S. might use their common political values as the basis of a long-term, sustainable and mutually beneficial future relationship.

However, it is still far from certain if India will ever be comfortable with the American brand of ideological posturing and of interventionist international politics. As a series of votes in recent times at the United Nations—on Libya, Syria and Sri Lanka—has shown, New Delhi has reservations about the U.S.'s wish to "remain the greatest force for freedom and security that the world has ever known" (opening note, U.S. President Barack Obama)

or about how it goes about remaining that way. There might even be differences between the U.S. and India on the definitions of “freedom” and “security.” It also remains to be seen if the U.S. itself can remember its own rhetoric long enough to be sensitive to Indian interests so that a fruitful bilateral relationship based precisely on such shared values can be developed instead of privileging its own national interest considerations at all times.

Therefore, given its history as a victim of both colonialism and Cold War era politics, India is unlikely to follow the methods that the U.S. has used. Rather, it could well seek to distinguish itself from the U.S. in its approaches which are likely to be far more sensitive to developing country concerns of respect for national sovereignty and the need for economic development to be prioritized simultaneously with political freedoms.³² Thus, as important as the Indo-U.S. partnership is to New Delhi, India also takes seriously its participation in such international forums and groupings that do not involve the U.S. such as the Russia-India-China trilateral or the BRICS summit and for which a major rationale is the opposition to hegemonic domination by any one power.³³

CONCLUSION

QUOTING FORMER U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower, who said “each proposal must be weighed in the light of a broader consideration: the need to maintain balance in and among national programs,” Obama noted that “[a]fter a decade of war, and as we rebuild the source of our strength—at home and abroad—it’s time to restore that balance.”³⁴ That indeed is the critical issue for the U.S.. While pursuing balance at home, however, the U.S. will also seek to preserve its global interests and has identified the Asia-Pacific region as the one most crucial to its foreign policy and security interests. It has also begun to believe that its interests are best achieved in cooperation and partnership with the countries of the region. Such a view does not necessarily exclude China and nor need it be seen as one that inevitably targets China—the U.S. has far too much at stake in economic terms to pursue a confrontational strategy with China.

China can also be reassured by the fact that, if the U.S. relies on allies and partners in the region, then those countries—India among them—usually have at least as important a relationship with China as they do with the U.S. and are even less likely to want a quarrel with Beijing. What is more, large and emerging powers like India, in addition to maintaining simultaneously good relations with the U.S. and China, also seek to leave their own stamp on Asian and global affairs and expect Beijing and Washington to be helpful and respectful of such ambitions.

In all instances, therefore, it is only the U.S. and China that have the power and influence to complicate matters by being insensitive to the interests of their allies/partners/neighbours. And yet, neither has the power to then conclude matters decisively in their favor. The U.S. rebalancing towards Asia is an acknowledgement especially of this latter reality. Despite a tone of assertiveness and especially perhaps where China is concerned, the new U.S. strategic guidance document is in essence, a holding operation to preserve U.S. interests as they are rather than actively expanding them.

It has often been remarked that China wishes to avoid the fate of the Soviet Union. But, between the physical breakup of the Soviet Union on the one hand and the fall of its communist regime on the other, lies also the reality that a global superpower suddenly ceased to exist. For the U.S., that is the lesson—the U.S. might not break up physically and nor might its capitalism collapse but it certainly can cease to exist as a *superpower* or as the *only* superpower with China's rise and also perhaps, the rise of other powers in the future.

The unipolar moment of the U.S. is thus surely passing and a multipolar and more equitable global order will be possible with time. However, this demands that China guard against overreach even as its global power and influence grow. If it does not do so, then the U.S. rebalancing allows it to be in a stronger position to react and also affords American allies and partners the opportunity to hedge

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against China. Given that its neighbours perceive China as having becoming increasingly assertive over the last few years, it might well be necessary for Beijing too, to achieve a “rebalancing” of its own in its relationships in Asia.

In the whole issue of the American rebalancing towards Asia, the perspectives of countries besides China also need to be understood. These countries have their own balancing act to follow; and India, much more so than most other countries, given that it is a strategic partner to both China and the U.S. and has ambitions of superpower status itself. While ensuring the growth of its individual bilateral relationships with China and the U.S., New Delhi will also have to achieve its interests with each country in a manner that does not also complicate the Sino-U.S. relationship. It would appear that the era of “rebalancing” has only just begun.

¹ Department of Defense, United States of America, “Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense,” January 2012, http://www.defense.gov/news/Defense_Strategic_Guidance.pdf. Quotes from this document are referenced in the text of the article itself.

² For a typical example of each kind see respectively, “Pentagon plan changes game in Asia,” *Global Times*, 6 January 2012, <http://www.globaltimes.cn/NEWS/tabid/99/ID/691074/Pentagon-plan-changes-game-in-Asia.aspx>; and Luo Yuan, “China should stay calm, alert about U.S. strategy adjustments,” *PLA Daily*, edited and translated by *People’s Daily Online*, January 12, 2012, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90883/7702723.html>.

³ See for example, Luo Yuan, “China should stay calm, alert about U.S. strategy adjustments,” *PLA Daily*, edited and translated by *People’s Daily Online*, January 12, 2012, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/90883/7702723.html> and Li Wen, “How should China cope with America’s return to Asia?,” *China Youth Daily*, edited and translated by *People’s Daily Online*, 28 February 2012, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/204372/7742466.html>.

⁴ Office of the Press Secretary, the White House, “Remarks by President Obama to the Australian Parliament,” Parliament House, Canberra, Australia, November 17, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/17/remarks-president-obama-australian-parliament>.

⁵ Office of the Press Secretary, the White House, “Remarks by the President on the Defense Strategic Review,” Pentagon, January 5, 2012, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/01/05/remarks-president-defense-strategic-review>.

⁶ Subhash Kapila, "China: Strategic Impact of United States Defence Strategic Review 2012," South Asia Analysis Group, Paper No. 4881, January 27, 2012, <http://www.southasiaanalysis.org/%5Cpapers49%5Cpaper4881.html>.

⁷ U.S. Department of State, "Remarks by Secretary Clinton, Remarks at Press Availability, National Convention Center, Hanoi, Vietnam, July 23, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/07/145095.htm>.

⁸ U.S. Department of State, "America's Engagement in the Asia-Pacific," Remarks at Kahala Hote, Honolulu, Hawaii, October 28, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2010/10/150141.htm>.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Hillary Clinton, "America's Pacific Century," *Foreign Policy*, November 2011, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/11/americas_pacific_century?page=full.

¹¹ See for example, Trefor Moss, "China's Nuclear Influence," *Diplomat*, March 27, 2012, <http://the-diplomat.com/flashpoints-blog/2012/03/27/china%E2%80%99s-nuclear-influence/>.

¹² See Henry Sokolski, "China's Nuclear Weapons and Fissile Materials Holdings: Uncertainties and Concerns," Testimony before the U.S. Economic and Security Review Commission "Developments in China's Cyber and Nuclear Capabilities," March 26, 2012, <http://www.npolicy.org/article.php?aid=1168&rid=2#Appendix1>.

¹³ See for example, Henry Sokolski, "China's Nuclear Weapons and Fissile Materials Holdings: Uncertainties and Concerns," Testimony before the U.S. Economic and Security Review Commission "Developments in China's Cyber and Nuclear Capabilities," March 26, 2012, <http://www.npolicy.org/article.php?aid=1168&rid=2#Appendix1>.

¹⁴ Lin Liyao, "U.S. 'Pivot' in Asia-Pacific signals new, complex era," *Xinhua*, February 26, 2012, http://www.china.org.cn/opinion/2012-02/26/content_24722893.htm.

¹⁵ Office of the Press Secretary, the White House, "Remarks by the President on the Defense Strategic Review," Pentagon, January 5, 2012, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/01/05/remarks-president-defense-strategic-review>.

¹⁶ Li Wen, "How should China cope with America's return to Asia?" *China Youth Daily*, edited and translated by *People's Daily Online*, February 28, 2012, <http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/204372/7742466.html>.

¹⁷ Attention in the Chinese official media itself was soon directed from the DoD document to the upcoming visit of the Chinese vice-president and editorials stuck largely to a moderate tone on Sino-U.S. relations.

¹⁸ "Pakistan got \$18bn aid from U.S. since 2001," *Times of India*, 23 February 2010, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2010-02-23/pakistan/28138643_1_civilian-aid-counterinsurgency-capability-fund-civilian-assistance.

¹⁹ Pranab Dhal Samanta, "MoD, Navy and Air chiefs object to U.S. defence pact," *Indian Express*, 3 November 2010, <http://www.indianexpress.com/news/mod-navy-and-air-chiefs-object-to-us-defence-pact/706242/0>. Of India's approximately US\$13 billion worth of arms purchases during 2007-2011, 80 per cent came from Russia. See Paul Holtom, Mark Bromley, Pieter D. Wezeman and Siemon T. Wezeman, "Trends in International Arms Transfers, 2011," *SIPRI Fact Sheet*, March 2012, http://books.sipri.org/product_info?c_product_id=443.

²⁰ According to figures released by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in mid-March 2012, India is now the world's largest arms importer. Paul Holtom, Mark Bromley, Pieter D. Wezeman and Siemon T. Wezeman, "Trends in International Arms Transfers, 2011," *SIPRI Fact Sheet*, March 2012, http://books.sipri.org/product_info?c_product_id=443.

²¹ KV Prasad, "U.S. 'deeply disappointed' by thumbs down to fighter jets," *Hindu*, 28 April 2011, <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article1818550.ece?homepage=true>.

²² Of course, India has a very hawkish section of its strategic community some of whom have even been predicting a Chinese-initiated conflict with India, but these are really fringe voices and

count for little in the larger strategic community or among the small group of China specialists or indeed in the circles of government most connected with China policymaking in India.

²³ It is to be noted, however, that this position was soon reversed by the Obama administration following in the path of the Bill Clinton and George W Bush administrations before it, each of which began by placing India low in their list of foreign policy priorities before acknowledging it was a very important player in the Asian region. See Daniel Twining, "Not a Chinese Century, An Indo-American One," *Global Asia*, Vol. 6, No. 1, March, 2011, http://www.globalasia.org/V6N1_Spring_2011/Daniel_Twining.html. China too rejected the G-2 but citing its lack of capabilities as a still developing country. "Wen: China disagrees to so-called G2, calling for effort to fight protectionism," *Xinhua*, November 18, 2009, http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-11/18/content_12485458.htm.

²⁴ Sunil Khilnani, Rajiv Kumar, Pratap Bhanu Mehta, Prakash Menon, Nandan Nilekani, Srinath Raghavan, Shyam Saran and Siddharth Varadarajan, *Nonalignment 2.0: A Foreign and Strategic Policy for India in the Twenty First Century* (National Defence College and Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi), http://www.cprindia.org/sites/default/files/NonAlignment%202.0_1.pdf.

²⁵ The expression "Indo-Pacific" has also been several times by senior U.S. government functionaries like Hillary Clinton as well as Indian diplomats and analysts as a way of highlighting more forcefully India's essential place in the geopolitics of Asia. See also David Brewster, "Evolving 'Mental Maps': India as an Asia-Pacific Power," *Future Directions International*, November 30, 2011, <http://www.futuredirections.org.au/publications/indian-ocean/29-indian-ocean-swa/321-evolving-mental-maps-india-as-an-asia-pacific-power.html>.

²⁶ For the reasons for the Chinese reluctance, see Li Mingjiang, "China and Asian Regionalism: Pragmatism Hinders Leadership," RSIS Working Paper, No. 179, <http://www.rsis.edu.sg/publications/WorkingPapers/WP179.pdf>.

²⁷ For a study in this regard, see Nagesh Kumar, "Towards a Broader Asian Community: Agenda for the East Asia Summit," Discussion Paper No. 100, Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), New Delhi, November 2005, http://www.ris.org.in/images/RIS_images/pdf/dp100_pap.pdf.

²⁸ Ben Bland and Girija Shivakumar, "China confronts Indian navy vessel," *Financial Times*, August 31, 2011, <http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/883003ec-d3f6-11e0-b7eb-00144feab49a.html#ixzz1WguaKVu4>.

²⁹ Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, "Incident involving *INS Airavat* in South China Sea," *Press Briefings*, 1 September 2011, <http://www.mea.gov.in/mystart.php?id=100518137>.

³⁰ Bharat Karnad, "Rising Powers" CNAS/GWU Conference, Washington, DC, 23-24 January 2012, posted on January 27, 2012, <http://bharatkarnad.com/2012/01/27/bharat-karnad-at-cnasgwu-conference-on-rising-powers-in-washington-dc-january-23-24-2012/>.

³¹ Office of the Press Secretary, the White House, "Remarks By President Obama to the Australian Parliament," Parliament House, Canberra, Australia, November 17, 2011, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/17/remarks-president-obama-australian-parliament>.

³² See also Jabin T. Jacob, "Towards a New Asian Architecture: India and Ideology," *IPCS Issue Brief*, No. 80, August 2008, http://www.ipcs.org/pdf_file/issue/IB162-Jabin-China.pdf.

³³ Of course, even within these groups, a case can be made separating the democratic regimes from the authoritarian ones. See Oliver Stunkel and Jabin T. Jacob, "Rising powers and the future of democracy promotion: the case of Brazil and India," *Portuguese Journal of International Affairs*, No. 4, Autumn/Winter 2010, pp. 23-30. Also if its approach to encouraging democratic change can be different from American methods, India could conceivably even want to distinguish itself from the other developing world democracies such as say Brazil, for the uniqueness of its own democratic experience.

³⁴ Office of the Press Secretary, the White House, "Remarks by the President on the Defense Strategic Review," Pentagon, January 5, 2012, <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/01/05/remarks-president-defense-strategic-review>.