

The US-India Interactions to Russia-Ukraine War

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Since Russia-Ukraine war, India and the United States has enhanced their cooperation as evidenced by the recent engagements. Multiple meetings by officials and leaders including two Quad and 2+2 dialogue summits, have provided a clear stance on each country's perspective on the recent conflict. The US-India dispute regarding Russia-Ukraine war demonstrates that it is a stress test for the US-India ties, as well as a test of the US leadership in the global politics. The balancing act required to settle the differences between the two countries will have implications for the Indo-Pacific region as well as global security, even though the disagreements are not yet mutually incompatible. Strengthening ties with the US is now a tightrope walk for India. While there are differences between the two countries in Ukraine, the real challenge is turning these differences into opportunities. The paper deals with the different issues arising from the Russia and Ukraine conflict in the context of US-India interface.

Keywords

US-India Dispute, Russia-Ukraine War, Quad, 2+2 Dialogue Summit, India-US interactions

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1. Introduction

The leaders of all participating nations underlined at the most recent Quad Summit their dedication to an open, free, and inclusive Indo-Pacific region and the significance of preserving the concepts of sovereignty, territorial integrity, and amicable conflict resolution. India emphasized its steadfast and moral stance on the necessity of ending hostilities and resuming communication and diplomacy.¹ Apparently, the US President Biden vehemently denounced Russia's unwarranted conflict in Ukraine. In order to safeguard their own populations as well as the rest of the globe, the leaders decided to keep delivering humanitarian support and discussed how they could cooperate to control the disruptions brought on by the crisis in Ukraine, particularly the rising inflation. This essay aims to discuss the US-Indian ties and their impact on both nations' relationship since the Russia-Ukraine war.

2. The US Evaluation and Reaction to India-Russia Cooperation

The US evaluated India-Russia cooperation as a critical element of India's foreign policy. The dynamism in the Indian foreign policy amid the conflict has been appreciated all around the world. The US sees this as an opportunity to welcome India in critical issues of Asia-Pacific. Though India has extended humanitarian support to Ukraine, it has clearly stated that maintaining relations with Russia would continue.² India is looking forward to expanding BRICS partnership amid Russia-Ukraine war which indicates that India's stance is to exploit the situation in its own benefit at the foremost.³

For years, New Delhi maintained autonomous relations with both Washington and Moscow. As China casts a shadow over the continent, however, Russia strives for

¹ See *Quad Summit 2022 Live Updates: India-US strategic partnership is a 'Partnership of Trust', Modi says*, WION (May 25, 2022), <https://www.wionews.com/world/quad-summit-2022-leaders-of-japan-united-states-india-australia-meet-in-tokyo-481143>.

² Teresa Mettela, *What's behind India's strategic neutrality on Russia's invasion of Ukraine*, ABC NEWS (Mar. 29, 2023), <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/india-remaining-neutral-russias-invasion-ukraine/story?id=97891228>.

³ Vaishali Sharma, *Amid Sanctions Against Russia, BRICS Can Lead the Change towards National Currency Payments*, WIRE (Apr. 7, 2022), <https://thewire.in/world/amid-sanctions-against-russia-brics-can-lead-the-change-towards-national-currency-payments>.

a multipolar order. In this regard, America wants to preserve its hegemony and the war in Ukraine pushes everyone to pick sides. India's policy on Russia and Ukraine has been at odds with the American agenda because the US called India's stand somewhat shaky.⁴ The White House officials also began warning with significant and long-term consequences, but India did not give in. Four months on, Washington seems to have agreed to disagree with India. This was amply evident in the Modi-Biden bilateral meeting held in the Quad Summit. US President Biden did bring up Ukraine and the impact of Russia's actions but refrained from drawing India. The India-Russia relations are acceptable in the eyes of the US, considering the long-standing and trustable partnership between both countries.⁵ It is also evident from Secretary of State Antony Blinken's remark that "India's relationship with Russia was developed over decades at a time when the United States was not able to be a partner to India, but time has changed, and today, we are able and willing to be a partner of choice with India across every realm: commerce, technology, education and security."⁶

The US is trying to woo India by offering opportunities of bilateral partnerships in several domains which India requires to achieve technological progress. Considering the global objectives India is looking for, it will not leave such an opportunity. Thus, India may compromise with Russian cooperation in areas in which Russia cannot help. Although Russia wants to be an old friend of India, India will never ditch Russia altogether but only in certain areas. Regarding the acceptability of Russia-India cooperation, the US has no problem if India does not bolster the status of Russia. If the US sanctions are countered by bilateral payments mechanism between India and Russia for oil and defense products, for example, the US may not regard it as acceptable.⁷

The US has unsatisfactorily accepted India's position in the current crisis. The long-standing relationship between India and Russia are continuous. However, India's discounted oil purchase from Russia and ongoing trade in other sectors have disappointed the US. Given the volume of India's energy imports from Russia in comparison to European countries and rising inflation, the US has recognised India's

⁴ *India 'shaky' on Ukraine invasion: Biden builds up pressure*, TRIBUNE (May 28, 2022), <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/nation/india-shaky-on-invasion-biden-builds-up-pressure-379867>.

⁵ *Abhishek Chakraborty, PM Modi focuses on development at Quad meet, Biden pulls no punch against Russia*, INDIA TODAY (May 24, 2022), <https://www.indiatoday.in/world/story/pm-modi-at-quad-biden-russia-ukraine-war-kishida-albanese-1953289-2022-05-24>.

⁶ *Murali, India developed ties with Russia as United States couldn't do it earlier: Antony Blinken*, CITY TODAY (Apr. 28, 2022), <https://citytoday.news/india-developed-ties-with-russia-as-united-states-couldnt-do-it-earlier-antony-blinken>.

⁷ *PTI, Bilateral payments with Russia unlikely to be impacted amid sanctions*, TIMES OF INDIA (Feb. 25, 2022), http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/89834903.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst.

predicament. The US has also examined Europe's reliance on Russian oil, which is fuelling the current crisis, as it strengthens Russian forex reserves.⁸ India is not alone in maintaining neutral stance. Saudi Arabia, China, Pakistan, Israel and Iran are also among those who have refrained from condemning Russia.⁹ Therefore, India's actions alone do not jeopardise the sanctions. Rather, the number of neutral countries in this crisis will be increasing, given the current downfall of the US in shaping international order. Nonetheless, the US has asserted that India's oil purchases from Russia (much smaller than the US) were not only a technical violation of its sanctions, but also subverting its efforts to isolate Russia.¹⁰

On the other hand, New Delhi wants to distance itself from global conflicts only to the degree that it is not left out. Entirely walking a tightrope between the White House and the Kremlin is a strenuous task that requires diplomatic prowess and foresight. It is not an easy task in connection with the Ukraine War. At the UN, India has so far abstained, five times from condemning Russia's armed intervention.¹¹ It shows that striking a balance between two partners will become increasingly difficult, yet this is one impasse that India cannot afford to misconstrue.¹²

The US may attempt to threaten India with sanctions but given India's political and economic influence in the new world order, this appears unlikely. Some American officials have repeatedly warned that the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA)¹³ will be imposed on India if the S-400 air defense system

⁸ Antony Ashkenaz, *Energy crisis: Spain lays-out roadmap 'answer' to slash EU reliance on Russian fuel*, EXPRESS (May 25, 2022), <https://www.express.co.uk/news/science/1615667/energy-crisis-lifeline-spain-roadmap-answer-slash-eu-reliance-russian-energy-gas>.

⁹ H. Varulkar, *Saudi Arabia, UAE Refuse to Side with U.S. against Russia due to U.S. Refusal to Side with Them against Iran*, MEMRI (Mar. 21, 2022), <https://www.memri.org/reports/saudi-arabia-uae-refuse-side-us-against-russia-due-us-refusal-side-them-against-iran>; Reuters, *China refrains from condemning Russian invasion despite intensifying Ukraine attack*, ALARABIYA NEWS (Feb. 25, 2022), <https://english.alarabiya.net/News/world/2022/02/25/China-refrains-from-condemning-Russian-invasion-despite-intensifying-Ukraine-attack>; *Israel refrains from criticizing Russia over Ukraine*, TECHNOSCIENCE (Feb. 25, 2022), <https://www.technoscience.fikrikadim.com/2022/02/25/israel-refrains-from-criticizing-russia-over-ukraine>; Hamza Ameer, *Pak refrains from taking sides on Russia-Ukraine crisis*, DAIJWORLD (Mar. 1, 2022), <https://www.dajiworld.com/news/newsDisplay?newsID=932080>.

¹⁰ Swati Bhasin, *'India's Russia energy imports only 1-2% but...': US's latest amid Ukraine war*, HINDUSTAN TIMES (Apr. 05, 2022), <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/indias-russia-energy-imports-only-1-2-but-us-s-latest-amid-ukraine-war-101649119203541.html>.

¹¹ G.A. Res. ES-11/1, U.N. Doc. A/ES-11/L.1, ¶5 (Mar. 2, 2022), <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N22/293/36/PDF/N2229336.pdf?OpenElement>.

¹² *India yet again abstains in UN over Russia-Ukraine conflict: Why it's different this time*, TIMES OF INDIA (Mar. 24, 2022), <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/india-yet-again-abstains-in-un-over-russia-ukraine-conflict-why-its-different-this-time/articleshow/90413816.cms>.

¹³ Kashish Parpiani, Nivedita Kapoor & Angad Singh, *India's Purchase of the S-400: Understanding the CAATSA Conundrum*, ORF Special Report No. 129 (2021), at 16, https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/ORF_SpecialReport_129_CAATSA1.pdf.

becomes operational. Moreover, India's neutral stance in the current Ukraine conflict has fuelled calls to implement the CAATSA against India. The CAATSA mandates the US government to impose financial sanctions and travel bans on any country transacting significant defense or intelligence deals with Russia, North Korea, or Iran.¹⁴ However, these sanctions would cancel or block the sales of licensed goods and technologies and curtail credit lines from the US, banning banks, manufacturers, suppliers, and property transactions from sanctioned countries. Under such pressure international trade becomes exceedingly difficult.¹⁵

Washington is obligated to sanction India, but the sanctions will come at a decisive moment when America is trying to reinstate the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) setting up a containment belt around China. However, coercion through sanctions does not always work as intended. Actually, imposing sanctions on India would harm the US interests in Asia Pacific. But a waiver to India would upset some of America's partners, because CAATSA was applied to similar S-deals like Turkey.¹⁶ Furthermore, a waiver might encourage other nations to follow suit and sign defense deals with Russia. So, from a political angle, US's best call may be to do nothing, but delay the sanctions while keeping the threat of the CAATSA alive. However, statecraft policy is drafted with a sense of realism, despite the looming threat of sanctions. Indian policy makers are not willing to abandon their partnership with Russia.¹⁷

The CAATSA includes 12 different types of sanctions. Among them, only four may have an impact on either India-Russia or India-US relations.

A. Prohibition of Banking Transactions

This US sanction will make it difficult for India to pay Russia under Section 235 of the CAATSA. The payment for oil imports and other transactions have already been made difficult since Russia's expel from SWIFT payment mechanism. However, India and Russia are continuously trading with each other and working for building the

¹⁴ CAATSA § 231.

¹⁵ Kartik Bommakanti, CAATSA, Russia's S-400s, and the challenge for India's defence indigenization, Observer Research Foundation (Dec. 29, 2021), <https://www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/caatsa-russias-s-400s-and-the-challenge-for-india>.

¹⁶ US Department of State, The United States Sanctions Turkey under CAATSA 231, Statement by Michael R. Pompeo, Secretary of State (Dec. 14, 2020), <https://2017-2021.state.gov/the-united-states-sanctions-turkey-under-caatsa-231>; Sriram Lakshman, *U.S. imposes CAATSA sanctions on Turkey for S-400 Purchase*, HINDU (Dec. 15, 2020), <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/us-imposes-caatsa-sanctions-on-turkey-for-s-400-purchase/article33333317.ece>.

¹⁷ ANI, *India-Russia trade will continue despite Western sanctions: Envoy*, BUS. STANDARD (July 6, 2022), https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/india-russia-trade-will-continue-despite-western-sanctions-envoy-122070600100_1.html.

Rupee-Rouble payment mechanism.¹⁸

B. Export Sanctions

This type of sanction has the potential to completely subvert India-US Strategic and Defense partnership, as it prohibits the sanctioned person the licence for, and export of, any items controlled by the US, including dual-use high technology goods, defense and nuclear related items, and all other items from the US which require prior review and approval of the US Government.¹⁹ It will effectively prohibit India from purchasing any major defense equipment from the US, effectively putting an end to any defense alliance and Strategic Partnership between India and US. In that case, the Major Defense Partner (MDP) designation would become meaningless.

C. Procurement Challenges: Acquisition Delays

Export controls, legal restrictions, and review procedures are inefficient and time-consuming which may stymie India's growth. However, in the current scenario, these sanctions are unrealistic because the US cannot resist China without India. Since Russia's military operation began in Ukraine, the US has not taken any steps so far that may harm the US-India relations. Moreover, there have been alliance talks between the countries to encourage defense relations and bolster the partnership in other sectors. Should the US carry out its threat of sanctions, bilateral relations may stagnate for many years, and the US runs the risk of being viewed as unpredictable, unduly demanding, and arbitrary partner.

3. Communication in the QUAD Summit

On the side-lines of the 2022 Quadrennial Meeting in Tokyo,²⁰ India and the US held bilateral discussions, during which President Biden stated that he is committed to make the US-India partnership "among the closest on the planet."²¹ In a similar

¹⁸ Suchitra Karthikeyan, *What is the Rupee-Rouble mechanism, and why is India considering reviving it?*, HINDU (Apr. 13, 2022), <https://www.thehindu.com/business/Economy/explained-what-is-rupee-rouble-mechanism-why-is-india-considering-to-revive-it/article65313729.ece>.

¹⁹ CAATSA § 231.

²⁰ See *QUAD Leaders' Meeting, Tokyo 2022*, KANTEI (May 24, 2022), <https://www.kantei.go.jp/quad-leaders-meeting-tokyo2022/index.html>.

²¹ PTI, *Committed to making US-India partnership among closest on earth: President Joe Biden to PM Modi in Japan*,

vein, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi referred to the Indo-US relationship as a “trust partnership.”²² The bilateral connection between the US and India was reinforced throughout the conference for the partnership based on a common legacy of democracy, liberty, tolerance, and equal opportunity. Along with talking about the Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership, both leaders pledged to strengthen the Major Defense Partnership.²³ The conversation also included pandemic preparedness, critical and emerging technologies, better cooperation in global health, and mutually beneficial economic involvement. Through the US-India Climate and Clean Energy Agenda Partnership, the importance of addressing climate change is acknowledged while bolstering cooperation to expedite India’s energy transition. This is especially true in the areas of renewable energy deployment, zero-emission vehicles, decarbonizing the energy and industrial sectors, adaptation, and mobilizing related climate sustainable investment in India.²⁴ In confirmation of the previous meetings, the recent bilateral meeting of India and the US reaffirmed their shared commitment to an Indo-Pacific that is open, free, and inclusive. In addition, the two leaders held a discussion on the following topics.²⁵

Defense

Both nations have pledged to increase defense cooperation, as shown by India’s admission as an associate partner of the Combined Maritime Force (CMF).²⁶ A series of recently signed defense agreements including USINDOPACOM look to enhance India’s military ties with the US through joint naval military drills like SEA DRAGON, TIGER TRIUMPH, and MALABAR. The US is apparently offering India half a billion dollars in financial help to enhance defense ties in response to India’s significant purchase of Russian weapons. This would make India one of the greatest recipients

ECON. TIMES (May 24, 2022), <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/committed-to-making-us-india-partnership-among-closest-on-earth-president-joe-biden-to-pm-modi-in-japan/articleshow/91760412.cms>.

²² *Id.*

²³ US Department of State, Fourth Annual U.S.-India 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue, Media Note (Apr. 11, 2022), <https://www.state.gov/fourth-annual-u-s-india-22-ministerial-dialogue>.

²⁴ PTI, *PM Modi holds first bilateral meeting with Biden; discusses climate, Covid*, BUS. STANDARD (Sept. 24, 2021), at ¶ 14, https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/pm-modi-holds-first-bilateral-meeting-with-us-president-joe-biden-121092401216_1.html.

²⁵ The White House, Readout of President Biden’s Meeting with Prime Minister Modi of India, Press Release (May 24, 2022), ¶ 5, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/24/readout-of-president-bidens-meeting-with-prime-minister-modi-of-india>.

²⁶ Suchet Singh, *What’s Combined Military Forces-Bahrain? US-backed coalition India joined on Quad sidelines*, PRINT (May 25, 2022), <https://theprint.in/Defense/whats-combined-military-forces-bahrain-us-backed-coalition-india-joined-on-quad-sidelines/970558>.

of such aid, behind Israel and Egypt.²⁷ However, historically, India's weapons from Russia have not been of high quality, so America's move may result in a long-term partnership. New Delhi is also inviting American military contractors by offering to purchase expensive systems such as NASAM (National/Norwegian Advanced Surface to Air Missile System) systems by Raytheon Technologies at a cost of one billion dollars.

Supply Chain Resilience

To reduce risks in the area and promote collaboration in semiconductors and other key technologies, the Quad members released a Common Statement of Principles on key Technology Supply Chains.²⁸ Additionally, they have decided to sign MoUs on supplier diversification and interoperability standards to increase cooperation in 5G technology.²⁹

Crisis Deterrence

India and the US have placed a strong emphasis on developing the bilateral relationship to act jointly in the event of calamity and strengthen deterrence. The vaccine development, climate change, cyber security is some of the topics on which both countries are committed towards mutual efforts.³⁰

Indo-Pacific Framework

In line with India's Act East strategic framework,³¹ both nations serve as the relationship anchors within the greater Indo-Pacific security architecture. Under the Quad initiative, the member countries are committed to offer "tangible benefits to the region."³² For this purpose, they will invest USD 50 billion over the next five years in the development of infrastructure in the Indo-Pacific region.³³

²⁷ See *US to offer India \$500 mn in military aid to reduce Russia dependence*, HINDUSTAN TIMES (May 18, 2022), <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/us-to-offer-india-500-million-in-military-aid-to-reduce-dependence-on-russia-101652853517651.html>.

²⁸ The White House, Quad Joint Leaders' Statement, Press Release (May 34, 2022), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/24/quad-joint-leaders-statement>.

²⁹ *Supra* note 25.

³⁰ *Id.*

³¹ For details on India's Act East Policy, see Garima Sangwan, *RCEP and Indo-Pacific Region: Implications for India's Act East Policy*, 9(2) CHINA & WTO REV. 339-53 (2023).

³² Sachin Parashar, *Quad pledges \$50 billion package with 'tangible benefits' to check China*, TIMES OF INDIA (May 25, 2022), http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/articleshow/91774703.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst.

³³ *Supra* note 25.

Strategic Convergence

The US and India are concerned about China's hostile actions especially along the Sino-Indian border. China was left out of the joint statement released after the Quad Leaders' meeting. Instead, the steps outlined were intended to shield the members and other like-minded nations from China's increasing economic pressure. The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) is joined by 13 countries in the region, all of them being significant economies.³⁴ All countries strongly opposed "any coercive, provocative or unilateral actions that seek to change the status quo" in the Indo-Pacific through.³⁵

Divergences

Russia remains the major source of disagreement among countries, as evidenced by the Quad Summit. The US and Japan are vocal in their criticism of Moscow, whereas New Delhi has called for immediate cessation of violence without condemning Russia.³⁶ There are still differences between the US and Indian approaches to countering current challenges, despite their shared ideas. The US and India are not on the same page regarding some domestic issues including human rights and minority protection, either. During a press conference, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken stated: "We share a commitment to democratic values such as human rights protection. We regularly engage with our Indian partners on these shared values, and we're keeping an eye on some recent troubling developments in India, such as an increase in human rights violations by some government, police, and prison officials."³⁷ Some Indian experts argue that the US should end up meddling in India's internal affairs such as human rights and civil liberties, which India does not appreciate.

Military

The US has invited India to join combined military forces – Bahrain, as an associate partner to bolster its naval security. It has also agreed on co-development of systems

³⁴ Staff reporter, *India Joins US-Led New Indo-Pacific Economic Bloc, Aimed at Countering China*, WIRE (May 23, 2022), <https://thewire.in/diplomacy/india-joins-us-led-new-indo-pacific-economic-bloc-aimed-at-countering-china>.

³⁵ PTI, *In clear message to China, Quad opposes 'any provocative or unilateral attempt' to change status quo in region*, ECON. TIMES (May 24, 2022), https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/in-clear-message-to-china-quad-opposes-any-provocative-or-unilateral-attempt-to-change-status-quo-in-region/articleshow/91767106.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst.

³⁶ Shubhajit Roy, *Quad signs off on Indo-Pacific: Split on Russia, unity on China*, INDIAN EXPRESS (May 25, 2022), <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/quad-signs-off-on-indo-pacific-split-on-russia-unity-on-china-7934390>.

³⁷ Reuters, *US monitoring rise in 'rights abuses' in India, says Antony Blinken*, HINDUSTAN TIMES (Apr. 22, 2022), <https://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/us-monitoring-rise-in-rights-abuses-in-india-says-antony-blinken-101649740226022.html>.

of air-launched drones, cooperation on geo-spatial information sharing, logistics cooperation, agreement on space situational awareness, and India-US Civil Space Joint Working Group.³⁸ The US and India reaffirmed the cooperation on Malabar, Tiger Triumph, Milan Naval, Yudh Abhyas Vajra Prahar, Cope India Air Exercise, and Indian Participation in Red Flag.³⁹

Indo-Pacific Economic Framework

The US has offered to export crude oil to India in order to diversify its energy sources and reduce its reliance on Russia. Both countries discuss important trade and economic issues, such as the digital economy, safe and resilient supply chains, investments in clean energy infrastructure, the transition to clean energy, the improvement of transparency, equitable taxation, and anti-corruption standards.⁴⁰

Politics

The US's commitment to support India against China has been exhibited in every meeting held in recent times. While handling the Russia-Ukraine conflict, the US has kept the Indo-Pacific on its top list to contain China. The US has also committed to supporting India in countering terrorism. This means India has become a strategic ally for the US to counter China. However, the US has not yet taken any decision.

4. India-US Communications since the Ukraine War

Since Russia-Ukraine conflict erupted, the high-ranking officials of the US and India have regularly visited with each other to discuss the critical issues. Table 1 shows those events.

³⁸ PTI, *Quad nations to deepen cooperation on infrastructure: Joint statement*, BUS. STANDARD (May 24, 2022), https://www.business-standard.com/article/international/quad-nations-to-deepen-cooperation-on-infrastructure-joint-statement-122052400996_1.html.

³⁹ US Department of State, *The United States and India: Deepening our Strategic Partnership*, Fact Sheet, Office of the Spokesperson (July 27, 2021), at ¶ 8, <https://www.state.gov/the-united-states-and-india-deepening-our-strategic-partnership>.

⁴⁰ *Id.*

Table 1: India-US Mutual Communication since the Ukraine War

Visitors	Discussion	Date
Daleep Singh, US Deputy National Security Adviser for International Economics	Visited India to put pressure on the country to stop trading with Russia. ⁴¹	March 31, 2022
US Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin III	Travelled to New Delhi with the goal of promoting collaboration “for a free, prosperous, and open Indo-Pacific and Western Indian Ocean Region” as well as “deepening the Both Lloyd and his colleague Rajnath Singh decided to explore accelerated cooperation with the US Indo-Pacific Command, Central Command, and Africa Command after reviewing the vast range of bilateral and multilateral exercises. ⁴²	June 4-5, 2023
Victoria Nuland, US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs	Met with Minister of External Affairs ⁴³ and reportedly discussed the Indo-Pacific region, ways to strengthen bilateral ties, and the Ukraine crisis. She also put pressure on India to stand against Russia as she stated, “Democracies must stand against autocracies.” ⁴⁴	March 22, 2022
US Congressmen	Travelled to India under the leadership of Adam Smith received Foreign Secretary Harsh Vardhan Shringla and other officials. A detailed exchange of views was held on Ukraine, Afghanistan, South Asia, and the bilateral cooperation between the two countries. ⁴⁵	April 13-15, 2022
US Defense Secretary and India’s External Affairs minister	Discussed various issues including Global Partnership and Indo-Pacific Cooperation. ⁴⁶ Indian Defense Minister Rajnath Singh reached out to American firms to jointly invest in innovation, manufacturing and maintenance of military software and hardware with a vision of “Make in India, Make for the world.” ⁴⁷	April 11, 2022

⁴¹ Suhasini Haidar, *Ahead of Lavrov’s arrival, U.S. to send Deputy NSA to India*, HINDU (Mar. 29, 2022), <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/after-cu-and-uk-senior-us-official-to-visit-delhi-to-discuss-sanctions-against-russia/article65271287.ece>.

⁴² *U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin begins India visit by meeting Narendra Modi*, HINDU (Mar. 19, 2021), <https://www.thehindu.com/news/international/us-Defense-secretary-lloyd-austin-begins-india-visit-by-meeting-narendra-modi/article34109745.ece>.

⁴³ US Department of State, Under Secretary Nuland’s Travel to Bangladesh, India, and Sri Lanka, Press Release, Office of the Spokesperson (Mar. 18, 2022), <https://www.state.gov/under-secretary-nulands-travel-to-bangladesh-india-and-sri-lanka>.

⁴⁴ *See India must stand against ‘autocracies’ like Russia and China: senior U.S. official*, HINDU (Mar. 22, 2022), <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-must-stand-against-autocracies-like-russia-and-china-senior-us-official/article65248954.ece>.

⁴⁵ Dipanjan Chaudhury, *Harsh Vardhan Shringla talks joint production of defence items with US Congress team*, ECON. TIMES (Apr. 16, 2022), <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/defence/harsh-varadhan-shringla-talks-joint-production-of-defence-items-with-us-congress-team/articleshow/90868330.cms>.

⁴⁶ *Supra* note 24.

⁴⁷ Ravi Sharma, *Rajnath Singh invites U.S. companies to India for collaborating in Defense manufacturing and undertaking*

5. Conclusion

The India-US relationship is extremely crucial for both countries. For the Indo-Pacific region, it is a pillar of stability and resilience. It has become multi-dimensional with the stretching system across all areas of climate change, economic and strategic cooperation, and joint military exercises. Despite their disagreements about Russia, both countries mutually recognize the importance of the other and thus could not afford to antagonize each other. Finally, the current escalation between Israel and Hamas will have implications on the geo-political scenario resulting in revisiting the bilateral relations.

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