India's Approach to Great-Power Status

John D. Ciorciari

Although often overshadowed by the rise of China, India's ascent toward great-power status over the past two decades has been one of the most dramatic developments in the international system. In the late 1980s, India was the world's most populous nation but had an economy barely one-third the size of Italy's and an outdated military dependent largely on Soviet hand-me-downs.[1] Today, India's economy is the world's fourth largest in terms of purchasing-power parity; it will soon overtake Japan for third place if current trends continue.[2] It has risen to become the world's ninth-largest source of industrial output, slightly ahead of Brazil.[3] India has also become a more modern, sophisticated military power, and with the passage of the Indo-U.S. civil nuclear agreement in 2008, India received a key endorsement as a legitimate member of the "nuclear club."

Becoming a "great power" has not always been an explicit objective of Indian foreign policy, and the pursuit of a stronger global role has been controversial in a state with immense domestic needs. However, India's recent rise—particularly in economic terms—has led an increasing number of officials and members of the public to embrace this idea. Leaders of both of India's leading political parties—the ruling Congress Party and Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)—have stated openly in recent years that they seek great-power status for their country.[4]

John D. Ciorciari *is an assistant professor at the University of Michigan's Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy. He is a former U.S. Treasury official and term member of the Council on Foreign Relations.* *This article is based on a paper presented at a May 2009 workshop on rising powers organized by the Princeton Institute for International and Regional Studies. The author thanks Professors John Ikenberry, Thomas Christensen, John Mearsheimer, and other participants for their comments.*

When statesmen and scholars speak about great powers, they usually refer to the handful of states with the most formidable capabilities and influence. Part of that definition is material—great powers usually have advanced industrial economies and broad military reach. In that regard, India has a considerable way to go. India remains a poor developing country; despite its vast population, its nominal GDP ranks alongside small Western states like Canada and Spain, and its per capita GDP is comparable to that of Yemen and Cote d'Ivoire.[5] The Indian military still has limited power-projection capability, and the country's defense expenditures (roughly USD 36 billion per annum) are similar to Italy's and Saudi Arabia's—less than one-third of China's outlays and a comfortable distance behind France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and Japan.[6] However, gold and guns are not all that define a great power. Political influence and expectations of future performance also matter. Given this expanded conception of great-power status, India may soon qualify despite its regional military focus and profound economic development needs.

However, gold and guns are not all that define a great power. Political influence and expectations of future performance also matter. Given this expanded conception of great-power status, India may soon qualify despite its regional military focus and profound economic development needs.

India's cultivation of great-power capabilities and influence—and the policy goals it pursues as it amasses strength—are clearly important to U.S. foreign policy. At the global level, India is a large, democratic, developing country that could either help advance or frustrate core U.S. foreign policy aims. In the near term, a rigid Indian alliance with or against the United States is highly unlikely, but a range of options exists in between. On key strategic and ideational issues, India could tilt toward the United States or engage in what scholars Robert Pape and T.V. Paul describe as "soft balancing": using political levers and flexible coalitions with other emerging powers to resist American leadership.[7] This possibility has led CIA officials to characterize India as the key "swing state" in the twenty-first century international system.[8] At the regional level, India's rising clout and improved Indo-U.S. ties create both opportunities and potential pitfalls for American efforts to help manage the maelstrom in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Economic relations between India and the United States are

also growing in importance, both bilaterally and in multilateral forums such as the G-20, where India carries increasing weight.

Navigating Indo-U.S. relations effectively requires understanding the motives and means for India's great-power quest. This article attempts to address three basic questions. First, what does great-power status generally mean to India's governing elites? Second, how is the Indian government pursuing its goal of becoming a legitimate great power? Third, how can the answers to these questions guide U.S. foreign policy toward a stable and constructive relationship with India as the latter becomes a more prominent player on the world stage?

GOALS UNDERLYING INDIA'S GREAT-POWER QUEST

To India and other rising powers, the material might and political influence that define great powers are not simply teleological *ends*—they are *means* by which governments pursue their interests and foreign policy objectives. India has sought to build capabilities and influence not simply for the sake of being strong, but also to advance more specific national aims. In some respects, India has sought to become a great power for "defensive" reasons, as officials in New Delhi seek to protect their state against external domination or intimidation. In other respects, India has sought to revise the existing regional and international orders to enable it to play a more prominent role.

This section argues that despite significant shifts in tactics, four broad goals have provided much of the motivation for India's great-power quest over the past several decades. These include increasing policy autonomy, securing the state from internal and external threats, raising the living standards of its vast population, and winning diplomatic recognition as one of the world's leading nations. Individually, none of these objectives is unique, but taken together they give India's quest its particular character.

In a 2004 speech on India's great-power quest, Minister of External Affairs Yashwant Sinha specifically outlined three of the four goals above. He acknowledged his country's efforts to build military and economic "hard power," as well as political and ideational "soft power," but emphasized that "India's search for great power status is not an end in itself." Rather, "India's power capabilities are a guarantee of the freedom and security of its people…a means of advancing the welfare of our people and a tool for preserving and consolidating the autonomy of our foreign and domestic policy."[9] The same day, Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee referred to the fourth goal by saying that India sought to secure "a meaningful role in

world affairs," partly by promoting a "cooperative multipolar order" that would restrain existing powers and give India a louder voice.[10]

The aims that Sinha and Vajpayee expressed were not new. All of these goals have strong roots in the period immediately following India's independence in 1947 and remain important today. They certainly cannot explain all of the Indian government's specific foreign policy decisions. As in any state, domestic pressures and the need to respond to periodic crises often provide powerful alternative explanations for short-term policy trends and shifts in tactics. Moreover, the four goals above have sometimes been in tension with one another, requiring trade-offs and reconciliation. The argument advanced here is that these goals have nevertheless provided important guideposts for Indian policymakers and that they help illuminate the motives for the country's great-power quest. Understanding the core elements of India's foreign policy aspirations is an important precursor to constructive policy engagement with New Delhi.

Promoting Autonomy

Autonomy has long been one of the most important goals of Indian foreign policy. Modern India took shape in the shadow of British colonial rule, and the country's great-power quest is inextricably linked to the effort to avoid subservience to the United Kingdom or other external masters. In 1946, amid the struggle for independence, Jawaharlal Nehru invoked the concept of a great power in an apparent effort to boost the confidence of his audience of Indian army officers. He declared that "India is today among the four great powers of the world: [the] other three being America, Russia, and China."[11] That statement, of course, was more rhetorical than realistic. India had a large army and population but was far from possessing the material capabilities or political influence to fit under any reasonable definition of a great power. Even after breaking free of British rule, India's new government was militarily and economically weak, confronted daunting domestic challenges, and faced the real possibility of continued external domination. As discussed below, India's tactics evolved throughout the Cold War era, but autonomy remained a mainstay of the country's foreign policy.

Modern India took shape in the shadow of British colonial rule, and the country's great-power quest is inextricably linked to the effort to avoid subservience to the United Kingdom or other external masters.

Although India is stronger today than it was in the early Cold War era, autonomy remains central to its foreign policy. Over the past several years, as India sought to strike a controversial civil-nuclear deal with the United States, the most common domestic criticism of the plan was that it would compromise the country's hard-earned sovereignty and independence. Interestingly, the governing Congress Party suffered criticism from both the left and right, showing the appeal of the independence theme across the political spectrum. The Communist Party of India and nationalist BJP were the most vocal critics of the plan. The memory of colonial subjugation still exerts a strong influence in New Delhi and in the minds of many Indian voters, encouraging the cultivation of power that will help ensure the country's political independence.

Securing the State

To India's governing elites, a second key foreign policy goal—and a second reason to build greater national capabilities and influence—has been to improve internal and external security. India's status as a developing country in a dangerous neighborhood has meant that the country's security dilemmas have been somewhat more complicated than they have been for other rising or established powers. One priority has been to develop the ability to deter or ward off stronger foes. India's modern history has been marred by frequent reminders of its military vulnerability and circumscribed position. The disastrous 1962 war against China in the Himalayas broke Nehru's faith in Third World solidarity and reinforced India's vulnerability to external giants. China has since been a frequent security concern for India, and many Indian officials continue to see China as a bona fide external threat to their interests, contributing to a "defensive" motivation for great-power capabilities.[12]

Contemporary concerns focus partly on maritime security. Chinese naval ties with Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Myanmar are one source of concern. The People's Republic of China's (PRC) bases or installations in those countries threaten to encircle India with a Chinese "string of pearls"—points from which China can exert naval influence along the Asian littoral from the Straits of Malacca to the Persian Gulf.[13] The unresolved border disputes over Aksai Chin and Arunachal Pradesh also motivate Indian interest in a stronger military. Like the leaders of any budding great power, Indian officials seek, at a minimum, to avoid being bullied along their borders and in their own neighborhood.

On land, India has also faced serious impediments to achieving what

it regards as its rightful role as the dominant regional power. Pakistan has posed the most vexing obstacle. Despite the 1971 war, which cleft Pakistan in two and solidified India's military advantage, Islamabad has issued frequent provocations and has refused to acquiesce to a South Asian security order predicated on strong Indian leadership. The campaign against Islamist militants and separatists in Kashmir has been a particularly painful thorn in India's side, tying down troops in a conflict that has been doggedly resistant to resolution. Frequent American and Chinese military and economic support for Pakistan has reinforced the nexus between great-power politics and India's frustrated regional aspirations.[14]

Centrifugal threats remain acute, with the leftist Naxalite movement challenging the government in several states, and continued clashes involving Hindu nationalists and Islamic radicals that contribute to tensions in the general population.

International relations theory usually focuses on the external security dynamics associated with rising powers, but India's bid for great-power status also reflects internal security concerns. Nehru inherited a state with a vast, mostly indigent, and dauntingly diverse population. Instilling a sense of national pride and identity has been crucial to uniting that population behind a single national government.[15] Even today, with a much healthier economy and well-established democratic norms and institutions, Indian leaders face the perennial challenge of managing social unrest that springs from poverty, inequality, and ethno-religious cleavages. Centrifugal threats remain acute, with the leftist Naxalite movement challenging the government in several states, and continued clashes involving Hindu nationalists and Islamic radicals that contribute to tensions in the general population.[16]

Pursuing Economic Development

India's internal security concerns relate closely to the goal of economic development. Since independence, Indian governments have confronted the challenge of mass poverty in both urban slums and the countryside. India is unusual (though not unique) as a state approaching great-power status while most of its population remains poor. This places significant political (and perhaps moral) constraints on New Delhi's ability to expend national resources on military buildup, economic liberalization, and other policies that may involve trade-offs between aggregate national capabilities

and absolute or relative poverty in the country. Politically, Indian parties risk punishment for policies seen to neglect or downplay concerns of the poor—by voters, opposition parties, and sometimes coalition partners, as in the case of leftist members of the ruling United Progressive Alliance, led by the Congress Party.

After launching a major liberalization program as finance minister in the 1990s, Manmohan Singh argued that India would become "free from poverty" by "becoming a major global power in the world economy."[17] India has indeed grown and become more active in international trade; robust growth has given India a total GDP approaching Japan's on a purchasing-power parity basis. However, as noted above, poverty and inequality remain major problems. India's nominal per capita GDP lags behind even poor countries like Mongolia and Cameroon, and much of the country's wealth accumulation has accrued to the benefit of the urban middle class, leaving many in the countryside behind.[18] In 2009, the Indian Planning Commission issued a report indicating that the country has more than 400 million people living on less than USD 1.25 per day—the World Bank and United Nations benchmark for absolute poverty.[19] For that reason, some Indians, especially on the political left, continue to question the wisdom of a great-power quest that features military expansion and liberalization.[20]

Achieving Social Status and Respect

A fourth aim of Indian foreign policy has been to achieve added social status and influence in international diplomacy. India's size, status as the hub of a major world civilization, and anti-imperial credentials all contribute to a sense of entitlement to regional leadership and to a major role on the world stage.[21] However, wealthier states have tended to deny it treatment as a major player.[22] India has not been a member of any of the official or unofficial clubs that have mostly defined great-power status since the end of the Second World War. It has not been a permanent member of the UN Security Council, a member of the G-7 or G-8, or a leading shareholder in the International Monetary Fund (IMF) or World Bank. By these institutional measures, India has been decidedly denied recognition as a great power.

Status is closely related to respect. India's exclusion from the great-power club has produced a deep sense of what Baldev Raj Nayar and T.V. Paul call "status inconsistency."[23] Even outside formal institutions, India has often been snubbed. In diplomacy, states' perceived pecking order is evident in the phone logs and travel schedules of great-power leaders and

the schedules of sideline meetings at the margins of multilateral conferences. Indian diplomats have not been shy about jockeying for diplomatic position but have found it difficult to earn recognition as representatives of a major power.[24] India's economic growth and military expansion have only just begun to change that situation.

The Challenge of Pursuing Multiple Goals

The goals discussed above have provided important ballast for Indian officials over time and have served as motives for seeking great-power capabilities and influence. They also help account for some of the broad outlines of Indian foreign policy behavior. Nevertheless, it is important not to exaggerate the extent to which these goals have dictated its foreign policy in specific situations. Indian leaders have rarely had the benefit of operating from a neat strategic roadmap. Like all policymakers, they have been constrained by myriad short-term political pressures and the need to respond to periodic crises. India's complex multiparty democracy, numerous external and internal challenges, and material weakness relative to established great powers have made it difficult to articulate and follow a clear strategic plan. A number of scholars have therefore emphasized the "reactive" aspects of Indian foreign policy.[25]

India's complex multiparty democracy, numerous external and internal challenges, and material weakness relative to established great powers have made it difficult to articulate and follow a clear strategic plan.

The following section outlines the difficult path that Indian leaders have trodden as they have tried, through various means, to acquire the great-power capabilities and influence that would help deliver autonomy, security, development, and respect. It draws attention to key strands in India's foreign policy practice and how its leaders have tried to adapt amid the shifting tectonic plates of international politics and in the face of periodic crises.

INDIA'S PATH TOWARD GREAT-POWER STATUS

Indian leaders have pursued power and influence in a variety of ways. Like the heads of most emerging states, Indian officials have sought to build

their country's material self-help capabilities via economic and military expansion, albeit in various ways. India has also followed a longstanding strategy of using multilateral institutional venues and weak-state ententes to project a louder political voice than India's capabilities would otherwise permit. Third, Indian officials have often sought to position their state between the existing great powers to seek triangular leverage—i.e., the influence that comes from being closer to two stronger rivals than they are to one another.

India has not followed all of these strategies—building capabilities, using institutional channels for influence, and cultivating triangular leverage—all of the time or with consistent success. The road has been bumpy, and as described below, India's progress was slow during the decades following independence. Conditions over the past two decades have been more favorable, enabling and encouraging India to revitalize its economy, expand its leadership in selected forums, mend fences with the United States, and establish new leverage as a "swing state."

Guarding Independence Without Might, 1948-1970

In the decades immediately following independence, India pursued great-power status primarily in the three ways described above. Building material might was one consideration. The relations among states depend heavily on perceptions, but underlying "objective" military and economic might provides much of the basis for those perceptions and the ordered social relations that flow from them. India's first foreign secretary, Gijra Shankar Bajpai, made this point in a 1952 essay, declaring, "armed power supported by industrial power…constitutes the only safeguard against a threat to a country's independence."[26]

India was materially weak, however, and needed to prioritize domestic regime consolidation. Nehru thus sought to compensate through an active and moralistic form of diplomacy, particularly in multilateral forums. Nehru lamented in 1946 that the postwar settlement smacked of "a continuation of power politics on a vaster scale." He thus declared, "there really seems no alternative between world conquest and world association; there is no choice of a middle course."[27] Beneath such poetic pronouncements, however, Indian leaders understood institutions to be both venues for fostering cooperation and crucial arenas for power politics. In practice, that meant charting precisely the "middle course" to which Nehru alluded: steering between the advancement of specific state interests and the development of broader normative frameworks and institutional arrangements within which those interests could be achieved.

India's diplomatic approach was thus a kind of "institutional realpolitik."[28] Without enough guns or butter to qualify as a major power, it used multilateral venues to level the playing field, promote desired norms, and boost its influence in world politics. Indian leaders subscribed to the view that skillful and assertive diplomacy can help a state punch above its weight, that their own rigorously selected civil servants had the skills to do so, and that their experience as anti-colonial vanguards put them in a position to lead the Global South. Officials in New Delhi saw institutions as important spaces for norm incubation but were well aware that the norms that hatched and took flight depended largely on a competitive political process. India thus used—and has continued to use—liberal institutional venues, norms, and rhetoric in the service of a foreign policy rooted largely in national interests.

Without enough guns or butter to qualify as a major power, it used multilateral venues to level the playing field, promote desired norms, and boost its influence in world politics.

India also tried to use triangular leverage to guard its independence and improve its standing. Adopting a relatively neutral position among stronger powers was one way that India—like many developing countries—sought to avoid subservience to a superpower patron, maintain relative autonomy, and increase diplomatic and economic leverage by playing off the superpowers.[29] This strategy merged to a considerable extent with India's institutional agenda, as Nehru spearheaded initiatives to advance the political and economic interests of developing countries. These include the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which Nehru helped to establish in 1955, and the G-77, founded in 1964 to influence UN policies.

Nehru expected that non-alignment would deliver material benefits to India by helping the country avoid exploitation and by prompting rival great powers to vie for influence on the subcontinent. He also believed that Third World solidarity would help the country enjoy secure relations with neighbors and enable it to devote resources to national development strategies instead of military uses.[30] Indeed, India enjoyed economic support from both Washington and Moscow during the early years, and China and India had something of a honeymoon period in the 1950s. As strategic divides hardened, however, India's refusal to take sides and reap the military rewards of an alliance left it acutely vulnerable. India's policies under Nehru tended to emphasize norms over firepower. They raised India's international profile but did little to address the country's hard power deficit.

The humiliating 1962 defeat in the war against China shattered Nehru's faith in Third World cohesion and encouraged India to refocus attention on military capabilities and increase reliance on the USSR.[31] China's nuclear tests and the 1965 war against Pakistan—a friend of the PRC and a treaty ally of the United States—drew further attention to India's military weakness. The looming threat of another war with Pakistan in 1971 finally pushed India decidedly away from its avowed policy of non-alignment and into an informal alliance with the USSR, a relationship fortified by the clear American "tilt toward Pakistan" during the Indo-Pakistani conflict.[32]

Suffering Sluggish Growth, 1971-1990

As Indo-Soviet ties solidified, officials in New Delhi redoubled their efforts to build military strength through the development of nuclear weapons. For some, the nuclear program was a means to counterbalance the Chinese bomb.[33] Nehru's daughter, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, also believed nuclear weapons were the key to achieving great-power status.[34] The 1974 "Smiling Buddha" test at Pokhran—India's first test explosion of a nuclear device—certainly helped, but it did not catapult India onto the world stage as officials in New Delhi might have hoped. Rather, it resulted in ostracism, as the United States led the establishment of a forty-five member Nuclear Suppliers Group for legitimized nuclear powers and pointedly excluded India.

The 1974 "Smiling Buddha" test at Pokhran—India's first test explosion of a nuclear device—certainly helped, but it did not catapult India onto the world stage as officials in New Delhi might have hoped.

India's conventional armed forces developed only sluggishly during the period. The breakup of Pakistan (and birth of Bangladesh) in 1971 had left India the dominant military force in South Asia, and Soviet arms helped India sustain its lead over Pakistan and likely helped to deter further Chinese advances.[35] However, India's resources remained limited, and many of the weapons sent by the USSR were outdated. Consequently, India was able to maintain an army that could defeat Pakistan but had little strategic reach and influence beyond its immediate borders, and it would be no match for China.

Although close ties to Moscow helped fortify India's external security, they did little for India's stunted economy, which would likely have been

better served by orienting toward the West and plugging more fully into capitalist channels of trade and finance. In that sense, a pro-Soviet tilt frustrated India's great-power aspirations over the medium term. An autarkic economic model and "license raj"—the pejorative label applied to India's heavy-handed bureaucracy—severely constrained the country's growth. The interests of a powerful civil service were partly responsible, but a desire to avoid dependency on Western capitalist powers also helps explain why Indian leaders allowed statist principles and red tape to suffocate the economy. The Indian government began to liberalize and boost growth in the late 1980s, but dire poverty and industrial weakness remained albatrosses to the government's foreign policy aspirations.

Politically, India continued to emphasize anti-imperialism in the NAM and other forums. Severe economic problems in India and other parts of the Third World during the 1970s led to an increasing focus on principles of distributive justice as the "north" raced ahead economically, leaving developing states even further behind. India was a leading member of the G-24—set up in 1971 as an unofficial shadow IMF board for developing countries—and a key driver of the movement for a "New International Economic Order" in the 1970s and 1980s. Naturally, India's anti-imperial push and pro-Soviet tilt had political drawbacks as well, contributing to India's second-class status in Western-led institutions and clubs.

In short, India's Cold War experience showed the difficulty of pursuing several strategic goals—autonomy, security, development, and status—in a dangerous and polarized international environment. It also reinforced the difficulty of achieving any of those aims without the benefit of strong raw capabilities.

Repositioning and Revitalizing, 1991-2000

The end of the Cold War brought about a profound shift in Indian domestic and foreign policy. The economic reforms that began under then Finance Minister Manmohan Singh in 1991 were the most decisive turning point in the country's effort to build great-power capabilities. The end of the Cold War brought serious economic and security challenges to India and essentially shocked the country into liberalization. Economically, the 1991 Gulf War led to a spike in oil prices and led India's fragile economy into a balance-of-payments crisis. At the same time, the loss of Soviet military support left India vulnerable from a security standpoint. To secure an IMF rescue package, repair relations with Washington, and plug into a globalizing economy that was leaving it behind, India undertook a series

of economic reforms that began to unlock the country's potential. The decision to plug into the global economy indeed helped India begin to mend fences with the United States after decades of relative estrangement.[36] Growth during the 1990s also put India in a position to devote more resources to defense. This was crucial to India's emergence as a great-power candidate, because a great power cannot be built easily on the back of a frail economy.

Regionally, India worked during the 1990s to develop leadership in South Asia. That effort was best encapsulated in the "Gujral Doctrine" developed by Prime Minister Inder Kumar Gujral in the 1990s, which laid out a series of core principles for South Asian regional relations, including accommodative Indian policy toward much smaller states, non-interference in neighbors' political affairs, a respect for territorial integrity, and a commitment to peaceful dispute resolution.[37] Indian leaders also sought with limited success to exercise leadership by promoting trade liberalization and confidence-building measures through the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), a regional institution founded in 1985.[38]

In multilateral diplomacy, India remained broadly committed to multilateralism and the interests of the Global South. Its leaders continued to work assiduously to develop institutional clout at the United Nations, largely by mobilizing diplomatic coalitions in the General Assembly, often to oppose or counteract Western initiatives and to make up for India's lack of a vote on the Security Council. In fact, even in the decade following the end of the Cold War, India voted against the United States in the General Assembly more often than Cuba.[39] Indian leaders continued to position themselves as chiefs of the "outsiders." Thus, even when India has not had direct interests at stake, it has often sought to mobilize "Third World" coalitions. Its opposition to Western-led interventions in Iraq, Kosovo, East Timor, and elsewhere can be viewed partly through this lens.

…even in the decade following the end of the Cold War, India voted against the United States in the General Assembly more often than Cuba. Indian leaders continued to position themselves as chiefs of the "outsiders."

Despite stronger growth and a thawing relationship with the United States, India's aspirations for recognition as a major power continued to be frustrated. New Delhi's "Pokhran II tests" of nuclear weapons in 1998 were a turning point in the country's effort to gain that recognition. More about

demanding attention and respect than meeting any military necessity, they reflected both India's mounting aspirations and a continuing streak of defiant independence in its foreign policy.[40] Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh referred to the tests as an escape from "nuclear apartheid."[41]

The Pokhran II episode quickly resulted in a new wave of sanctions—which temporarily set back India's great-power quest—but ultimately appears to have had the desired effect. As India awoke economically and as Cold War tensions receded into history, New Delhi began to draw more serious attention from major capitals—especially Washington. The relatively even-handed U.S. response to the 1999 Kargil crisis, in which Pakistani forces moved across the Line of Control in Kashmir, was a key pivot in Indo-U.S. relations. President Bill Clinton demanded a Pakistani withdrawal and helped broker an end to the fighting, suggesting to Indian officials that the United States was not irrevocably committed to siding with Islamabad in a crisis.[42]

Becoming a Key "Swing State," 2001-2010

Over the past decade, India has arguably made better progress on its great-power quest than in any previous period and has been better able to advance its core foreign policy objectives. It has done so by continuing to grow its economy, pursuing rapprochement with the United States, and keeping ties open to other major powers, which enables New Delhi to reap the rewards of status as a key swing state.

Enhancing Capabilities

Perhaps the leading driver of India's progress toward great-power status this decade has been its robust economic growth; a general consensus exists across Indian political parties on the centrality of economic growth to the country's great-power aspirations.[43] Former Finance Minister P. Chidambaram said in 2007 that, "India is not respected because it has acquired the capacity to launch rockets or satellites, or because of the size of its population…The world respects India because of its capacity to emerge as an economic powerhouse."[44] Since 2002, India has enjoyed an average annual real GDP growth of roughly 8 percent, one

Since 2002, India has enjoyed an average annual real GDP growth of roughly 8 percent, one of the highest in the world.

of the highest in the world.[45] The country's dynamic high-tech sector and entrepreneurial successes have also encouraged investment and fed expectations of future growth. The vestiges of India's state-controlled economy were blessings in disguise during the Asian financial crisis in the late 1990s, and although India suffered in the crisis of 2007-2009, it has rebounded well.

After decades of a relatively closed economy, India still lacks global economic impact commensurate with its size. For example, its total external trade still falls well short of Taiwan's—a country with roughly one-fiftieth its population.[46] Infrastructure bottlenecks also threaten to choke off future growth. As noted above, poverty and inequality remain major problems, challenging the credibility of India's great-power aspirations at home and abroad. India's economy has not arrived at the great-power level yet, though its trajectory is broadly positive.

The same can be said of India's military. The challenges it faces are considerable. Tensions with China and Pakistan continue to simmer on land and at sea. India's efforts to cultivate influence in Kabul to contain Pakistani influence have generated an uptick in tensions between the old adversaries,[47] and the possibility of a U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan could further complicate India's regional relations. However, greater aggregate wealth has helped India build its hardpower capabilities, with military expenditures rising by approximately 350 percent in nominal terms between 1999 and 2009 and including purchases of more high-end systems.[48] India has long had one of the world's largest armed forces in terms of personnel; in recent years its quality has also improved.

Economic openness and a stronger military have helped India develop triangular leverage more effectively. During the Cold War, India lacked the independent power capabilities to make a decisive difference in the systemic balance of power at that stage. As growing capabilities put it on the map as a major power, its influence as a potential swing state has risen. Further, financial and trade ties have facilitated rapprochement with the United States and, to a lesser extent, with China. India's two-way trade with the United States has grown from less than USD 15 billion in 2000 to a projected USD 50 billion in 2010, and its trade with China has exploded from a mere USD 2 billion to nearly USD 60 billion over the same period.[49]

Mending Ties with the United States

Rapprochement with the United States has been at the center of India's recent approach to building capabilities and clout. Shared counter-

terrorism concerns after September 11 helped solidify the new Indo-U.S. partnership. The United States dropped the post-Pokhran sanctions, and India entered into more substantial defense arrangements with the United States and its Asia-Pacific allies. The expanded annual *Malabar* naval exercises are perhaps the most noteworthy indication. They began bilaterally in 1992 in the western Indian Ocean but now include Australia, Japan, and Singapore, and feature war games in the Bay of Bengal, closer to the crucial Straits of Malacca. They constitute a major way in which India is trying to secure its own naval environs as China develops a blue-water fleet.[50]

Indo-U.S. rapprochement also paved the way toward a series of arms deals and the headline civil-nuclear agreement. U.S. officials came to see India as a key swing state in the international system and hoped that it would become an informal ally vis-à-vis China, a stalwart supporter of the campaign against terrorism, and a possible partner in advancing the spread of democracy.[51] Indian leaders used that perception to their advantage, especially after the start of George W. Bush's second term in 2005. The civil-nuclear deal arguably knocked down one of the most salient impediments to India's accession to great-power status.

The deal was not easily sold in India given the country's longstanding commitment to an autonomous foreign policy. After decades of mutual estrangement, Indian parties on both the left and right raised significant domestic political resistance to what Jaswant Singh called "strategic subservience" to the United States.[52] Nevertheless, the deal survived, and India was the primary immediate beneficiary. It helped usher India into the club of legitimate nuclear powers (albeit through the back door), it led to similar pacts with other states to develop civil nuclear technology, and it helped quench some of the Indian economy's growing appetite for energy. India's tilt toward the United States has not revolutionized its raw capabilities, but it has helped at the margins and has increased expectations about India's potential for future economic and military expansion.

The desire for autonomy remains a core Indian priority, however, and New Delhi has by no means pursued ties with the United States alone. Instead, it has returned to the policy Nehru advocated in the early Cold War era of seeking triangular leverage through multidirectional partnerships. Thus, as it became closer to the United States on issues related to defense and counterterrorism, India was also able to strengthen bonds elsewhere. Indo-Russian ties have rebounded since the conclusion of a "strategic partnership" in 2000. Moscow is again India's dominant arms supplier, swapping obsolete Soviet-era hardware for modern equipment, and in recent years the two countries have concluded a number of pacts

for military, technical, and economic cooperation. As noted above, India's trade with China is booming despite residual distrust in the New Delhi defense establishment. In 2005, India became an observer to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a group led by China and Russia that is focused on transnational threats in Central Asia.

India's loose alignment with the United States has not come entirely without constraints on policy autonomy. For example, India's relative restraint in opposing the U.S.-led war in Iraq reflected a degree of accommodation of U.S. interests. India has also taken a more neutral line on Iran's nuclear program. New Delhi originally opposed sanctions, but its cordial ties with Tehran—fostered largely to secure energy resources and reduce reliance on pipelines through Pakistan—have ruffled feathers in Washington.[53] It is unclear whether India will support the U.S. position when it assumes a rotating Security Council seat in January 2011.[54] On other issues, India has shown a clearer willingness to assert its autonomy from Washington. For example, seeing economic opportunities and fearing instability or excessive Chinese influence in neighboring Myanmar, India has resisted U.S. calls for tighter sanctions.[55] India has also refused periodic U.S. requests that it sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Comprehensive Test Ban treaties.[56]

Pursuing Reforms in International Institutions

India's independent streak has been even more manifest in its continued approach to international institutions, and a stronger economy has supported a larger role for India in multilateral talks. India was the leading champion of the poor-country cause in the World Trade Organization (WTO), it spearheaded opposition to wealthy states' agricultural subsidies during the Doha Round, and it has been perhaps the most important state in resisting the Western trade liberalization agenda. Its role has been much maligned in first-world capitals—Commerce Minister Kamal Nath is often accused of sinking the Doha Round—but India was able to cast a large shadow by leading the emerging world opposition.[57] India has also remained a strident critic of the governance of the IMF and multilateral development banks (although it is a major customer of the latter) and a loud proponent of the need for UN Security Council reform.

India's positions are partly attributable to normative convictions but also reflect an effort to maintain credibility as a leader of the NAM and the Global South.[58] By speaking for developing countries, India can enjoy importance vis-à-vis the great powers that it lacks in the context of unequal

bilateral relationships. India can become something of an alternative power center in negotiations.

Multilateral groups and institutions also offer a way for India to amass influence even before it achieves bona fide great-power capabilities. India's greatest recent success in building multilateral clout has come through the G-20, which has emerged from its humble 1999 beginnings as the G-7's weaker sibling to play a more central role in the international economic system. Indian leaders have also been invited as guests to some recent G-8 meetings and have risen in the unofficial pecking order that determines the meeting calendars of senior great-power officials on the sidelines of major multilateral gatherings.

India has also had recent success building clout at the Bretton Woods institutions. India has long been underrepresented at the IMF, World Bank, and Asian Development Bank (ADB) in terms of its capital contribution (and thus voting power). Its capital share at the IMF actually dipped from 1.95 percent to 1.91 percent—a share smaller than Belgium's—in the 2006 round of IMF quota reform, which then Finance Minister P. Chidambaram called "hopelessly flawed."[59] However, in October 2010, the G-20 reached agreement on major reforms to the IMF's governance structure.[60] In November, the IMF announced that it will give emerging powers greater weight and make India the Fund's eighth-largest shareholder, with 2.75 percent.[61] This change, which could presage similar reforms in the World Bank and ADB, represents a significant institutional step for India, marking it more clearly as a major power.

Permanent membership on the UN Security Council—which one scholar calls "the holy grail of Indian foreign policy"—remains elusive.[62] It would require amending the UN Charter, which would mean winning a two-thirds vote in the General Assembly and the approval of all five permanent members.[63] India received a much-coveted U.S. endorsement in November 2010, when President Barack Obama visited the Indian parliament and said: "in the years ahead, I look forward to a reformed United Nations Security Council that includes India as a permanent member."[64] The United Kingdom, France, and Russia have also supported New Delhi.[65] China has been the most wary permanent member, but took a cautious half-step toward supporting India's bid in May 2010 when Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said that he "supports India's aspiration for a greater role in the UN, particularly the

Permanent membership on the UN Security Council—which one scholar calls "the holy grail of Indian foreign policy"—remains elusive.

[Security Council]."[66] Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei repeated similar language in response to questions about President Obama's statement of support in November, leaving China's exact position unclear.[67]

Despite recent progress, India faces an uphill climb for a permanent seat. Reform will require difficult deal-making that involves the G-4 candidates (India, Germany, Japan, and Brazil) and aspirants from Africa and elsewhere. Any proposals for change will likely face considerable opposition. Pakistan has already sought to block India's bid, working with large countries such as Italy, South Korea, and Argentina under the rubric of "Uniting for Consensus" to oppose a deal that would empower their respective G-4 neighbors. In addition to concerns about specific candidates and regional representation, at least a few members have expressed fears about lost efficiency and effectiveness if the Council becomes too large.[68] Given these concerns, Indian accession to the permanent members' club seems relatively unlikely in the short term.

At the regional level, India has also made some progress. It is the natural leader of SAARC, but that organization continues to underperform in the context of the ongoing feud between its two largest members (India and Pakistan). India has plugged eagerly into Asian institutions, joining the ASEAN Regional Forum in 1996 and the East Asia Summit in 2006, and has launched a bid to join the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, thus far without success. As in global institutions, India is encountering some regional headwinds despite its rising capabilities, as existing regional leaders—especially China—remain cautious about welcoming New Delhi into the fold.

In sum, India has pursued its three basic strategies quite effectively over the past ten years. In a period of relative peace among the great powers, it has been able to diversify its defense linkages as well as economic and diplomatic linkages. Doing so has helped India build capabilities and establish itself as a key "swing state" in the eyes of the U.S. government and others. Identification as a pivotal state helped admission to one of the key clubs that defines great-power status: the club of legitimate nuclear powers. At the same time, India has managed to pursue an international agenda that often runs directly counter to U.S. preferences in the WTO, the Bretton Woods institutions, the United Nations, and elsewhere.

Looking Forward

India's recent policy approach has performed well at building capabilities and influence and at advancing the country's core foreign policy

goals. For the first period since early in its independent history, India enjoys friendly relations with almost all major powers. By trading on its potential as a swing state, India has obtained significant gains in status and security from the United States without major concessions in autonomy.[69] It has also lifted millions out of poverty and raised its international profile. Nevertheless, India's road to great-power status is not complete. The country's significant challenges have been noted. Growth has not ended the problem of poverty; military modernization has occurred in the context of new security challenges; New Delhi faces new constraints on its policy choices; and India has not been granted full admission to the inner institutional sanctums of the great-power club.

IMPLICATIONS FOR INDO-U.S. RELATIONS

India is still very much in the mode of seeking great-power status, which presents both risks and opportunities for the United States. The principal risk is that India will use its newfound leverage to flexibly partner with other emerging powers, oppose many U.S. initiatives, and thus frustrate American leadership as India moves toward center stage. However, there are also real opportunities associated with India's rise. India's aspirations for regional leadership and nuclear legitimacy facilitated Indo-U.S. rapprochement during the final years of the Clinton administration and during the Bush administration. Those interests contributed to India's willingness to strategically realign itself toward a modest pro-American stance, which represents one of the major accomplishments of U.S. foreign policy over the past decade.[70]

The principal risk is that India will use its newfound leverage to flexibly partner with other emerging powers, oppose many U.S. initiatives, and thus frustrate American leadership as India moves toward center stage.

Both governments should redouble efforts to build on that foundation. Numerous global challenges demand cooperation between India and the United States, such as terrorism, nuclear proliferation, climate change, poverty, and institutional reform. Regional problems also abound, including not only the headline issues in Afghanistan and Pakistan but also episodic unrest in India's smaller neighbors, abuses in Myanmar, and the possibility of a destabilizing naval competition with China along the southern Asian littoral. Wise policies can help enlist New Delhi as a key

partner; unsound choices can push India back toward the obstructionism of the past. The analysis in this article suggests some key principles that the Obama administration should keep in mind as it engages with India over the next few years.

Conveying Respect

After a decade of robust economic growth and strategic rapprochement, India has developed a legitimate expectation to be treated as a diplomatic priority and key strategic partner. Striking the right balance is not easy amid simmering Indian tensions with China and Pakistan. Immediately after his inauguration, President Obama raised a few eyebrows by appointing Richard Holbrooke as his special adviser on Pakistan and Afghanistan (but not India). During President Obama's first trip to Asia in November 2009, he stopped in China (twice), Japan, South Korea, and Singapore, but omitted India, which augmented concerns in New Delhi. He also stoked Indian ire by pledging in a communiqué to develop cooperation with China in South Asia and to encourage warmer Indo-Pakistani ties.[71] To some critics, that pledge seemed to downgrade India, treating it less like a strategic partner and more like a pawn on an emerging Sino-American chessboard.

Recently, the administration has begun to make amends. In May 2010, President Obama called India an "indispensable partner" and launched an overdue U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue modeled on the interagency U.S.-China dialogue established in 2006.[72] President Obama's November 2010 trip to India—punctuated by his endorsement of a permanent Indian Security Council seat—eased concerns about fading American interest in the relationship. The endorsement was a surprise to most observers and it entails non-negligible risks. American support for India will likely lead to renewed requests for backing from other candidates and will probably irritate India's opponents, particularly Pakistan and possibly China. Pakistan's Foreign Ministry quickly accused the U.S. government of ignoring India's "continued flagrant violation" of UN Security Council resolutions on Kashmir, indulging "temporary expediencies" and playing "power politics."[73] On the whole, however, the announcement was an important and appropriate step. It signaled the sustained elevation of Indo-U.S. ties even if it does not carry a promise of specific U.S. action or the likelihood of a permanent seat for New Delhi in the near term.

Reinforcing Credibility

Building a durable Indo-U.S. partnership also requires an even-handed approach to the rivalry between India and Pakistan. Part of that challenge relates to arms sales. Since September 11, 2001, Indian officials have expressed concern that the United States is rewarding Pakistan for counterterrorist cooperation by arming it with F-16s, anti-ship missiles, and other military hardware more useful for fighting India than for fighting insurgents.[74] Critics have also accused the Bush and Obama administrations of turning a blind eye to Pakistani-backed terror in Kashmir for fear of alienating Islamabad.[75] In the fall of 2010, the White House announced a new USD 7.5 billion aid package for Pakistan.[76] However, in November, President Obama announced USD 10 billion in new trade deals with India, including "preliminary agreements" to sell military aircraft to India.[77] Although sales to Pakistan will continue to grate nerves in New Delhi, rapidly rising Indo-U.S. arms sales should make this challenge manageable.

Terrorism and the Kashmir issue also pose perennial problems for U.S. policy in South Asia. The Obama administration cannot be expected to eliminate *jihadist* threats or to solve the Kashmir dispute, but if it seeks credibility in New Delhi, it must be more consistently attentive to legitimate Indian security concerns. In particular, the United States should condemn Pakistani-backed violence in India when evidence of Islamabad's participation is strong. President Obama's recent trip suggested a modest but appropriate policy recalibration. The President visited the site of the 2008 Mumbai attacks, and although he avoided mention of Pakistan or use of the term "terrorism" on that occasion,[78] his speech to the parliament stressed that the United States supports justice for the Mumbai attacks and will press Pakistan's leaders to eliminate terrorist safe havens.[79] To address concerns that the United States was neglecting the point of ultimate sensitivity in South Asian security, President Obama added that the U.S. government cannot "impose a solution" on Kashmir but will play "any role the parties think is appropriate."[80]

After decades of frosty relations, building a degree of trust will not happen overnight. Measures like the new strategic dialogue are sound diplomatic investments for the United States, even if they do not bear immediate fruit in negotiating thorny issues. In this and other respects, U.S. officials must take regular steps to demonstrate that rapprochement was not a flash in the pan and that the priority placed on the relationship is durable. India will only opt to be a reliable partner if it believes the United States will be a credible counterparty.

Understanding Differences

U.S. policy should be based on an understanding that prioritizing India will not necessarily lead to agreement on many key contentious issues. Two Indian prime ministers—Singh and his predecessor, Atal Bihari Vajpayee—and some key U.S. officials presented India and the United States as "natural allies" during the civil nuclear negotiations.[81] That phrase was politically sensible in its context and appealing as an aspiration, but it overstated the probable near-term congruence of the two countries' policy attitudes. India and the United States will likely continue to quarrel over a wide range of issues, from development policy to climate change. India remains a poor developing country likely to champion the concerns of the Global South and to favor a multipolar order and relatively strong norm of state sovereignty. Precipitous change is unlikely in the near term.

The notion of a natural alliance also defies some of the logic of India's recent foreign policy approach. A relatively weak power often seeks influence by adopting a middle position among rival great-powers to keep options open and also entices rival powers to vie for its allegiance. Indian leaders have worked diligently to build favorable ties toward both the East and West that leave it in a pivotal position. They are not likely to forfeit that flexibility or autonomy easily, even if the incentive to do so comes as part of their accession to privileged great-power clubs.

The point here is certainly not to subject Indo-U.S. relations to low expectations. It is to be realistic, to pursue incremental gains when major breakthroughs are not possible, and to avoid reflexively downgrading the relationship out of frustration when impasses inevitably occur. On some issues—perhaps education—progress may come easier than it will on thornier ones, such as climate change and agriculture. Patience will be a key virtue. The primary goal of engagement with India should not be to score short-term political victories or quick policy concessions; it should be to manage a complex and often challenging relationship that will help define international affairs in the twenty-first century.

Requiring Responsibility

The United States has an interest in promoting the emergence of a strong and friendly India. Despite some disagreement, helping India reach great-power status on favorable terms does not require massive concessions, and the United States has considerable leverage in the relationship. India's wish list is not exhausted. It seeks access to certain forms of advanced tech-

nology and defense equipment that the United States and its allies can provide.[82] It also remains significantly underrepresented in key institutions that define great-power status. The United States is not the official gatekeeper of such institutions, but its leadership in key forums does give it considerable input on how those clubs and institutions evolve.

President Obama struck an appropriate balance when he pledged to support a permanent Indian Security Council seat. His announcement was a watershed, but it did not offer an unconditional endorsement, and it set neither a timeline nor a specific plan of action.[83] The U.S. government has good reasons to engage in UN Security Council reform and to support Indian candidacy, but it is also wise to proceed on an incremental basis. Indo-U.S. cooperation can and should be a major factor in determining how (and to what extent) the United States will use its influence to advance India's quest for Security Council membership and for other institutional reforms.

American statesmen should emphasize that recognition as a great power carries rights but also responsibilities. India's accession to larger institutional roles should be premised on its demonstrable commitment to forge cooperative solutions—both in bilateral and multilateral settings—on economic, security, and environmental issues of regional and global concern. U.S. officials should also continue to press India to assume responsibility in promoting good governance and democratic norms abroad.[84] There are already hints of a shift in Indian strategy. In a closed-door meeting in August 2009, Prime Minister Singh reportedly told a number of his key subordinates and an audience of foreign ambassadors that India would try to reverse its image as an obstructive player in global negotiations on trade, climate change, and other issues.[85]

In the near future, India will remain a relatively poor country that objects to many elements of the status quo configuration of international politics. Nevertheless, India's pursuit of great-power status does not pose an intractable challenge to U.S. interests. The two countries share important basic values and interests, and the near-term role that India seeks is compatible with the U.S. vision of a desirable world order. ■

ENDNOTES

1 Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook* (1988) (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1988).

2 *World Economic Outlook: Rebalancing Growth*, International Monetary Fund, April 2010.

3 United Nations Industrial Development Organization, *International Yearbook of Industrial Statistics*, 2010 (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2010).

4 For example, in 2006 Prime Minister Manmohan Singh expressed that aim in a U.S. media interview: "Charlie Rose Interviews PM Manmohan Singh," *Council on Foreign Relations*, February 27, 2006, <https://secure.www.cfr.org/publication/9986/charlie_rose_interviews_indian_pm_manmohan_singh.html> (accessed December 1, 2010). In 2004, the BJP's election campaign carried an explicit pledge to make India a "great power" by 2020: Bharatiya Janata Party, "Vision Document 2004," March 2004, <http://www.bjp.org/content/view/448/425/> (accessed December 1, 2010).
5 *World Economic Outlook*.
6 Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, *SIPRI Yearbook 2010* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
7 Robert Pape, "Soft Balancing Against the United States," *International Security* 46(1) (2005), 1-46; and T.V. Paul, "Soft Balancing in the Age of U.S. Primacy," *International Security* 30(1) (2005), 46-71.
8 Edward Luce, *In Spite of the Gods: The Strange Rise of Modern India* (New York: Doubleday, 2007), 277; Daniel Twining, "Why Obama Needs to Play His Cards Right with India," *Foreign Policy.com*, November 24, 2009; and Nicholas Burns, "America's Strategic Opportunity with India," *Foreign Affairs* 86(6) (November/December 2007).
9 Yashwant Singh, "What It Takes to be a World Power," *Address to the India Today Conclave 2004*, December 3, 2004, <http://www.indianembassy.org.cn/press/eam_indiatoday.htm> (accessed December 1, 2010).
10 Atal Bihari Vajpayee, "India Tomorrow: Building an Indian Century," *Address to the India Today Conclave 2004*, December 3, 2004, <http://pib.nic.in/release/release.asp?relid=1305&kwd=> (accessed December 1, 2010).
11 Jawaharlal Nehru, *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru, Second Series* (New York: Oxford University Press), vol. 1 (1984), 311, and vol. 14 (1995), 325.
12 For an overview of the historical rivalry, see J. Mohan Malik, "China-India Relations in the Post-Soviet Era: The Continuing Rivalry," *China Quarterly* 142 (1995), 317-55. On contemporary perceptions of a "China threat" in India, see R.S.N. Singh, "Threat Perception of India," *Indian Defence Review*, August 13, 2010 <http://www.indiandefencereview.com/spotlight/Threat-Perception-of-India.html> (accessed December 1, 2010); Rajat Pandit, "Army Reworks War Doctrine for Pakistan, China," *The Times of India*, December 30, 2009; and "IAF Chief Says China a Greater Threat than Pakistan," *Reuters*, May 24, 2009 <http://www.expressindia.com/latest-news/IAF-Chief-says-China-a-greater-threat-than-Pakistan/465100/> (accessed December 1, 2010).
13 A group of Booz-Allen Hamilton consultants coined the term in a 2007 report to the U.S. Defense Department. See *Energy Futures in Asia: Perspectives on India's Energy Security Strategies and Policies*, Office of the Secretary of Defense, 2005, 3-5.
14 Baldev Raj Nayar and T.V. Paul, *India in the World Order: Searching for Major-Power Status* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 66-98.
15 Selig Harrison argues that great-power posturing was particularly crucial in winning support for Nehru's early Five-Year Plans. See Selig S. Harrison, "Troubled India and Her Neighbors," *Foreign Affairs* 43(2) (January 1965).
16 T.V. Paul thus calls India a "strong-weak state," emphasizing the country's considerable continuing security challenges. See T.V. Paul, "State Capacity and South Asia's Perennial Insecurity Problems," in T.V. Paul, ed., *South Asia's Weak States: Understanding the Regional Insecurity Predicament* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010), 15-16.
17 "Commanding Heights: An Interview with Manmohan Singh," *PBS*, February 6, 2001,

<http://www.pbs.org/ wgbh/commandingheights/shared/minitext/int_manmohansingh.html> (accessed December 1, 2010).

18 Jayati Ghosh, *Poverty Reduction in China and India: Policy Implications of Recent Trends*, United Nations DESA Working Paper No. 92 (January 2010), 14-16. Comparative GDP per capita data from Central Intelligence Agency, *The World Factbook* (2008), (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2008).

19 "100 Million More Indians Now Living in Poverty," *Reuters*, April 18, 2010.

20 Erin Robinson, *Rising India's Great Power Burden*, The Sigur Center for Asian Studies Asia Report 7 (January 2010), summarizing a lecture by C. Raja Mohan.

21 Stephen P. Cohen, "India Rising," *Wilson Quarterly* 24 (Summer 2000), 52.

22 Barry Buzan and Ole Wæver, *Regions and Powers: The Structure of International Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 118-119.

23 Nayar and Paul, 1.

24 Nayar and Paul, 109-112. On the importance of status recognition and respect, see also Brahma Chellaney, "Does India Crave International Recognition?" *The Economic Times* (India), November 12, 2010.

25 See, for example, Robert L. Hardgrave, Jr. and Stanley A. Kochanek, *India: Government and Politics in a Developing Nation,* 7th ed. (Boston, MA: Thomson Wadsworth, 2008), 477-78; Sandy Gordon, *India's Rise to Power in the Twentieth Century and Beyond* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995), 12; and Sumit Ganguly, "India's Foreign Policy Grows Up," *World Policy Journal* 20(4) (2003), 47.

26 Girja Shankar Bajpai, "India and the Balance of Power," *The Indian Yearbook of International Affairs* (Madras: Indian Study Group on International Affairs, 1952), 1-87.

27 Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery of India* (New York: John Day, 1946), 550.

28 For more on the concept of "institutional realpolitik," see John D. Ciorciari, "Institutions and Indian Foreign Policy," unpublished paper presented at the International Studies Association Annual Convention, New Orleans, LA, February 2010 (available upon request from the author).

29 Nayar and Paul, 127. On the general strategy of non-alignment or limited alignments, see John D. Ciorciari, *The Limits of Alignment: Southeast Asia and the Great Powers since 1975* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2010), 16-29.

30 Sumit Ganguly, "India: Policies, past and future," in Selig S. Harrison, Paul H. Kreisberg, and Dennis Kux, eds., *India and Pakistan: The First Fifty Years* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 155-156.

31 C. Raja Mohan, *Crossing the Rubicon: The Shaping of India's New Foreign Policy* (New Delhi: Penguin Group, 2003), 120-123.

32 Christopher Van Hollen, "The Tilt Policy Revisited: Nixon-Kissinger Geopolitics and South Asia," *Asian Survey* 20(4) (1980), 339-361.

33 Mohan, 9-10.

34 Sumit Ganguly, "An Indian Concern is China," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (July/August 1994), 16.

35 Ganguly, "India: Policies, past and future," 162-164.

36 S. Paul Kapur, "India and the United States from World War II to the Present," in Sumit Ganguly, ed., *India's Foreign Policy: Retrospect and Prospect* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) 259-260.

37 Inder Kumar Gujral, *A Foreign Policy for India* (New Delhi: Indian Ministry of External Affairs, 1999).

38 Stephen F. Burgess, "India and South Asia: Towards a Benign Hegemony," in Harsh V. Pant, ed., *Indian Foreign Policy in a Unipolar World* (London: Routledge, 2009), 238-240.

39 Xenia Dormandy, "Is India, or Will It Be, a Responsible International Stakeholder?" *Washington Quarterly* 30(3) (2007), 126. For detailed data on General Assembly voting, see Erik Gaertzke, "The Affinity of Nations: Similarity of Voting Patterns in the UNGA," <http://dss.ucsd.edu/~egartzke/htmlpages/data.html> (accessed December 1, 2010).
40 Ashley Tellis, *India's Emerging Nuclear Posture* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2001), 105; and Fareed Zakaria, "How to Be a Great Power, Cheap," *Newsweek*, May 25, 1998.
41 Jaswant Singh, "Against Nuclear Apartheid," *Foreign Affairs* 77(5) (September/October 1998).
42 Kapur, 263.
43 David Malone and Rohan Mukherjee, "Polity, Security, and Foreign Policy in Contemporary India," in T.V. Paul, ed., *South Asia's Weak States: Understanding the Regional Insecurity Predicament* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press), 163-64.
44 P. Chidambaram, "India Empowered to Me Is," in *A View from the Outside: Why Good Economics Works for Everyone* (New Delhi: Penguin, 2007).
45 *Asian Development Outlook 2010*, Asian Development Bank, 2010.
46 *Asian Development Outlook 2008,* Asian Development Bank, 2008.
47 Emily Wax, "Wooing Afghanistan, at a Cost," the *Washington Post*, April 4, 2010; and Jayshree Bajoria, "India-Afghanistan Relations," *Council on Foreign Relations*, July 22, 2009. This follows an approach long-ago expounded by the philosopher Kautilya via the concept of *mandala*, whereby India courts friends in outer concentric strategic circles to constrain more proximate foes. See Roger Boesche, "Kautila's *Arthasastra* on War and Diplomacy in Ancient India," *Journal of Military History* 67(1) (2003), 9-37.
48 Nominal expenditures rose from roughly USD 10.5 billion in 199 to USD 36.6 billion in 2009. See *SIPRI Yearbook 2010*; and *SIPRI Yearbook 2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
49 For Indo-U.S. data, see *Foreign Trade Statistics*, "Trade in Goods (Imports, Exports and Trade Balance) with India, U.S. Census Bureau, <http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade/balance/c5330.html> (accessed December 5, 2010); for figures on trade between China and India, see the *Trade Statistics: Bilateral Trade*, Confederation of Indian Industry, <http://www.indiachina.org/trade_statistics.htm> (accessed December 5, 2010), and Indian Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Press Release, December 6, 2000, "India's Trade with China to Cross $2 Billion Mark in 2000-2001," <http://commerce.nic.in/pressrelease/pressrelease_detail.asp?id=106> (accessed December 5, 2010).
50 "India, U.S. in Talks for Malabar Joint Services War Game," *The Hindu*, December 4, 2009.
51 India has indeed drawn some attention to its democratic success and cultivated—albeit cautiously—what Prime Minister Singh has called "soft power." See "Interview with Manmohan Singh," the *Financial Times*, March 31, 2009.
52 Somini Sengupta, "A Bump in Indo-U.S. Rapport: Defining 'Ally,'" *The New York Times*, August 23, 2007; and Sumit Ganguly, "Nuclear Brinkmanship," *Newsweek,* September 3, 2007.
53 In the run-up to the civil nuclear deal, some U.S. Congressmen agitated for India to break ties with Iran. See Glenn Kessler, "Lawmakers Decry India-Iran Alliance," the *Washington Post,* May 3, 2007, A15.
54 Jeremy Kahn, "India's Nuclear Diplomacy," *Newsweek*, August 16, 2010; and "India at the High Table," *Straits Times* (Singapore), October 20, 2010.
55 Ramesh Ramachandran, "No Rethink on India's Burma Policy," *The Asian Age*, November 10, 2010; and Harmeet Shah Singh, "Myanmar's Military Leader Accorded Red-Carpet Welcome in India," *Time*, July 27, 2010.

56 "India Will Not Sign 'Discriminatory' NPT: Tharoor," *ANI,* September 25, 2009, <http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/india-news/india-will-not-sign-discriminatory-npt-tharoor_100252484.html> (accessed December 1, 2010). The U.S. State Department recently indicated that India's refusal to sign the two nuclear treaties was not "at odds" with U.S. support for India's bid for a permanent UN Security Council seat. Philip J. Crowley, Daily Press Briefing, U.S. State Department, November 16, 2010, <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/dpb/2010/11/151006.htm> (accessed December 1, 2010).

57 Stephen Castle and Vikas Bajaj, "New Players, Same Issues on Trade," *International Herald Tribune*, September 3, 2009; and John Miller, "India Emerges as Doha's Linchpin," the *Wall Street Journal*, July 25, 2008.

58 Teresita C. Schaffer, "The United States, India, and Global Governance: Can They Work Together?" *Washington Quarterly* 32(3) (2009), 73.

59 "India Attacks 'Flawed' IMF Reform," *BBC World News*, September 19, 2006.

60 "G-20 Ministers Agree 'Historic' Reforms in IMF Governance," *IMF Survey Magazine*, October 23, 2010, <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/survey/so/2010/new102310a.htm> (accessed December 1, 2010).

61 International Monetary Fund, Press Release, November 5, 2010, "IMF Executive Board Approves Major Overhaul of Quotas and Governance," <http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2010/pr10418.htm> (accessed December 1, 2010); and International Monetary Fund, "IMF Quota and Governance reform—Elements of an Agreement," Memorandum by the IMF Finance, Legal, and Strategy, Policy, and Review Departments, October 31, 2010, <http://www.imf.org/external/np/pp/eng/2010/103110.pdf> (accessed December 1, 2010).

62 Stewart M. Patrick, "A Moment for U.N. Security Council Reform," *Council on Foreign Relations*, November 8, 2010, <http://www.cfr.org/publication/23346/moment_for_un_security_council_reform.html> (accessed December 1, 2010).

63 United Nations, Charter of the United Nations, October 24, 1945, 1 UNTS XVI, article 108.

64 Christi Parsons and Paul Richter, "Obama Backs India's Bid for U.N. Security Council Seat," *Los Angeles Times*, November 8, 2010.

65 India-Russia Joint Declaration, Moscow, December 7, 2009, paragraph 16.

66 Rahul Karmakar, "China for Greater Indian Role in United Nations Security Council," *Hindustan Times*, May 27, 2010.

67 On November 9, 2010, Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Hong Lei said that China "understands and supports India's aspiration to play a bigger role at the UN and will stay in contact and consultation with other UN member states including India on the UN and Security Council reform." Foreign Ministry Spokesman Hong Lei's Regular Press Conference, November 9, 2010, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/xwfw/s2510/t768001.htm> (accessed December 2, 2010).

68 Russia and the United States have both suggested in recent years that a Council expanding beyond 20-21 members could become unwieldy. See William M. Reilly, "U.S. Spells Out U.N. Reforms Sought," *UPI*, June 25, 2005, <http://www.upi.com/Business_News/Security-Industry/2005/06/23/US-spells-out-UN-reforms-sought/UPI-91551119560797> (accessed December 2, 2010); and "Reformed UN Security Council Must Not Be Too large—Lavrov," *Interfax*, September 27, 2010, <http://www.interfax.com/newsinf.asp?pg=4&id=191481> (accessed December 2, 2010). For analysts who agree, see David Bosco, "Think Again: The U.N. Security Council," *Foreign Policy.com*, September 23, 2009; Thomas G. Weiss, "The Illusion of Security Council Reform,"

Washington Quarterly 26(4) (2003), 149-50; and Yehuda Z. Blum, "Proposals for UN Security Council Reform," *American Journal of International Law* 99(3) (2005), 644.

69 This argument is developed at some length in John D. Ciorciari, "What Kind of Great Power Will India Be? Indo-U.S. Alignment and India's Broader Foreign Policy Orientation," unpublished paper presented at the International Studies Association Annual Convention, New York, NY, February 2009.

70 S. Paul Kapur and Sumit Ganguly, "The Transformation of U.S.-India Relations," *Asian Survey* 47(4) (2007), 647-653.

71 Sumit Ganguly, "America's Other Strategic Dialogue," the *Wall Street Journal,* May 30, 2010.

72 Merle David Kellerhals, Jr., "India an Indispensable Partner, U.S. Officials Say," U.S. State Department news release, June 1, 2010.

73 Sheryl Gay Stolberg and Jim Yardley, "Countering China, Obama Backs India for U.N. Council," *The New York Times*, November 8, 2010; and Baqir Sajjad Syed, "Pakistan Concerns Conveyed to U.S. Ambassador," *Dawn* (Pakistan), November 10, 2010.

74 "U.S. Arms Sale to Pakistan Matter of Concern for India: Antony," *Hindustan Times*, September 27, 2010; and Gurmeet Kanwal, "U.S. Arms Sales Are Propping up Pakistan as a Regional Challenger," Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, February 11, 2010, <http://www.idsa.in/idsacomments/USArmsSales isproppingup-PakistanasaRegionalChallenger_gkanwal_110210> (accessed December 2, 2010).

75 See, for example, Ahmed Rashid, "The Road to Kabul Runs through Kashmir," *Foreign Policy.com*, November 22, 2010; and Selig Harrison, "Pakistan Divides U.S. and India," the *Los Angeles Times*, November 12, 2010.

76 "U.S. Doesn't Want to Arm Pak Against India, Obama Told Zardari," *Times of India*, September 27, 2010.

77 "Factbox: Obama Highlights USD 10 Billion of Deals in India," *Reuters*, November 6, 2010.

78 Tripti Lahiri, "Obama's Cautious Terror Speech Extols Mumbai," *The Wall Street Journal*, November 6, 2010.

79 "Obama Backs India for U.N. Security Council Seat," *Associated Press*, November 8, 2010.

80 Ibid.

81 Atal Bihari Vajpayee, *Speech After Dedicating the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial*, Washington, DC, September 16, 2000; and Robert Blackwill, "Why is India America's Natural Ally?" *The National Interest*, May 2005.

82 Ashish Kumar Sen, "India Seeks Eased U.S. Controls on Sales of Its Defense Technologies," the *Washington Times*, September 27, 2010.

83 That aspect of Obama's statement was not lost on Indian observers. See Siddharth Varadarajan, "Obama's UNSC Statement a Boost but India to Be on Probation," *The Hindu*, November 9, 2010.

84 For a discussion of Indo-U.S. engagement on democracy issues during the Bush years, see C. Raja Mohan, "Balancing Interests and Values: India's Struggle with Democracy Promotion," *Washington Quarterly* 30(3) (2007), 99-115.

85 Jeremy Kahn, "India Cleans Up Its Act," *Newsweek*, November 6, 2009.