



INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY TOWARDS RUSSIA DURING THE RUSSO-UKRAINE WAR

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ABSTRACT

India's response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine has been unique among major democracies and US strategic partners. Despite its discomfort with Moscow's war, New Delhi has adopted a studied public neutrality toward Russia. It has consistently avoided votes in the UN Security Council, the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council condemning Russian aggression in Ukraine and has so far refused to openly call out Russia as the instigator of the crisis. For many in the United States, including President Joe Biden's administration, India's neutrality has been disappointing because it signaled a sharp divergence between Washington and New Delhi on a fundamental issue of the global order, namely, shifting borders and annexation. The legitimacy of using force to take another country's territory through coercive war of conquest. Whatever their views on the origins and causes of the Ukraine war, most Indian strategic elites would admit that their country's diplomatic neutrality ultimately reflects what one Indian scholar has called "a subtle pro-Moscow position".

Key words: *Russia-Ukraine, India, Foreign Policy, UN Security Council, General Assembly*

INTRODUCTION

The meeting between President Vladimir Putin and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Samarkand, Uzbekistan in September 2022 marked a change in the partnership between Russia and India. Speaking about the Kremlin's invasion of Ukraine, Modi publicly warned Putin that he had told him "many times before" about the need to rely on diplomacy and taking the path of peace to end the war. " Had talked. Food and fuel prices had soared.1 Xi Jinping, who also attended the SCO gathering, did not support Putin's war, but neither did he openly criticize it; Modi did it. India,



although it has long been dependent on Russia and still considers it an important country, is increasingly seeking to set the terms of its partnership.

Russia and India have a long history of friendly, mutually beneficial relations. During the Cold War, the Soviet Union, as a superpower, had the upper hand in relations with India, which was part of the Community of "Developing" Nations, although also one of the leaders of the Non-Aligned Movement. The breakup of the Soviet Union and Russia's subsequent waning international position changed the balance of relations towards India, which emerged as a major power due to economic reforms initiated in the early 1990s as well as a growing global presence. In the ongoing friendly and wide-ranging relations between Moscow and New Delhi, no observer would describe Moscow as the junior partner.

Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, the relationship is set to undergo even greater change for four reasons:

- Russia's efforts for closer ties with China.
- For Russia, its relations with China are more important than with India.
- Decreased importance of Russia in India's foreign policy agenda.
- India's growing security relationship with the United States.

The paper first provides the strategic context surrounding Russian-Indian relations and its development from the end of the Cold War to the beginning of the invasion of Ukraine in February. It then provides an analytical overview of the relationship, including the legacy of the Soviet era, the period following the break-up of the Soviet Union, and the post-invasion dynamics. Finally, it presents two scenarios for where the relationship could move and ends with implications for US interests.

India - Russia Relations

Relations with Russia are an important pillar of India's foreign policy and Russia is a long-standing time-tested partner of India. Since the signing of the "Declaration on India-Russia Strategic Partnership" in October 2000 (during the visit of Russian President H.E. Vladimir Putin to India), India-Russia relations have acquired a qualitatively new character, with the development of bilateral relations. The level of cooperation has increased in almost all areas including politics, security, trade and economy, defence, science and technology and culture.



Under the Strategic Partnership, various institutional dialogue mechanisms are functioning at both the political and official levels to ensure regular dialogue and follow-up on cooperative activities. During the visit of the President of Russia to India in December 2010, the diplomatic partnership was raised to the level of "Special and Privileged Diplomatic Partnership".

Political Affiliation

During the visit of the President of Russia to India in December 2010, the diplomatic partnership was raised to the level of "Special and Privileged Diplomatic Partnership". So far 16 Annual Summits have been held alternately between India and Russia, of which the 16th Annual Summit was held in Moscow on 23 and 24 December 2014 during the visit of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Russia. 17 documents were signed during this summit which included cooperation in nuclear energy, defence, hydrocarbons, satellite navigation, railways, solar energy, heavy engineering, super computing, visa simplification, Ayurveda and media. A joint statement "Shared faith, new horizons" was also adopted by the Prime Minister and President Putin. In addition to the Annual Summit in December 2015, our Prime Minister also met the President of Russia on the sidelines of the 7th BRICS Summit and SCO Summit on 8 July 2015 in Ufa, Russia. The Indian President participated in the celebrations commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Victory in World War II in Moscow on May 9, 2015 and held a bilateral meeting with President Putin on the sidelines.

There are regular talks between the two countries at the highest level. There are annual meetings of two Inter-Governmental Commissions, one on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC), which is co-chaired by the Foreign Minister and the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, and the other on Related to Military Technical Cooperation (IRIGC - MTC), which is co-chaired by the Russian and Indian Defense Ministers. EAM visited Moscow on 20 October 2015 to co-chair the 21st IRIGC-TEC meeting and also met his Russian counterpart. The Foreign Ministers of India and Russia have met twice earlier in 2015, on the sidelines of the Russia-India-China (RIC) Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Weijiang on 2 February 2015 and on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly in New York in September 2015. At the BRICS Foreign Ministers meeting during the 70th session. Foreign Secretary visited Moscow on 19 October 2015 and held Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) with First Deputy Foreign Minister of Russia Vladimir Titov and Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Morgulov. Deputy Prime Minister Rogozin visited India on 8 December 2015 and during the visit he met the Prime Minister and the National Security Advisor.



The Speaker of the State Duma (the lower house of the Russian Parliament) visited India in February 2015 to co-chair the third meeting of the India-Russia Inter-Parliamentary Commission with the Speaker of the Lok Sabha. He also met the President and Vice President of India. In March 2015 Russian Minister of Telecommunications and Mass Communications Mr. Nikolay Nikiforov visited Delhi where he met his Indian counterpart Minister of Communications and Information Technology and Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting. In April 2015, India's Minister of State for Defense visited Moscow and attended the 4th Moscow Conference on International Security and also addressed the ASSOCHAM-Sberbank Conference on Defense Industry Cooperation. The Chief Justice of India and the Minister of Law and Justice participated in the St. Petersburg International Legal Forum in May 2015. In June 2015, Commerce and Industry Minister visited St.Petersburg to participate in the 15th St.Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPEIF) and also met Mr. Denis Mendurov, Minister of Trade and Industry of Russia. In September 2015 the Interior Minister of Russia Mr. Vladimir Kolokoltsev visited India and had a bilateral meeting with our Home Minister.

Russia assumed the chairmanship of BRICS in April 2015 and since then it has been organizing several events and meetings under the BRICS format. Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change visited Moscow for BRICS Environment Ministers' Meeting on 21st April, 2015 Secretary (East) participated in BRICS Consultations on Middle East and North Africa in Moscow on 22nd May, 2015 National Security Advisor visited Moscow to participate in the 5th Meeting of the BRICS High Representatives for Security Issues on 25 and 26 May 2015 and the Chairman of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs attended the BRICS Parliamentary Forum in Moscow on 8 June 2015 participated in. The Finance Minister attended the BRICS Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Moscow on 7 July and the BRICS Summit in Ufa. The Prime Minister attended the 7th BRICS Summit in Ufa, Russia on 8 and 9 July and also attended the Plenary Session of the SCO where it was decided to initiate the process of India's membership of the organization. India's Minister of State for Home Affairs and Minister of Agriculture and Science and Technology and Earth Sciences visited Russia in October 2015 to participate in various BRICS events, while External Affairs Minister co-chaired the IRIGC-TEC session. During his visit to Moscow on October 20 to chair the BRICS Industrial Ministers' Meeting.

Defense Cooperation:

India's relations with Russia in the defense sector have been longstanding and one of wide-ranging cooperation. India-Russia military technical cooperation has moved beyond a simple buyer-seller framework to one that involves joint research, development and production of



advanced defense technologies and systems. BrahMos missile system, joint design and development of fifth generation fighter aircraft and multi transport aircraft and licensed production of Su-30 aircraft and T-90 tanks are examples of such major cooperation. In June 2014, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi dedicated the Russian-built aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya to the nation at a special ceremony off the coast of Goa. Both countries also conduct annual exchanges and training exercises between their armed forces. An Indian contingent takes part in the military parade during the 70th anniversary of the victory in World War II, in Moscow on May 09, 2015.

Review of defense cooperation between the two countries by the Inter-Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-MTC) co-chaired by the Defense Ministers of the two countries and its working groups and sub-groups. Defense Minister of India to co-chair the 15th meeting of the Commission with Defense Minister of Russia Sergey Sogou on 2 November 2015 in Moscow to review the ongoing cooperation and to consider future opportunities for furthering bilateral defense cooperation Visited. In December 2014, the governments of the two countries signed an agreement for the training of personnel of the Armed Forces of India at military educational establishments of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation. On 24 December 2015, at the annual summit, a government-to-government agreement was signed for the manufacture of Ka-226 helicopters in India, the first major defense project under the Make in India initiative.

Economic Relations

Making the economic partnership between India and Russia a strong pillar as other pillars of strategic partnership is the main priority of both the governments. In order to encourage freer and greater movement of businessmen, the two countries signed a Protocol on 24 December 2015 to simplify the visa process for businessmen and representatives of associations.

In December 2014, the leaders of India and Russia set a target of US\$ 30 billion in bilateral trade by 2025. Bilateral trade during 2014 stood at US\$ 9.51 billion, with exports from India valued at US\$ 3.17 billion (up 2.6 per cent over 2013) and imports from Russia valued at US\$ 6.34 billion (up 2.6 per cent over 2013). 9.2 percent less than Major items exported from India include pharmaceuticals, miscellaneous manufacturing, iron and steel, apparel, tea, coffee, and tobacco. The main items imported from Russia include defense and nuclear power equipment, fertilisers, electrical machinery, steel and diamonds.



Indian investments in Russia are estimated to be around US\$ 8 billion, including Imperial Energy Tomsk; Sakhalin I; Volzhsky Abrasive Wax Volgograd; and Commercial Indo Bank. Kamaz Vectra in Hosur among Russian investments of about US\$ 3 billion in India; Shyam Systema Telecom Ltd., Sberbank and VTB are involved.

The Inter-Governmental Commission on Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC) is the apex G-to-G forum for reviewing economic cooperation. It deals with trade and economic cooperation, priority investments, modernization and industrial cooperation (sub-groups on civil aviation, mining, fertilizers and modernisation), outstanding issues, energy and energy efficiency, science and technology, communications and information technology, tourism and culture, and Reviews regional cooperation under the sub-groups of banking and financial matters and matters relating to tiger and leopard conservation. The 21st session of the Inter-Governmental Commission on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation was held in Moscow on 20 October 2015.

The India-Russia Business and Investment Forum and the India-Russia CEOs Council, co-chaired by the Minister of Commerce and Industry of India and the Minister of Economic Development of Russia, are the two primary mechanisms for promoting direct bilateral business contacts between India and Russia. India-Russia Business Council (Partnership between FICCI of India and CCI of Russia), India-Russia Business Dialogue (Partnership between CII of India and Business Council of Russia for Co-operation with India) and India-Russia Chamber of Commerce (with special focus on SMEs) complement efforts to enhance direct business-to-business relationships. The 8th India-Russia Forum on Trade and Investment was held on 5 November 2014 in New Delhi. In June 2015, during the 15th St.Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF), a joint proposal was made by India and the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) to conduct a joint feasibility study for a Free Trade Agreement between India and the Eurasian Economic Union. Statement signed.

Hydro carbon is an active area to explore for cooperation between the two countries. In May 2014, ONGC and Rosneft signed an MoU for bilateral cooperation in surface survey, exploration, evaluation and hydrocarbon production in the Russian Arctic offshore. In June 2014, Gazprom International, a Russian company, signed an MoU with Oil India Limited for cooperation in the field of oil and gas, which includes joint exploration of oil fields and training, development and exchange of information.

In December 2014, Rosneft signed a memorandum of understanding with Essar Group on the possibility of a long-term contract for the supply of crude oil. In July 2015, Essar and Rosneft



announced the signing of a preliminary agreement to acquire 49 percent stake in Essar's Vadinar oil refinery and to supply crude oil to Essar for 10 years. OVL in September 2015

signed an agreement with Rosneft to acquire 15 percent stake in the Vankorneft project. During the 16th Annual Summit, OVL, Oil India Limited and Indian Oil Corporation Limited have signed agreements with Rosneft for cooperation in the field of hydrocarbons.

In December 2015, Tata Power signed an agreement with Russia's Ministry of Far East Development for investment projects in the energy sector in the region; Railways of India and Russia have also signed an agreement for High Speed Rail and Modernization of Railways in India; Heavy Engineering Corporation (HEC), Ranchi has signed agreements with Russian company Klitsmash to modernize HEC facilities and set up a Center of Excellence in India; And Solar Energy Corporation of India has signed MoU with its Russian counterpart for manufacturing solar plants in India.

Nuclear Energy:

Russia is an important partner in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and considers India a country with advanced nuclear energy technology with an impeccable non-proliferation record. In December 2014, the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) and Rosatom of Russia signed a Strategic Vision to strengthen cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy between India and Russia. Russia's collaboration is taking place in the construction of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP) in India. Unit-1 of the Kudankulam Nuclear Power Plant (KKNPP) was commissioned in July 2013 and achieved full generation capacity on 7 June 2014, while its Unit-2 is in the process of being commissioned in the first half of the next year. India and Russia have signed a General Framework Agreement on KKNPP Units 3&4 and subsequent agreements are under preparation. Secretary, Department of Atomic Energy visited Moscow on June 9, 2015 to review comprehensive cooperation in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. An agreement for localization of nuclear equipment in India was also decided during the Annual Summit on 24 December 2015.

Space Cooperation:

India-Russia cooperation in the use of outer space for peaceful purposes goes back nearly four decades. This year marks the 40th anniversary of the launch of India's first satellite 'Aryabhata' on a Russian (then USSR) satellite launch vehicle 'Soyuz'. In 2007, India and Russia signed a Framework Agreement on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in which Satellite launching, GLONASS navigation, remote sensing and other social applications of outer space. In June



2015, the space agencies of the two countries signed an MoU on expanding cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful uses. An agreement was signed between C-DAC and GLONASS for cooperation in the field of technology based satellite navigation.

Science and Technology:

Working Group on Science and Technology, Integrated Long Term Program (ILTP) and Basic Science Cooperation Program functioning under the Inter-Governmental Commission on Commercial, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation (IRIGC-TEC) There are three main institutional mechanisms for technology cooperation, while the science academies of both countries promote intra-academic exchanges. During its long implementation period of 25 years, ILTP has facilitated the conduct of more than 500 joint R&D projects and establishment of 9 thematic centers in India and Russia which have led to more than 1500 joint publications and more than 10000 scientific agreements. Apart from development, many new products, processes, facilities and research centers have been created. The India-Russia Science and Technology Center with one branch each in the National Capital Region of Delhi and Moscow was established in 2011-12 to promote transfer of technologies and their commercialization.

In October 2013, two new programs in the area of Science, Technology and Innovation and Biotechnology became active mechanisms; It has already supported the first batch of 11 joint R&D projects in 2014. In December 2014, the Indian Council of Medical Research and the Russian Center for Basic Research signed an MoU for cooperation in health research. On 8 May 2015, the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Russian Science Foundation signed an agreement to support basic and investigative research. C-DAC, Indian Institute of Science (Bangalore) and Moscow State University have signed an agreement for cooperation in High Performance Computing during the 16th Annual Summit.

Cultural Cooperation:

There is a strong tradition of Indian studies in Russia. Embassy of India, Jawaharlal Nehru Cultural Center (JNCC) in Moscow maintains close links with leading institutions in Russia including Institute of Philosophy, Moscow, Russian State University for Humanities, Moscow, Institute of Oriental Studies, Moscow, Asian Institute of Moscow State University and Institute of African Studies, School of International Relations of St. Petersburg University, Kazan Federal University, Kazan and Far Eastern National Universities, Vladivostok, Russian Cultural Research Institute, Krasnodar, Institute of Oriental Manuscripts (St. Petersburg), Peter the Great



Museum of Anthropology and Anthropology (Constkamera) are included. The Institute of Philosophy, Moscow has a Mahatma Gandhi Chair on Indian Philosophy. About 20 Russian institutions including leading universities and schools teach Hindi regularly to 1500 students. Besides Hindi, languages such as Tamil, Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali, Urdu, Sanskrit and Pali are also taught in Russian institutions. There is a general interest among Russians in Indian dance, music, yoga and Ayurveda. The Jawaharlal Nehru Cultural Center conducts yoga, dance, music and Hindi classes for about 500 students per month.

Cultural initiatives are regularly held between India and Russia to promote people-to-people contacts, including holding each other's culture years. The President of India inaugurated the Year of Indian Culture "Namaste Bharat" in Moscow on 10 May 2015. 15 performances are planned in 8 cities in different parts of Russia in 2015 as part of "Namaste Bharat". Also the first International Day of Yoga (IDY) was celebrated in which around 45000 yoga enthusiasts participated.

Indian Community:

The Indian community in the Russian Federation numbers about 30,000. In addition, about 1500 Afghan nationals of Indian origin live in Russia. There are about 500 Indian businessmen living in Russia out of which about 200 businessmen work in Moscow. There are approximately 300 registered companies operating in Russia. Most of the Indian businessmen/companies in Russia are engaged in trade while some represent Indian banks, pharmaceutical companies, hydrocarbons and engineering companies. Products being imported from India by these companies include tea, coffee, tobacco, medicines, rice, spices, leather footwear, granite, IT and apparel. There are about 4500 Indian students enrolled in medical and technical institutions in the Russian Federation. About 90 percent of them study medicine in about 20 universities/institutes across Russia. 'Hindustani Samaj' is the oldest Indian organization working in Russia since 1957. Other Indian organizations in Moscow include Indian Business Alliance, Overseas Bihar Association, AMMA (All Moscow Malayali Society), DISHA (India-Russia Friendship Society), Textile Business Alliance, Indian Cultural Society and Ramakrishna Society Vedanta Kendra. The Embassy of India School in Moscow is affiliated to the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan in New Delhi with teachers deputed from India. The school runs classes I to XII and has approximately 350 students.



CONCLUSION

According to the realistic interpretation, there are no such things as permanent friends or foes in international politics. During the Russia–Ukraine conflict, neoliberal globalization and geo-economic interconnectedness provide a "positive-sum game" for all stakeholders. Geoeconomics also has a big impact on India's foreign policy. In international politics, India has been both a beneficiary and a cost bearer. The western pressure in India is only to condemn Russia. The United States has not yet implemented the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA). This shows that apart from western countries, these countries are also interested in economic engagement with India. The major interest of the United States is in the Indo-Pacific region rather than in Eurasia. For the Quad grouping, India can play an important role in containing China in the region. This would be the reason why western countries could not demonstrate massive military deployment against Russia.

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