

**WORKING PAPER NO. 67**

**AUSTRALIA-INDIA  
SECURITY RELATIONS:  
COMMON INTERESTS OR  
COMMON DISINTEREST?**



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## Australia–India Security Relations Common Interests or Common Disinterest?

*Jenelle Bonnor*

Australia suspended defence and security relations with India in May 1998 as a reaction to India's nuclear tests. Defence relations are now only just being resumed. There is, however, a limited basis on which to build the defence relationship. India's strategic interests focus on South Asia, viewed through the Pakistan, China and nuclear weapons prisms. Australia looks to South-East Asia and the South West Pacific as its area of primary strategic interest. There is currently little overlap, although with India's increasing interest in East Asia, there is a need to build a deeper understanding of each other's security perceptions and preoccupations. There is value in establishing an official-level security dialogue and 'second track' dialogue between Australia and India to do this. Expectations should be realistic, but it is important to introduce more predictability into the bilateral relationship if it is to achieve a sustainability that does not presently exist.



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## INTRODUCTION

In May 1998 Australia's relationship with India hit an all time low. Not particularly strong to start with, bilateral relations plummeted as a result of India's five nuclear tests at Pokhran. Australia's strong reaction to the tests outstripped other Western nations, including the United States (US), and outlasted many of them. The strength of Australia's stance was matched by an equally vigorous Indian rejection of these criticisms, and a fairly rapid spiral to the nadir in the relationship. It has been a long, slow haul back ever since.

The rapid decline of the bilateral relationship illustrated the fragile foundations on which it rested. As efforts are now made on both sides to reconstruct relations, what common interests will help bond the two countries more closely?

A common British heritage, democratic traditions and a love of cricket are all too often seized upon to illustrate commonality between India and Australia. This is a shallow basis on which to build relations. More recently, a growing trading relationship adds much needed strength to bilateral interests. Yet one of the most neglected, but key areas that will add weight to the relationship is the extent to which Australia and India have common security interests. And assuming that common security interests exist, what is the best way to progress them? It is on bilateral security interests that this paper will focus, attempting to identify areas of common interest and to map out a way forward. At the very least, it will be important for Australia and India to have a better understanding of each other's security concerns if relations are to progress in a more predictable and sustained manner.

## FROM POKHRAN TO THE PRESENT<sup>1</sup>

Hindsight is a wonderful thing. In May 1998, if Australia had realised just how comprehensively it would damage its relationship with India, would it have reacted the way it did to India's nuclear tests? Indeed, should India conduct another nuclear test in the future, how would Australia react again?

On 12 May 1998, the Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, called India's nuclear tests 'an ill-judged step which could have most damaging consequences for security in South Asia and globally'.<sup>2</sup> Two days later, his Foreign Minister, Alexander Downer, called the tests 'outrageous acts perpetrated by India',<sup>3</sup> and outlined a series of actions Australia was taking 'to leave India in no doubt about the strength of our condemnation of its decision to conduct nuclear tests'.<sup>4</sup>

These actions included:

- recalling Australia's High Commissioner to India for consultations;
- suspension of bilateral defence relations with India;
- withdrawal of Australia's Defence Adviser from New Delhi;
- cancellation of ship and aircraft visits, officer exchanges and other defence-related visits;
- withdrawal of Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel training in India and the sending home of three Indian defence force personnel at Australian Defence Staff Colleges;
- suspension of non-humanitarian aid; and
- suspension of Ministerial and senior officials visits.

Australia's reaction was driven by two main factors. Prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons was (and still is) a central foreign policy tenet on which Australia has long been active in the international context, and on which it has a significant amount of bureaucratic expertise. The reaction was intended to send a clear message that there would be a price to pay for undermining the global non-proliferation regime.

Nuclear weapons are also an issue on which the Australian public feels quite strongly. French nuclear testing on Mururoa Atoll in the South Pacific in 1995 led to quite a public outcry. The current Australian Government was in Opposition at the time and condemned the then Labor Government for the

inadequacy of its protests to the French. This stance had popular support, which did no harm to its election chances. Given the strength of the then Shadow Foreign Minister's (Alexander Downer's) reaction to French testing in 1995, he could do no less, as Foreign Minister in 1998, following the Indian tests.<sup>5</sup>

What Australia did not predict was the strength of India's reaction to its condemnation. India was, of course, not surprised at being condemned by the international community, but being turned on by what one Indian analyst described recently as a 'friendly, harmless country' in a most 'vociferous' manner, raised Indian ire. In Indian eyes, Australia did not have the clout to react as strongly as it did – even more strongly than the US, and nor was it being consistent with its treatment of France and China when they tested nuclear devices.<sup>6</sup> India's defence relations with the United States continued after the Pokhran tests; its defence relations with Australia disappeared altogether.

International reactions to India's tests were mainly confined to strong protests and condemnation, as well as suspension of non-humanitarian aid. The US and Canada also banned military sales to India. Australia's reaction was strong by any measure. The US, the United Kingdom (UK) and Canada all left their defence attachés in place. In this group, Australia was alone in withdrawing its defence attaché.

It should be noted that Australia also strongly condemned Pakistan's nuclear tests a few weeks later and took essentially the same set of actions as it did against India.<sup>7</sup> However, unlike with India, the actions taken against Pakistan are still in place, partly because of the overthrow of democracy through Pakistan's 1999 military coup.

The visit to India by the then Deputy Prime Minister, Tim Fischer, in February 1999<sup>8</sup>, arrested the slide in relations and denoted resumption in Ministerial and senior officials' visits. Tim Fischer was the first Australian ministerial visitor after the tests, partly because he is known as 'a truly great friend of India'<sup>9</sup> and partly because of significant trade interests.

The Australian Foreign Minister visited New Delhi in March 2000, at the same time as US President Clinton, the US again being more proactive than Australia in putting the nuclear episode behind them. At that time, President Clinton and Prime Minister Vajpayee signed documents outlining a comprehensive vision for US–

India relations.<sup>10</sup> In contrast, Alexander Downer announced the resumption of defence ties after almost two years in abeyance saying:

The (Indian) Foreign Minister made it clear to me that they are working hard to build a consensus for signing the comprehensive test ban treaty. That would obviously be enormously welcomed by all countries that are committed to the non-proliferation agenda. That clearly includes Australia. And in that sort of an environment, I think we can get back to where we were back in 1996/97 and that is to ensure that we give India sufficient weight in our foreign policy.<sup>11</sup>

In another interview, Alexander Downer expanded on the reason for resuming defence ties: '[t]he point's been made about Indian nuclear testing. . . we operate in the real world and India is not going to abandon its nuclear weapons capability, of course, we knew that at the time.'<sup>12</sup> The Australian Government's aspirations for the bilateral relationship were very modest: to return it to the state it had been at three years previously.

Mr Downer's visit was followed by a visit by the Prime Minister to New Delhi in July 2000, the first Australian Prime Minister to visit India for eleven years. His message was simple: that 'we have moved on'<sup>13</sup> and that 'the time has come for both India and Australia to put new vigour and energy into a relationship that all of us have tended on occasions to take a little for granted.'<sup>14</sup>

Both the Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister emphasised common business and trading interests. Indeed, India is Australia's thirteenth largest merchandise trade export market and in 2000, Australia enjoyed a trade surplus with India of A\$876 million.<sup>15</sup> For India, Australia is its eleventh largest source of imports and ranks twenty-second in India's export destinations.<sup>16</sup> Business links are growing strongly, with obvious interest in the mining, agriculture and information technology sectors.<sup>17</sup>

For all the potential on the trade side of the relationship, it is the security side that has experienced a two and half-year hiatus due to the lack of defence contact from May 1998. In that time, much residual understanding of each other's priorities has been lost. Although, from this author's observations, Australian officials and observers have a fairly realistic appreciation of how India views Australia, they need a deeper appreciation of India's security perceptions and outlook. On the other hand, India's view of Australia is dated and Indian

decision makers do not appreciate the complexity of Australia's security relationships and priorities. This is largely due to Australia not really registering on the Indian radar screen. The successful staging of the Olympics in Sydney has gone some way towards helping India take more notice of Australia, but in security terms this of course has had little impact!

### INDIA'S SECURITY PREOCCUPATIONS<sup>18</sup>

India's security preoccupations revolve around two main, intricately connected problems: Pakistan and nuclear weapons. It is remarkable the extent to which India views its global foreign and defence policies through these prisms. Almost every discussion one has in India finds its way back to these fundamental concerns. It is important to recognise just how comprehensively the Pakistan and nuclear issues pervade Indian thinking on just about anything with an international dimension. China is also a significant Indian preoccupation, but does not receive the same overt focus as Pakistan.

#### Pakistan

Pakistan is a long running and intractable problem for India. There is little hope of a solution in sight. Indeed, a most pessimistic conclusion is possible with respect to India–Pakistan tensions: that there remains a real danger of nuclear war between them. Western defence attachés in New Delhi and a significant number of Indian security analysts are pessimistic on this issue. These Indian analysts argue that Pakistan's entire *raison d'être* is the conflict with India over Kashmir, and there is a belief that Pakistan is raising the rhetoric over the conflict to incorporate the concept of 'jihad' or holy war.

On the other hand, India will never give up Kashmir and there are many vested interests in continuing the conflict. As one analyst described it, the Pakistan problem is 'shackled' to India. India does not have a comprehensive policy of how to move forward on the problem of Kashmir, or what it wants to achieve. Probably, the best that could be hoped for at some point in the future is that the two parties would agree to the existing 'Line of Control' as their international border. But they are a long way from that compromise. Even moderate Indian security analysts say that a negotiated solution is out of the question.

Pakistan's incursion into the Kargil sector of Jammu and Kashmir in 1999 has left an indelible mark on the Indian psyche. India feels betrayed. After Prime Minister Vajpayee's bus trip to Lahore in February 1999, this action by Pakistan was unanticipated. The Kargil experience has led to much soul-searching on a range of defence and security issues in New Delhi,<sup>19</sup> which will be explored further below. Indian analysts feel that Pakistan proved a point in Kargil – its nuclear deterrent works. India did not escalate the conflict; instead it merely recovered its territory. Kashmir remains one of the most volatile areas in the world today, and maybe the one in which nuclear weapons are most likely to be used.

#### China

There is little doubt that India is very worried by China, and there is a prevailing view that China is 'encircling' India. As one Indian defence analyst put it, China's ability to exert influence around India causes much concern, and management of the China relationship remains one of India's greatest challenges. The border conflict of 1962 is still unresolved, despite periodic peace talks.

China's support of Pakistan, particularly nuclear support, means that it is seen as a long-term security threat in India. As Professor Chari, the director of the Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies in New Delhi describes it:

Sino-phobes believe . . . the Chinese threat to India primarily arises from its close political and military nexus with Pakistan and is plainly directed against India.<sup>20</sup>

Professor Chari goes on to argue that 'the only threat from China arises now from its policy of transferring nuclear and missile technology to Pakistan . . . How does it serve China's interests to provide India with the perfect rationale for weaponising and deploying its nuclear capabilities?' This is a very good question and one subject to considerable debate in New Delhi. However, its answer is beyond the scope of this paper.

China's strong and growing relationship with Burma, including exploring and establishing a naval base on the strategically important Coco Islands (north of India's Andaman Islands) and its gradual acquisition of a blue water navy capable of penetrating the Indian Ocean, are all seen as signs of China's intent to strategically confine India. India's reported

establishment of a new Far Eastern Naval Command in the Andaman Islands is largely an attempt to counter China's influence in Burma.<sup>21</sup> As a result of these fears, India is groping for friends against China, and its activities in South-East Asia (see below) can be seen as part of this strategy.

### **The nuclear card**

While in India, it is easy to believe that one is still in the middle of the Cold War with all the rhetoric about nuclear weapons, nuclear doctrine and deterrence. What is horrifying though, is the realisation of the lack of controls that surround these most deadly of weapons. At least in the Cold War, the US and the former Soviet Union had complex command and control procedures surrounding their nuclear weapons, underpinned by exhaustive nuclear doctrine. Mutual assured destruction was a powerful understanding driving each nation's policies. South Asia, on the other hand, is still grappling with the idea of nuclear weapons and tends to view them in a simplistic way. This is dangerous and frightening.

India's development and testing of nuclear weapons was driven by three main factors: Pakistan, China and a desire to take a prominent place in the global order.

India believes it has succeeded in matching Pakistan's nuclear deterrent with one of its own. However, it resents the fact that it has had to develop nuclear weapons indigenously, and Indian officials and analysts repeatedly point to the proven nuclear technology Pakistan is thought to have received from China. There is considerable debate about just how deliverable India's nuclear weapons are. The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace has concluded that while India is capable of weaponising its nuclear arsenal, it probably has not done it yet, and when it does, it will probably need to test again.<sup>22</sup> There are some that believe even this conclusion is optimistic, but as a minimum, India could probably strap a nuclear weapon onto one of its planes and drop it. Pakistan, on the other hand, may well have weaponised part of its arsenal.

India has declared no first use of nuclear weapons. Pakistan has not made a similar declaration. Nuclear deterrence in South Asia, therefore, appears to be based on the scenario that Pakistan would use nuclear weapons first against India. It would be as large and comprehensive a strike as Pakistan could manage, as

it would probably be its only strike. India, then, would retaliate and 'wipe Pakistan out'. The problem for India is also that given geography, much of the nuclear fallout on Pakistan would probably affect northern India as well.<sup>23</sup>

The view in India is that Pakistan has a more advanced nuclear doctrine and command and control structure than India. There is a significant debate amongst analysts in New Delhi about India's lack of, and need for, nuclear doctrine to provide a framework for its nuclear capacity. Although a draft nuclear doctrine has been prepared, it is not clear that it has been finalised or operationalised, and has been the subject of considerable criticism in India and abroad.<sup>24</sup>

Western defence analysts see this lack of nuclear doctrine as a significant concern. Is India capable of developing a rigorous doctrine to constrain these weapons? Or will it need outside help? The closeness of the India-Israel relationship may offer some scope,<sup>25</sup> or even the growing relationship with France. It seems unlikely, however, that the US will offer to help India on this one, despite the argument that the US is best placed to assist India in 'maintaining a credible nuclear deterrent with the fewest number of weapons and the highest level of stability'.<sup>26</sup>

It is clear that Indian officials and analysts have given less serious thought to how to deal with the security threat they perceive from China, than they have to Pakistan. At the time of the Pokhran nuclear tests, India's defence minister, George Fernandes, pointed to the China threat as the reason for testing. One view is that this may have been a tactic to deflect attention from how seriously India takes Pakistan.

India is conscious that China can deliver nuclear weapons onto its territory. It has fought a war with China along a common border that remains in dispute. Although the Indian security establishment does not appear to focus on China as the driving force in its nuclear weapons program, it is undoubtedly a major factor. The problem of deliverability also becomes magnified many-fold when India considers China, and India's missile development program recognises this.

As one Indian security analyst put it, India is surrounded by potential or actual nuclear weapons states: Pakistan, China, North Korea, Iran, Iraq, Israel and Russia. 'Is it little wonder that India felt compelled to go nuclear?' The grave danger remains, however,

the growing nuclear and conventional arms race in the South Asian region. Irrespective of whether these weapons exist or not, those in the South Asian region believe they do, and so respond to this belief.

The third factor behind India's decision to declare itself a nuclear weapons state was its desire to take what it perceives to be its rightful place as a global power. This derives from the belief, as India's External Affairs Minister, Jaswant Singh puts it, in 'India's nationhood being essentially civilisational'.<sup>27</sup> Time and again, Indian analysts indicated that India's decision to test was largely political. Without exception, Indian thinkers believe that India achieved its aim – the world sat up and took notice of India. These analysts are pleased with the political result. India is now taken seriously. They are particularly pleased that the US takes them seriously and by the stream of visits by world Heads of State and ministers. They also believe this adds extra weight to India's claim for a permanent seat on the United Nations' Security Council.

India has indicated that it is willing to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), but as the Indian External Affairs Minister put it: '[m]any in India see it as part of a discriminatory, nuclear non-proliferation regime'.<sup>28</sup> India has declared a moratorium on further nuclear testing, which it believes meets the basic obligations of the CTBT. However, before it will sign the Treaty, it wants to develop a national consensus. This is still continuing and is not seen by the ruling BJP party as a particularly high priority. The failure of the US Senate to ratify the CTBT and the election of George W. Bush as US President, means that in the Indian political establishment, the CTBT is regarded as 'not a live issue'.<sup>29</sup>

### Islamic extremism

Within India, reference is often made to Samuel Huntington's 'clash of civilisations' thesis.<sup>30</sup> India sees itself as a great civilisation, managing to celebrate its diversity through the vibrancy of its democracy and the strength of commitment to its secular traditions. It manages to accommodate its complex history, culture and religions through Indian society's high participation rate in democratic processes that result in a fairly stable society with a very broad political base.<sup>31</sup> India has a very strong national interest in maintaining this stability.

India has the second largest Muslim population in the world, after Indonesia. It has an Islamic state – Pakistan – on its border. There is an Islamic war being fought not far away in Afghanistan. India is committed to helping the resistance in the Afghan War, along with Russia and Iran. Apart from the matter of ideology, if the Taliban triumph in Afghanistan, it may increase pressure on Kashmir.<sup>32</sup> It is possible that Taliban fighters would be sent to Kashmir to assist Pakistan in its war against India, and result in the further spread of Islamic extremism and destabilisation.

India's fear of Islamic extremism cannot be underestimated. It is important to emphasise that it is the 'extremism' aspect about which India is concerned. In its secular society, its large Muslim minority live generally peacefully. So far there has been only the odd internal problem related to Islamic fundamentalism, but India fears the import of this sort of problem and with good reason, given its regional location. India is committed to global action on terrorism, much of which has Islamic fundamentalist origins. India has found much common ground with the US on this.

### Foreign relations

Indian security analysts are keen to emphasise, publicly and privately, that India's growing bilateral relationships, including those with Russia and the US, are not directed against third countries, including China. The United States is the focus of considerable attention in India and this has led to an interesting balancing act with India–Russia relations. A leading Indian commentator, Raja Mohan, has observed that 'India ... is in the middle of a new romance with America' and that '[t]he relationship with Russia is more like a marriage that New Delhi and Moscow are trying to save'.<sup>33</sup>

India still relies heavily on Russia for its defence equipment, particularly spare parts. According to New Delhi-based Western defence attachés, around seventy per cent of Indian military equipment is Russian. It is from Russia that India gets access to advanced technology, without the constraints imposed by the West. The visit by Russian President, Vladimir Putin, in October 2000, led to the announcement of a strategic partnership and more arms deals.<sup>34</sup> However, given the unreliability of some Russian equipment and the supply of spares, India really needs to expand its

sources of supply. The India–Russia security relationship is not just about defence equipment. Both are concerned about terrorism and religious extremism in Central Asia and are cooperating against the Taliban in Afghanistan.

The strategic relationship with Russia is still important to India, but it recognises that it needs a deeper and more extensive relationship with the US than in the past. President Clinton’s visit to India in March 2000 and Prime Minister Vajpayee’s reciprocal visit to the US later in the year has given the bilateral relationship a higher profile in both countries. Prime Minister Vajpayee even went so far as to say that India and the US were ‘natural allies’. An intensive dialogue between Strobe Talbot and Jaswant Singh was put in place from the time of the nuclear tests, but more recently groups dealing with specific issues – for example terrorism – have been set up and have met in 2000.

However, military to military relations between the two remain very limited. For instance, the US–India Defence Planning Group is dormant, and sanctions affect the supply of US-made spare parts for military equipment purchased from third parties.<sup>35</sup> It is the supply of military equipment from the US in which India is very interested, but US sales of defence equipment to India seem unlikely in the short term.

India has a close defence relationship with the United Kingdom, and is developing its defence relationships with Israel and France, the former in particular. Israel is supplying an increasing amount of military equipment to India.<sup>36</sup> India has also established security dialogues of various depths and subject areas with Russia, United Kingdom, France, Canada and Germany. It has a good relationship with Iran, sharing its anti-Taliban stance.

### Look East

India’s ‘Look East’ policy is aimed at establishing closer economic and strategic ties with East Asia. Leaving aside the trading potential, much of the impetus for this policy can be seen in the context of strategic competition with China, and India’s worry about being encircled by China. It is looking for friends to counter China in the South-East Asian region. Access to supplies of oil and military equipment are two other interests driving its strategic approach to South-East Asia, but are secondary interests.

In this context, India’s maritime interests include keeping vital trade routes clear between the Indian Ocean and the Asia–Pacific region. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands – Indian territory – lie across the western entrance to the Straits of Malacca. The China-dominated South China Sea lies at the eastern end. According to Indian security analysts, India’s increasing naval presence in the Asia–Pacific region should be seen as something quite usual. Prior to the Cold War, India exercised with Commonwealth forces, and it does not see anything very strange about reviving its presence. East Asian nations, however, may have a different view.

India is devoting considerable effort to its relationship with Burma, again in an effort to counter Chinese influence.<sup>37</sup> Although strategic competition with China seems to be the main impetus, combating drug running and counter-insurgency operations along the India–Burma border are also areas of joint action. India is now providing military support equipment to Burma.<sup>38</sup> India also sees Burma as its overland link to South-East Asia – literally – given the Asian highway project linking South-East Asia to India through Burma.<sup>39</sup>

Vietnam has been the subject of significant Indian attention. External Affairs Minister Jaswant Singh visited Vietnam in November 2000, continuing a series of high-level ministerial and official visits. India has agreed to help Vietnam set up a defence industry, and defence cooperation is increasing.<sup>40</sup> This closer relationship has the potential to give India easier access to the East Asian region, but it also has the potential to complicate the maritime dynamics of the South China Sea. China is unlikely to view the growing relationship favourably. Indeed, it protested about the presence of Indian naval ships in the region, despite the fact that they later visited Shanghai.<sup>41</sup>

An increasingly good relationship with Japan also has a strategic component, with reports that India and Japan will conduct joint exercises. However, it appears that relations will be largely economic, and focused in particular on information technology.<sup>42</sup>

The need to find more diverse sources of military equipment underpins some of India’s interest in developing better relations with Singapore and Malaysia. Reports indicate that India is interested in joint ventures with Malaysia in shipbuilding, spares, maintenance of combat aircraft and military training.<sup>43</sup>

India has traditionally had cordial relations with Indonesia through their Non Aligned Movement (NAM) connection. India sees commonalities with Indonesia over responses to Islamic extremism, and believes the two can cooperate more closely on this.

India did not however, contribute to the UN East Timor operation – an ideal opportunity to display its regional commitment and credentials. Indian analysts in New Delhi put this down to three factors. India saw negative parallels between Kashmir and East Timor's self-determination efforts and was unwilling to participate in anything that set a precedent for Kashmir. Secondly, India was unsure how ASEAN viewed the East Timor exercise, which indicates its lack of close security links. Thirdly, India was preoccupied with its negative Sierra Leone peacekeeping experience, where it is now in the process of withdrawing its peacekeeping troops.

India joined the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in 1998. Indian security analysts see membership of the ARF as an important part of India's 'Look East' policy. They see it as a way of working together with South-East Asia, to develop common understandings.<sup>44</sup> India hosted an ARF anti-piracy workshop in October 2000 as an illustration of its commitment to the process. India also joined the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP) in June 2000.

### Internal reform

A significant preoccupation within India is how to deal with all its security problems. A vigorous debate is raging about national security – its meaning and its management structure.

Jaswant Singh believes that India has a 'lack of any intelligible national strategic thought'.<sup>45</sup> Prominent commentator Mr K. Subrahmanyam describes the problem thus:

The essential Indian weakness, which our adversaries are well aware of, is the total lack of a tradition of strategic thinking and our reactive style of decision making in every sphere.<sup>46</sup>

In a lecture devoted to this problem, he expanded at some length on the shortcomings of India's National Security Council that was originally designed to provide the framework for the management of India's national security. Mr Subrahmanyam believes that:

It would appear that one of the most difficult challenges to its security India faces is the general

indifference to security on the part of the elite. . . This indifference to carry out regular periodic assessment of security threats on the part of our political class and bureaucracy and communicate it to the nation is at the root of the overall insensitivity. . . to problems of national security.<sup>47</sup>

Mr Subrahmanyam headed a committee after the Kargil clash with Pakistan which examined the causes and lessons of Kargil.<sup>48</sup> As a result, a Group of Ministers was commissioned to review national security.<sup>49</sup> Four task forces are reporting to it: border management, internal security, management of defence and intelligence. The expectation is that these ministers will recommend a significant shake-up of security management, planning and defence organisation when they report. Indian officials and analysts are showing interest in how other countries manage their security planning and decision-making processes. Reorganisation of the security establishment in India will also have implications for countries in their dealings with India on defence and security.

There is considerable mistrust between the defence bureaucracy and the military in India.<sup>50</sup> The bureaucracy controls much of the decision-making power, although the military must do the fighting. The lack of understanding and coordination between the two not only has consequences for the Indian defence establishment, but again it complicates how other countries deal with India on defence and security matters.

Much has been made of India's recent twenty-eight percent increase in its defence budget to US\$13.5 billion.<sup>51</sup> However, as one analyst put it, the Kargil action severely depleted India's stock of military equipment. The defence budget has been increased to deal with this, and the amount of money left over to spend on force modernisation will be limited.

### INDIA'S VIEW OF AUSTRALIA<sup>52</sup>

Australia does not loom large in the minds of Indian policy-makers or security analysts. To the extent it does, the focus is on Australia's reaction to India's nuclear tests, which, as discussed previously, raised Indian ire. Although well over two years have passed since then, the irritation with Australia has far from disappeared. In addition to Australia's nuclear reaction, there are several elements to this irritation. Some of these may mystify Australian observers, but none the

less are real annoyances in Indian eyes, and will need to be addressed. The following represents Indian views, and many Indian observers, when asked, will refer to the entire list.

### **Maritime surveillance**

There was an incident in 1993 when the Australian Navy overflew an Indian aircraft carrier, and again in 1997 when the Australian Navy dropped sonar buoys around the Indian destroyer INS Delhi in international waters. The latter evoked a strong protest from India, which referred to it as an ‘unfriendly act’.<sup>53</sup> The frequency with which officials and analysts refer to these incidents as evidence of Australian suspicion of India is remarkable, especially as this appears to be a relatively common practice by the Australian Navy and is not directed at any particular country. The irritation at this is especially deeply held in the Indian naval establishment.

### **A ‘lackey’ of the US**

Indians believe that Australia’s reaction to the nuclear tests was largely due to its echoing of the position of the United States. They are annoyed at the apparent inconsistency of Australia sheltering under the US nuclear umbrella, whilst denying the same security to India. Mr Subrahmanyam, described the July 2000 visit by the Australian Prime Minister, Mr Howard, in these terms:

[Australia] did not have to wait for Mr Clinton to come here and then follow him up. They could have come earlier than Mr Clinton. . . in most of these things we<sup>54</sup> do find Australia more or less toes the US policy.

### **Treatment of military exchange personnel**

A story that has assumed mythological proportions in New Delhi is how Indian military exchange personnel in Australia were summarily expelled from their classes and Australia during the nuclear crisis in 1998. This story is inaccurate, as the Australian High Commission in New Delhi has been at pains to explain. Although Indian defence force students were asked to leave Australia, this was done in a more considerate and dignified manner than the story circulating in New Delhi. Yet it persists with a significant sense of outrage and underlines the perception that Australia reacted more harshly than other nations.

### **APEC**

India wants to be part of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. India believes that its bid for membership was thwarted largely by Australia when APEC instituted its ten-year freeze on membership in 1997 – despite the reality that APEC decisions are consensus decisions. This perceived snub, as one Indian observer put it, ‘still runs very deep in Indian minds’.

Despite these residual irritants, the broad consensus in the security establishment in New Delhi is that the ‘nuclear phase’ of the relationship is over, and new forms of partnership need to be developed. Indeed, one defence analyst described Australia as a ‘natural strategic partner’ of India. Most officials and analysts are positive about the idea that Australia and India should, at the very least, enhance their understanding of each other, and use this understanding to build more practical forms of cooperation.

### **THE IMPACT OF INDIA ON AUSTRALIA’S SECURITY**

As outlined above, an examination of India’s security preoccupations indicates that there is very little focus on Australia, although there is some interest. India, in turn, has a somewhat higher profile in Australia, but not a central one. For years, the two countries have been on each other’s periphery, and recent history does not negate this view.<sup>55</sup>

The current Australian Government has not given India a particularly high profile in its foreign and defence policy compared with other parts of the world. However, several key strategic documents have been published during its time in office. Australia’s 1997 Foreign Affairs and Trade Policy White Paper conceptualised the relationship as one based largely on trade and investment, with ‘considerable scope to broaden the bilateral relationship’.<sup>56</sup> This included conducting the 1996 ‘New Horizons’ cultural promotion in India and the then Deputy Prime Minister, Tim Fischer’s designation of 1997 as the ‘Year of South Asia’.

*Australia’s Strategic Policy*, published in the same year, made a number of references to India.<sup>57</sup> It defined South Asia as part of the Asia–Pacific region, but

concluded that, in the short term, it was unlikely that either India or Pakistan would ‘have a major impact on the East Asian security environment’.<sup>58</sup> Work to develop a strategic dialogue with India and its role in the ARF were the two identified goals. However, bilateral strategic dialogue still does not exist.

In June 1999, the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee examined the security implications of India’s and Pakistan’s 1998 nuclear tests and the Australian Government’s role in efforts to constrain nuclear proliferation in South Asia. It made a series of recommendations, including re-establishing bilateral military links with both India and Pakistan and strengthening military exchange programs. It’s focus was on nuclear weapons disarmament, saying that Australia was ‘well placed to play a creative role’ internationally between nuclear weapons states and those disillusioned with the lack of progress towards nuclear disarmament (including India).<sup>59</sup>

Australia’s new Defence White Paper, published in December 2000, gives more prominence to India.<sup>60</sup> Indeed, the Government’s thinking about India has evolved considerably since 1997. It is worth quoting it at length:

The most critical issue for the security of the Asia Pacific region is the nature of the relationships between the region’s major powers – China, Japan, India, Russia and the United States. These countries are important to Australia’s security because they are the ones with the power – actual or potential – to influence events throughout the Asia Pacific region. Their relationship will set the tone for the whole region. Overall, the prospects for those relationships are good; however, *there remains a small but significant possibility of confrontation* [emphasis added].<sup>61</sup>

Australia’s five primary strategic objectives are defined in the White Paper: (i) ensuring the defence of Australia and its direct approaches; (ii) fostering the security of its ‘immediate neighbourhood’ (Indonesia, East Timor, Papua New Guinea and the South West Pacific); (iii) working with others to promote stability and cooperation in South-East Asia; (iv) contributing to maintaining strategic stability in the wider Asia–Pacific region; and (v) contributing to the efforts of the international community to uphold global security.<sup>62</sup>

The Australia–India relationship has the potential to be relevant to the last four of the above list. The White Paper’s analysis of India is in terms of the complexity

it adds to the regional nuclear balance, its strategic competition with China and the risk of war, including nuclear war, between India and Pakistan. However, it states ‘it is India’s growing role in the wider Asia Pacific strategic system that will have more influence on Australia’s security’.<sup>63</sup> This is the first time in Australia’s public defence planning that India has been examined in some detail and ascribed a more significant role in Australia’s security interests. It is indicative of Canberra’s growing interest in better relations with India.

Australia has not lessened its desire for India to sign the CTBT. Australia’s stance against nuclear proliferation is a key part of its foreign policy.<sup>64</sup> However, within the government bureaucracy in Canberra, there is a realistic appreciation of the extent of Australia’s ability to influence India. Australia feels the point has been made to India, Australia has not resiled from its position, but now it is time to move on. India, in its turn, has acknowledged Australia’s position on nuclear weapons.

In the discussion below on areas for future joint effort, the CTBT has not been listed, as the author believes it would be more constructive for the relationship to keep exchanges on nuclear matters on their separate and existing track for the time being. This does not lessen the importance of the nuclear issue, but would enable other areas of the bilateral relationship to be more successfully resurrected.

#### AUSTRALIA–INDIA: COMMON SECURITY INTERESTS?

Australia and India have limited bilateral security interests in common. As the discussion above has indicated, India is focused on the regional strategic and power dynamics of South Asia: Pakistan, China and the nuclear balance. Australia’s strategic interests revolve around South-East Asia and the South West Pacific, its alliance with the United States and developing constructive security relations in North-East Asia. Although there is some intersection of interests, these are not of enormous weight in each country’s strategic outlook.

However, given geographical proximity across a common ocean and the interest of both in East Asia, at the very least it would be beneficial for Australia and

India to better understand each other's security perceptions and preoccupations. This would also help to address the residual irritants in the relationship, as apart from these, there are no substantial conflicts between the two.

India is a nuclear-capable state and continues to have a dangerously volatile relationship with Pakistan. However, it is developing bilateral security relations with a number of countries with which Australia has close relations, particularly the United States, but also in South-East Asia. It is a larger player on the world and Asian stages than in the past and as such, deserves Australian attention. Given Australia's growing trade interests in India, a better security relationship would help to protect and strengthen the overall bilateral relationship.

Since 1998, strategic thinking has evolved in both countries. As discussed previously, Australia has recently published a new defence White Paper and India is developing its nuclear doctrine, as well as reshaping its security management. With increasing Indian attention to Australia's region of primary strategic interest – East Asia – Australia needs to understand India's aims in this regard, and share with India Australia's views on and aspirations for regional security. India, in turn, needs to more fully recognise Australia's established and unique role in the East Asian region.

Although limited, there are then a number of areas where there is commonality in security interests and which could underpin the development of a bilateral security and defence relationship that is, realistically, starting again from scratch.

### **Maritime routes**

India and Australia have common interests in the freedom of shipping lanes that carry vital trade and energy supplies. These stretch from the Indian Ocean, through the Malacca Straits, into the South China Sea and the Pacific Ocean. India, which is strengthening its maritime role in the Indian Ocean, would benefit from good defence relations with Australia, given the latter's geographic position on the Indian Ocean rim. Greater maritime cooperation in ensuring the security of sea-lanes, including from piracy, drug trafficking and illegal immigrants, may be sensible.

### **South-East Asia**

As part of Australia's 'immediate neighbourhood' of strategic concern, Indonesia and surrounds are immensely important to Australia's security. Australia has had a deep interest in, and contact with, Indonesia for a considerable time. As discussed previously, India's 'Look East' policy has seen it devoting greater attention to South-East Asia, particularly Indonesia. Although India views Indonesia partly in the context of shared concerns about Islamic extremism, the stability of Indonesia is an obvious common interest to India and Australia.

This also applies to the rest of South-East Asia where Australia has numerous close defence and security relationships that underpin its approach to this vital part of the Asia-Pacific region. The Five Power Defence Arrangements between Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Singapore and Malaysia, together with Australia's links to Thailand and Cambodia, mean that Australia has interests and expertise that are the product of many years of close contact. In turn, it would be useful for Australia to be better informed about India's developing relationships in Indo-China, particularly with Vietnam, as India seeks to establish a greater presence in the region.

### **North-East Asia**

India's fears about China mean that it seems to be looking for exclusive friends in the Asia-Pacific region. This represents quite a 'zero-sum' outlook on its strategic competition with China and is not something in which Australia would wish to be involved. Australia's security relationship with China is constructive, though complex, and China is not seen as an 'enemy'. Australia has a security dialogue with China. This is in its early days, but is apparently proving to be beneficial. Australia is, of course, concerned by strategic competition between India and China.<sup>65</sup> If this takes form in the South China Sea or the Eastern Indian Ocean, it is likely that it would be viewed seriously by Australia. A better understanding of each other's approach to China is an obvious area for India and Australia to progress.

Australia has a close defence relationship with Japan that has expanded considerably over the last decade. India is in the process of establishing a better security relationship with Japan. This, together with Australia and Japan's close military links to the US, may make

it attractive for India to seek Australia's views on the security environment in North-East Asia.

### **South Asia**

Australian officials and analysts could benefit from a deeper understanding of the tensions in South Asia and the security preoccupations of the involved parties. After all, geographical realities mean the Indian Ocean is not a region that can be neglected. The extent to which India views its defence and foreign policies through the nuclear and Pakistan prisms is not fully appreciated in Australia, and it should be, given the nuclear volatility of the area.

Australia does not want to see a nuclear (or large scale conventional) war between India and Pakistan. Any conflict will affect vital Australian trading interests, not to mention broader global security. It is in Australia's interests to more closely focus on the South Asian conventional and nuclear arms race, and the implications this has for its own defence policy.

### **The United States**

Indian officials and analysts have not really made positive connections between India's growing relationship with the US and Australia's historically close ties and military alliance with the US. There is an inconsistency in the Indian position when it criticises Australia for its closeness to the US on the one hand, but does not recognise the potential for greater access to, and cooperation with, US allies as its own bilateral relationship develops. There is a bit of a sense in India of 'why talk to the monkey, when you can talk to the organ grinder'. However, in areas such as information sharing there may be significant benefit to India. It is certainly in Australia's interests for India to understand more clearly that Australia follows its own national interests, and not those of the United States. That these interests often coincide and why, is worthy of more detailed discussion with India.

### **The South Pacific**

Australia is a member of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) that has focused on, among other things, the overthrow of democracy in Pakistan and Fiji. Whilst India does not seem overly interested in CMAG's work on Pakistan, India is quite exercised about Fiji. There is a degree of criticism in India of Australia's role in Fiji.<sup>66</sup> Not fully appreciating

that the dynamics of the South Pacific would not countenance undue interference, some Indian analysts believe Australia did not do enough during the 2000 overthrow of Fiji's elected government. Yet India welcomes Australia's role in Fiji, and this has had some bearing on the improvement in bilateral relations.<sup>67</sup> Australia's Prime Minister was able to discuss this with his Indian counterpart during his visit in July 2000, a time when the Fiji crisis was still at its height.<sup>68</sup> The South Pacific is an obvious area of future security discussion between the two.

### **Peacekeeping**

India and Australia have played proud roles in peacekeeping throughout the world. Both have worked together in United Nations peacekeeping operations, such as in Cambodia. Indian analysts believe there is scope to further enhance peacekeeping cooperation.

## **RE-ESTABLISHING SECURITY COOPERATION**

The above discussion identifies a number of interests about which it would be useful to have better mutual understanding. The bilateral security relationship suffered enormous damage as a result of India's nuclear tests. The lack of reciprocal defence attachés in either India or Australia, and the cessation of interaction on anything defence-related for well over two years, means that the security relationship is once again in embryonic form.

The Australian defence attaché arrived in New Delhi in January 2001, and the Indian defence attaché should arrive in Canberra later in 2001. Australia was represented at AERO India 2001 and participated in the Indian International Fleet Review, both in February 2001. Australia will be sending an ADF officer on staff college exchange to India in 2001 and hopes for reciprocation. That, to date, is the extent of defence and security cooperation. Despite all having suffered to some extent from the 1998 tests, India's defence relations with the US, UK, Canada, Germany, France and Israel are more advanced than with Australia.

Indian officials and analysts have made it clear that it will be up to Australia to move forward the security relationship. One Indian official said that this was not purely because of India's affront over Australia's nuclear testing reaction. It has much to do with the

bureaucratic culture in New Delhi, dominated by the Indian Brahmin tendency to place the onus of initiative on others. This applies to India's security partners, including the United States.

High level ministerial and official level visits have been re-established, with Australia's Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Trade Minister and Communications and Information Technology Minister all visiting India in 2000. The Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ashton Calvert, as well as a Deputy Secretary of the Department of Defence, Hugh White, made high level visits to India in 2000. In return, the then Indian Defence Secretary T.R. Prasad, visited Australia in August 2000, and met, amongst others, then Defence Minister, John Moore.<sup>69</sup>

It will be important to keep these high level visits continuing if the momentum towards security re-engagement is to be maintained. There is always a danger, that in an election year in Australia (which 2001 is bound to be), overseas ministerial visits will disappear. Australia is hosting the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in October 2001, which is likely to see the attendance of the Indian Prime Minister. This is an opportunity, which should be capitalised on, for the Indian Prime Minister to be invited to make a more formal state visit at that time.

### **BILATERAL SECURITY DIALOGUE**

The idea of a more formal, official-level security dialogue between Australia and India is one worthy of close consideration and support. The idea has support in India, amongst both officials and analysts, although they differ in their views of how it would work. Dialogue would be useful to enhance both nations' understanding of each other's security perceptions and preoccupations, and should be approached in that light.

The recently published Australian Defence White Paper identifies strategic dialogue with India as an explicit aim in order to 'explore and understand one another's perceptions'.<sup>70</sup> Indeed, it outlines how the development of bilateral strategic dialogues with regional countries is part of the Australian Government's support of strategic stability in the Asia-Pacific region.<sup>71</sup> It argues that through such dialogues, Australia can build up its access to other countries' strategic thinking and its influence in their decision-making.

India, of course, has security dialogue of a number of different forms with other countries, with varying degrees of usefulness. This dialogue does tend to be quite focused, for example on specific issues like terrorism or foreign ministry discussions. A broad-based dialogue in which officials from various ministries and military personnel participate is the sort of dialogue that a country like Australia finds the most useful. In pursuing the idea of an official security dialogue, the considerable bureaucratic challenge in India of crafting a useful forum should not be underestimated. This does not mean it should not be attempted.

The regularity of dialogue should also be carefully considered, particularly due to resource constraints and priorities in India. Although annual exchanges are ideal, this may not be possible initially, and careful and creative thought should be given to other models. For example, formal dialogue could be held every two years in alternate countries, with scaled down annual dialogue in the margins of other regular meetings, such as the ARF.

There is a lot to talk about. The list above under 'Common Interests' would provide a substantial first agenda. In addition, Australia's experience with restructuring its defence organisation and setting up a National Security Committee would be of value to India.

Indian officials and security analysts believe that there would be value in organising a 'second track' or non-official security dialogue, involving academics and non-government analysts from both sides, particularly those that have access to and influence government. Second track dialogue would at least help to re-establish some of the connections and understandings that have diminished over the last few years. It has the advantage of being unhampered by official positions and can consider issues otherwise too sensitive to be discussed easily or perhaps at all. Second track dialogue can also provide support for government-level dialogue, should that eventuate. It can help strengthen the bilateral security relationship and if managed well, can evolve into a key part of the strategic relationship. Second track security dialogue between Australia and India is something that should be actively pursued in the near term.

There was a suggestion from Indian officials that naval exercises were something in which India was

interested. However, it does seem a little early for this. Until common security priorities develop, the foundation for such exercises is far from strong. As a longer-term goal, it may be a more realistic expectation.

### CONCLUSION

What if India tests again? This is far from unlikely. If Australia and India are to move forward in their bilateral security relations, a foundation needs to be established that will withstand such a possibility. There is little point in re-establishing a defence and security relationship if a potential Australian reaction is planned along similar lines to the past.

If India does test again, defence relations should not be completely suspended. To do so would remove once again any chance of influencing India on the very actions Australia would be trying to stop: nuclear proliferation. By suspending defence relations in 1998, Australia lost its ability to influence the development of India's nuclear thinking and it lost several years of

direct insight into India's defence and security planning.

This loss was not all one-sided. Given India's increasing interest in East Asia, Australia is an obvious and relatively objective interlocutor with valuable insights to offer, and one that India has not tapped since 1998. Careful thought needs to be given on both sides to how each will deal with the other should India test again.

There is value in establishing a security relationship centred on a regular strategic dialogue and limited military personnel exchanges. Expectations should be realistic. Neither country is central to the other's strategic planning, yet both are influential in regions about which the other wants a deeper understanding. And both may yet play broader roles in each other's regions of primary strategic interest. It is for all these reasons that it is time to move on and give the bilateral security relationship the attention it deserves.

## APPENDIX

## DISCUSSIONS CONDUCTED OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2000

## AUSTRALIA

Defence Intelligence Organisation  
 Department of Defence  
 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
 Office of National Assessments

## INDIA

Aneja, Atul, Special Correspondent, The Hindu newspaper  
 Australian High Commission, New Delhi  
 BJP Delegation  
 Border Security Force (Kashmir)  
 Bhaskar, Commodore Uday, Deputy Director, Institute for Defence Studies and Analysis  
 Canadian High Commission  
 Chari, Mr P.R., Director, Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies, and colleagues  
 Chellany, Dr Brahma

Chopra, Professor Pran, Centre for Policy Research  
 Congress Party Delegation  
 Home Ministry  
 Jayaram, Mr P, Diplomatic and Political Editor, India  
 Abroad News Service  
 Joshi, Dr Manoj, Political Editor and Bureau Chief, *Times of India*  
 Kumar, Professor Satish, United Services Institution of India  
 Mohan, Dr Raja, Strategic Affairs Editor, the *Hindu* newspaper  
 Ministry of Defence  
 Ministry of External Affairs  
 National Security Council Secretariat  
 Parthasarathy, Professor G, Centre for Policy Research, and colleagues  
 United Kingdom High Commission  
 United States Embassy

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> This paper focuses on the Australian Government's policy and actions during the period May 1998 to the present. For discussions of Australia's approach to India prior to 1996 see Meg Gurry, *India: Australia's Neglected Neighbour? 1947–1996*, (Griffith, Qld: Centre for the Study of Australia–Asia Relations, 1996); A. D. D. Gordon, *The Search for Substance: Australia–India Relations into the Nineties and Beyond*, (Canberra: Australian Foreign Policy Publications Program, 1993); and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade East Asia Analytical Unit, *India's Economy at the Midnight Hour: Australia's India Strategy*, (Canberra: AGPS, 1994).

<sup>2</sup> John Howard, 'Indian Nuclear Tests', Media Release, 12 May 1998.

<sup>3</sup> Alexander Downer, 'Australian Response to Indian Nuclear Tests', Media Release, 14 May 1998.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> It is interesting that the Indians I talked to in New Delhi see the Australian Government's reaction to Indian tests as inconsistent with Australia's reaction to French nuclear testing. What they do not fully appreciate is that these were two different Australian Governments. Alexander Downer's reaction to French nuclear tests and Indian nuclear tests is actually quite consistent.

<sup>6</sup> Based on the author's conversations in New Delhi, October–November 2000.

<sup>7</sup> Alexander Downer, 'Pakistan Nuclear Tests', Media Release, 29 May 1998.

<sup>8</sup> I accompanied Tim Fischer on this visit, as I was his Principal Adviser at the time.

<sup>9</sup> Alexander Downer, 'Australia–India Relations; Unlimited Potential' in *Midnight to Millennium: Australia–India Interconnections*, Proceedings of a Conference held at the University of Canberra, July 1999, (Canberra: High Commission of India/ University of Canberra, 2000).

- <sup>10</sup> 'US–India Relations: A Vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, 21 March 2000', *IPCS Bulletin*, 3 (2000), 1–14.
- <sup>11</sup> Alexander Downer, 'Transcript of an interview with Mr Downer on 23 March 2000 with Delhi-based Australian journalists', [http://www.dfat.gov.au/media/transcripts/000327\\_downer\\_delhi.html](http://www.dfat.gov.au/media/transcripts/000327_downer_delhi.html).
- <sup>12</sup> Alexander Downer, 'Report on Australia's Back-down in Protests over India's nuclear weapons Program. Interview with Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer', ABC National Radio AM 8.05 am, 24 March 2000.
- <sup>13</sup> John Howard, 'Transcript of the Prime Minister The Hon John Howard MP Address to the India–Australia Council and the Confederation of Indian Industry Luncheon, New Delhi', 11 July 2000.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>15</sup> *Composition of Trade Australia 1999–2000* (Canberra: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, October 2000).
- <sup>16</sup> Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 'India Fact Sheet', May 2000.
- <sup>17</sup> See for instance Austrade and Ernst & Young, *Emerging Opportunities in Information Technology for Australia and India* (Canberra: Australian Trade Commission, March 2000) and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *Case Studies in India–Australia Trade*, 2000 at [http://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/india/case\\_studies.html](http://www.dfat.gov.au/trade/india/case_studies.html).
- <sup>18</sup> The following section is largely based on the author's conversations with a wide range of Government officials, security analysts and academics in New Delhi October/November 2000.
- <sup>19</sup> See The Kargil Review Committee Report, *From Surprise to Reckoning* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1999).
- <sup>20</sup> See P.R. Chari, 'India's Security and China', *Hindu*, 5 October 2000.
- <sup>21</sup> International Institute for Strategic Studies, 'China's Ambitions in Myanmar: India Steps up Countermoves', *Strategic Comments*, Vol 6 (July 2000) at <http://www.iiss.org/stratcom/sc.asp?66my>.
- <sup>22</sup> Aziz Haniffa, 'India Still Some Way off from Deploying Nuclear Weapons', *Economic Times*, New Delhi, 29 September 2000.
- <sup>23</sup> For a more general discussion about the pressures for pre-emptive strikes in any India–Pakistan nuclear conflict see Desmond Ball, 'Australian Defence Planning: Problems and Prospects', *Pacifica Review*, 12 (October 2000), 281–294.
- <sup>24</sup> See for instance Howard Diamond, 'India Releases Nuclear Doctrine, Looks to Emulate P-5 Arsenals', *Arms Control Today*, 29 (July/August 1999), p. 23, pp. 33–34; and the essays in *Securing India's Future in the New Millennium*, ed. Brahma Chellaney (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1999).
- <sup>25</sup> See Sushil Soni, 'India–Israel Relations: Adding a New Dimension', *Diplomatic Corps*, 29 (Jul–Aug 2000), 13–17, in which India's Home Minister, L.K. Advani, is reported as saying 'India would favour increasing cooperation with Israel in all fields, including nuclear' (p. 17).
- <sup>26</sup> Stephen P Cohen, 'A New Beginning in South Asia', *Brookings Policy Brief*, No. 55 (January 2000), <http://www.brook.edu/comm/PolicyBriefs/pb055/pb55.htm>, p.3.
- <sup>27</sup> Jaswant Singh, *What Constitutes National Security in a Changing World Order? India's Strategic Thought*, Occasional Paper No 6, (University of Pennsylvania: Centre For the Advanced Study of India, 1998).
- <sup>28</sup> Jaswant Singh, 'Clarifying India's Nascent Nuclear Doctrine: An Interview with Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh', *Arms Control Today*, 29 (December 1999), 17–19.
- <sup>29</sup> Author's conversations in New Delhi.
- <sup>30</sup> See Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996).
- <sup>31</sup> My thanks to Professor Pran Chopra for explaining so cogently the reasons behind India's strong democratic traditions.
- <sup>32</sup> See Atul Aneja, 'Russia, India to Cooperate', *Hindu*, 30 October 2000, p.8.
- <sup>33</sup> C. Raja Mohan, 'A Tale of Two Visits', *Hindu*, 8 August 2000, p.20.
- <sup>34</sup> For recent analysis of the India–Russia relationship, see for example V. P. Dutt, 'Indo–Russian Relations: The Challenges that Lie Ahead', *Tribune*, Chandigarh, 16 October 2000; Sadanand Dhume, 'Arming India', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 12 October 2000, p.20; and

- Rahul Bedi, 'India Agrees \$3 Billion Arms Deal with Russia', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 11 October 2000, p.3.
- 35 See Dinesh Kumar, 'Indo-US Defence Ties Grounded', *Times of India*, 13 October 2000.
- 36 Kesava Menon, 'Friction with Pak. Crops up in Indo-Israel Ties', *Hindu*, 29 September 2000.
- 37 IISS, 'China's Ambitions in Myanmar'.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 Shishir Gupta, 'Sharing of Intelligence to Fight Insurgency on the Cards', *Hindustan Times*, New Delhi, 17 November 2000.
- 40 Shawn W. Crispin, 'On their Marks', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 5 October 2000, p.29.
- 41 Gaurav C. Sawant, 'Indian Presence in China Waters Resented', *Indian Express*, 16 October 2000.
- 42 Frank Ching, 'Japan and India Forge New Links', *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 7 September 2000, p.32.
- 43 *Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter Online Newsletter*, <http://www.apdr.com.au>, 20 September 2000.
- 44 See also 'India to Back ASEAN Stand against Pakistan in ARF', *Asia Pulse*, Press Trust of India, 25 July 2000.
- 45 Jaswant Singh, 'What Constitutes National Security in a Changing World Order?', p.2.
- 46 K. Subrahmanyam, 'Slumber over National Security', *Economic Times*, New Delhi, 31 October 2000.
- 47 K. Subrahmanyam, 'Wanted Long-term Defence Planning', *Sunday Tribune*, Chandigarh, 5 October 2000.
- 48 Kargil Review Committee Report, *From Surprise to Reckoning*.
- 49 This Group of Ministers includes the Home Minister, Defence Minister and External Affairs Minister. See the editorial, 'Security in its Entirety', *Hindu*, 29 September 2000; and Aditi Phadnis 'GoM May Suggest Clipping of Mishra's Wings', *Business Standard*, New Delhi, 17 October 2000.
- 50 See Sanu Kainikara, 'The Military, Politicians and Bureaucrats of India', *Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter*, (June/July 2000), 13-14.
- 51 Dhume, 'Arming India' (p. 20).
- 52 Again, the observations of this section have been distilled from the author's conversations in New Delhi and represent the majority point of view in official and non-official circles.
- 53 Dinesh Kumar, 'Australian Aircraft Takes Pictures of Indian Vessels', *Times of India*, 17 December 1997.
- 54 Quoted in Debra Way, 'Fed - PM Denies he is Running from GST', Australian Associated Press, 20 June 2000.
- 55 For discussions of Australia-India relations prior to May 1998, see Gurry, *India: Australia's Neglected Neighbour?*, Gordon, *The Search for Substance*, and Samina Yasmeen, 'India', in *The Asia-Australia Survey 1996-97*, ed. Russell Trood and Deborah McNamara (South Melbourne: Macmillan, 1996).
- 56 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, *In the National Interest: Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper* (Canberra: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 1997), p.67.
- 57 Department of Defence, *Australia's Strategic Policy*, (Canberra: Defence Publishing Service, 1997).
- 58 Ibid, p.24.
- 59 Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee, *The 1998 Indian and Pakistani Nuclear Tests* (Canberra: Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia, 1999), p.xiii.
- 60 Commonwealth of Australia, *Defence 2000: Our Future Defence Force*, Defence White Paper 2000 (Canberra: Defence Publishing Service, 2000).
- 61 Ibid, p.ix.
- 62 Ibid.
- 63 Ibid, p.19.
- 64 The Senate FADT Committee report, *The 1998 Indian and Pakistani Nuclear Tests*, makes a number of thoughtful recommendations about how

Australia could play a more active and influential role in international nuclear policy development, focussed not just on South Asia, but more broadly as well.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, p ix; Department of Defence, *Defence Review 2000 – Our Future Defence Force*, A Public Discussion Paper, (Canberra, Defence Publishing Service, June 2000), p.16.

<sup>66</sup> The author heard suggestions that Australia should have considered military intervention in Fiji, something that was out of the question from Australia's point of view.

<sup>67</sup> P.R. Chari, 'Fiji & Indo-Australian Ties', *Hindu*, 19 August 2000.

<sup>68</sup> Press Trust of India, 'India, Australia Agree to Resume Defence Ties Suspended after Pokhran Tests', BBC Monitoring Service, 13 July 2000.

<sup>69</sup> Graeme Dobell, 'Australia, India Resume Defence Dialogue Suspended after Nuclear Test', Radio Australia, 31 July 2000; BBC Monitoring Service, 1 September 2000.

<sup>70</sup> *Defence 2000*, p.38.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, pp.36–37.