
The Relationship Dynamics Between India & European Union in the Changing World Order: Convergences and Challenges**Vidyottma Jha****Department of Political Science, Patna University****Email ID: vidyottma14@gmail.com**

The international order has been undergoing a radical transformation wherein the European Union (EU) needs to re-evaluate its role and priorities in a new, more challenging, competitive and strategic terrain. The distribution of power and the pervasive standards are the two cardinal factors that define any international order at the regional or global levels. So, at this stage, it's clearly seen that the combination of structural power shifts and competition of world views has reshaped the political models and taken the international order to a new territory. After the end of the Cold War, it was believed that the spread of liberal political values immediately after economic liberalization would gradually call for a worldwide convergence of norms, values, and political systems. Political and economic liberalization was the only direction to modernisation and growth, which also happened to be the principal objective of all countries. However, the new cardinal conjecture is that power politics is back as the liberal world order recedes. The 'new normal' would resemble the old normal of great power competition and zero-sum games, leaving little room for rules-based cooperation. Thus, it's clear by way of various indicators which point toward growing multi-dimensional political, economic, technological, security, and normative competition for the foreseeable future with the US-China rivalry becoming a prime aspect of current international affairs. This prospect has brought forth a number of questions about Europe's future and its role in the world. Some of the prominent questions are: How India and the EU relationship could be expanded with respect to their relationship from the current economic dimension to a broader dimension such as a security-based dimension? What is lacking despite the expressed willingness and the latent prospects in terms of democratic performance and complementarities or there is a need for a dialogue on sensitive issues or a need to identify the synergies that would trigger more cooperation across the board. Besides this, there is a need to analyse whether the experts and policymakers should be concentrating on traditional security threats or whether it is better to initiate and pursue cooperation on non-traditional one or on which direction of engagements India and EU focus; whether bilateral or multilateral forms of engagement? All these questions hold importance as it is necessary to

find answers to these questions as it could throw a light on why the EU-India partnership is not yet strategic and then find ways to challenge a relative impasse in the relationship between the two parties. There are few specific areas at the multilateral level where meaningful coordination and action could be undertaken in three main areas in order to set the strategic partnership in motion: The first is India and the EU's contribution to international governance with emphasis on economic governance; secondly, the passage of regional cooperation frameworks and the prospects for inter-regional cooperation beyond trade; and thirdly, the global security issues, particularly peacekeeping and peace-building.

Proposals for Augmenting cooperation at the Bilateral and Multilateral level

Trade and Economy: The Bilateral Exchanges and Cooperation

If we closely analyse we find that both India and the EU have mostly followed different paths with respect to trade and the financial and economic order. There has been a consistent growth in trade between the two with the exception of a small splash in 2009-10 due to the ongoing economic crisis. However, India's trade with other countries like China and the South Asia region has been growing more quickly. India owes the major part, i.e., approximately 40 percent of the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), to the EU. There are two ways for the concentration of FDI which infer that 70 percent of EU companies have been operating in Delhi, Mumbai and its encompassing areas, while 80 percent of EU companies are from the 8 Member States. Several important issues have been pending for a long time between India and the EU in this field, primarily affecting negotiations towards the Free Trade Agreement (FTA), especially the allocation of benefits of tariff reform and data-sharing. The development in addressing them has been steady due to the India-EU confrontations in the wake of WTO negotiations. This issue has given rise to the fear of the Indian experts that the crisis in the Eurozone may jeopardize the prospects of a successful conclusion of the FTA.

Issues and their Multilateral Relevance:

- (a) There is a scope for multilateral Cooperation between India and the EU within the G-20, especially considering that the crucial decisions would be taken by the US and China. The areas of potential Cooperation between India and the EU within the G-20 agenda include food and agriculture, in particular, food supply chains, biofuel production and the impact on food substitution, technology transfer, and best practices on water use. By way of this cooperation but going beyond the G-20, we see that there is a scope to create a framework that allows for sustainable economic growth based on

an educated labor force, access to education, and access to resources, particularly electricity.

- (b) The Cooperation between India and the EU might focus on Africa to establish a kind of trilateral cooperation scheme considering the 'proximity effect.' Then there is another predominant factor apart from the conspicuous areas of cooperation, such as the demographic boom in Africa, which is likely to overtake China and India in terms of the labour force.

India and the EU released a Joint Action Plan in 2008 wherein both the EU and India, for the first time, formally indicated their willingness 'to promote peace and comprehensive security'. However, the plan could not gestate. Although, the elements of NTS are clearly present and some of them have been part of the bilateral relationship for many years.

Non-Traditional security and Growing Relevance

The ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in Godollo, Hungary entitled as 'Working Together on Non-Traditional Security Challenges' on 7 June 2011 marked the official arrival of the concept of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) into the EU's dialogue.ⁱ Thus, the document does not offer any comprehensive definition of NT but lists a number of its components like natural disasters, climate change, food and water security, energy security, the challenge of education and health according to the Millennium Development Goals, the need for social safety nets, social protection, inclusive growth and poverty reduction, science and technology issues, the need for a dialogue of cultures and interfaith cooperation for peace. It also identified the global financial and economic crisis with terrorism, piracy and transnational organized crime, cyber-security and nuclear proliferation.ⁱⁱ All these aspects that are being covered show that the scope is very wide and has a direct impact on the volatility of commodity prices; for example, it has a direct impact on global food security. Terrorism is a big issue and is labeled as an NTS challenge. It has become a new dimension of the restricted 'traditional' concept of security which is related to open conflict and the use of force.ⁱⁱⁱ ASEM is basically an informal process of dialogue and cooperation. So, Indian leaders had a little different approach toward Non-Traditional Security. So they called for a holistic view of the foreign and security policy challenges that the country was facing. In a talk delivered at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses in New Delhi in 2007, the then Minister of External Affairs clearly stated that if we have to succeed in the international arena and secure our vital national interests, it's not only essential to have a strong defence, but also a robust

economy. The two are closely interlinked. All the issues we have discussed so far and the issues like current threats such as terrorism, a proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and conventional conflicts help define the critical areas of non-traditional security issues which can further build up the EU-India cooperation. Besides this, the issue of global food security and the implications of the global financial crisis and pandemics like SARS, AIDS and H5N1 virus and the challenges that arose due to this ought to be added to the list as it's one of the most vital issues which can't be overlooked and closed. The Indian National Security Adviser, Shiv Shankar Menon, while speaking on 'New Dimensions of Security at the IISS-sponsored Shangri-La Dialogue in 2010, also mentioned the threat to the geopolitical consequences of the financial crisis and the economic crisis. He also brought up the issue of the spread of weapons of mass destruction; terrorism which includes trans-border terrorism, piracy, the issue of energy security and stability, climate change, maritime security, security of the global commons i.e., outer space, oceans, cyberspace, global transport and communications networks, etc., and also the challenges they might pose which he precisely mentioned as the 'the power of non-state actors.'^{iv} This issue leads us to the transitional side of the discussion, which focuses on the vagueness of the concept of non-traditional security. We know fairly well about NTS. According to Mely Caballero-Anthony, the Head of the Centre for NTS Studies at Rajaratnam School of International Studies of the NTU University, the non-traditional security threats refer to the challenges to the survival and well-being of mankind and issues that arise mainly out of non-military sources, such as climate change, cross-border environmental degradation and resource depletion, infectious diseases, natural disasters, irregular migration, food shortages, people smuggling, drug trafficking and other forms of transnational crime' like domestic to cross-border environmental degradation and resource depletion which also includes within its purview the issue of cyber security and conflict resolution.^v Thus, we see that a number of issues have already been contrived in the agenda of India-EU cooperation. Secondly, without the label stuck on them – whether the label is 'comprehensive security,'^{vi} 'non-traditional security,' 'human security,'^{vii} or 'new dimensions of security – a number of issues related to NTS have already shaped up in the plan of EU-India cooperation. On the other hand, the issue of climate change has become a global issue in accordance with the issue of energy security and water security.

The EU-India dialogue and cooperation on non-traditional security

Alongwith NTS policy which still remains to be theorized, there are many other issues where both India and EU have agreed to cooperate. At the 2008 EU-India Summit, The Joint Action Plan of 2005 was reviewed and it spoke about the threat that is posed as a result of climate change, terrorism and instability with the new challenges that have arisen. It mentioned the difficulties that are posed by the outlandish pressure on energy and natural resources which calls for immediate action.^{viii} In order to resolve these issues, certain activities are being considered and are called Millenium Development Goals or MDGs like promoting peace and comprehensive security, promoting sustainable development, promoting research and technology, promoting cultural exchanges, human rights, civil-military peace-building operations, fighting nuclear proliferation and export control, fighting terrorism, etc. Therefore, the Country Strategy Paper 2007-2013 was released, which specifically mentioned the need for two- a pronged approach, such as assisting India in meeting the MDGs by providing budget support to the social sector with special emphasis on health and education and the other hand by implementing the EU-India Partnership through an ambitious Action Plan which emphasizes on sectoral economic dialogue, civil society, and cross-cultural cooperation, academic and education exchange'.^{ix} Later, when the paper was reviewed, it called for three closer concerns that needed to be addressed with immediate effect, these were: environment, health and terrorism. The Mid-Term Review of the Country Strategy Paper conducted in 2010 confirmed the policy selected previously, and noted: 'The proposal is that the MIP for India for 2011-13 should focus more on priority 1 i.e., to assist India with meeting the MDGs by providing support to the social sectors and extending support for the social sectors as requested by the Government of India. Priority 2 should focus on a limited number of sectors such as higher education, energy and the environment, where policy dialogue between the EU and India is in progress in the context of the JAP and which are highly relevant to the achievement of the MDGs and the targets set in the 11th Five-Year Plan.' To sum up, an extensive range of dialogues is selected without defining non-traditional security *per se*. This is not the place to offer a comprehensive study of the discussions initiated and the actions conducted with an impact on NTS. Still, we can select three examples for a closer look: the first would be related to the environment, the second would be health, and the third would be terrorism.

India- EU: Environment and Climate Change Co-operation

The first and foremost goal in this sphere is to extend support to the efforts made by India toward sustainable growth. So, for this purpose, the EU-India Environment Forum has held an annual meeting since 2005. The India-EU Joint Working Group on Environment has met annually since 2007 and, by way of the EU-India Action Plan Support Facility Programme (APSF), has been providing technical assistance in five priority sectors: waste, water, climate change, air pollution, and chemicals. The Work Programme on Energy, Clean Development and Climate Change, adopted in 2008, supports operations dealing with energy efficiency, renewable energy, transfer of technology and water management with sustainable habitat and climate change adaptation also being an important part of the discourse.^x This is a research project based on the repercussion of the retreat of the Himalayan glaciers. The European Investment Bank to the EXIM Bank of India has given a credit for reinforcing the investments in contributing to climate change mitigation. In addition to this, the EU-India joint research on climate change and natural disasters has also been carried out since 2004.^{xi} Along with these, the approach has been business-oriented due to which the area of focus has been mainly on clean technology transfers in many fields: the environment, energy, transport and biotechnology.^{xii} European Business and Technology Centre: 'Promoting European Clean technologies in India and Tackling Climate Change. This is followed by another objective of EU-India Cooperation which primarily focuses on the environment which is more political as it aims at building an 'understanding on global environmental issues including climate change. This is indeed necessary, considering the difficult negotiations conducted during the Summit on Climate Change held in Copenhagen in 2009. The EU-India cooperation looks beyond the given periphery. It aims at building a network of global environmental issues, including climate change.

India-EU Join Hands on Health Risks

Prior to NTS, the EU extended its support to India in the health sector for fighting with dreadful diseases like HIV/AIDS. Among other objectives, this sector has also been given a huge priority and so since 2003, NGOs' projects have been funded well in order to reach the vulnerable people in the rural and tribal communities or the youth or the childbearing women in the northeast. It aimed at preventing and ensuring access to sexual and reproductive health services for vulnerable women; guaranteeing the health rights and needs of tribal people in regions prone to HIV, malaria and Tuberculosis as a sub-structure of the EU 'Programme for

Action to confront HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis through external action (2007-2011)'. Hence, the European grants received by India cover over 50 percent of funds received by India under the Global Fund against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Apart from funding the idea is to address sensitive issues like HIV and the stigma attached to them. For this, the EU works in pace with the NGOs in India NGOs and the Indian National AIDS Control Organisation in order to build efficient indicators and monitoring tools useful for national policies.^{xiii}

India-EU: International Terrorism and Piracy

International terrorism has been one of the areas of discourse between the two. A joint declaration at the 11th summit was held in 2010. The Joint Declaration mainly addressed the issue of International Terrorism where it clearly said that the EU, its Member States and India condemn those who sponsor, abet and instigate terrorism and provide terrorists safe havens; it further underlines that cooperation in combating international terrorism which includes cross-border terrorism, is one of the key political priorities in the India-EU strategic partnership. It also reaffirmed the joint commitment to the conclusion of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.^{xiv} The fight against piracy in the Indian Ocean offers yet another area of convergence between India and the EU. For this purpose, the EU has set up its first naval operation called 'Atlanta' in this field under its own label. This is supposed to be conducted off the Somalia coast under the aegis of the EU Common Security and Defence Policy and the patronage of a series of UN resolutions adopted from 2008 onwards and the Operation 'Atlanta' has been extended until December 2012.^{xv} The EU NAVFOR website has mentioned a permanent collaboration with independent deployers like China, Russia, Japan, Taiwan, India and others'. This implies the facilitation of the programming of patrols and escorts.

The Geopolitics and Geo-economics: Converging and Conflicting Interests

Indian diplomacy has mostly endeavoured to promote the balance of interests and it has always shied away from promoting the concept of balance of powers which is inherited from the Westphalian type of international relations. Pranab Mukherjee touched on this issue and said: 'What the world needs is not old-style balance of power but a well-crafted system to promote a 'balance of interests among the major powers. No structure of international security will endure if it does not consider the interests of all the major powers. That is also true of regional security arrangements.'^{xvi} However, if we closely analyse there are a number of

issues that are way more ambiguous such as the climate change challenge, which concerns every nation across the globe. There is a common global interest if it is addressed properly, but the means of addressing it branches off between the old industrial nations on the one hand and emerging and developing countries on the other, as the Copenhagen divide shows. The issue of Intellectual Property Rights is one of the important areas of concern as the trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights (TRIPS) is not just an issue of trade; rather, they directly concern NTS when the access to generic drugs to treat AIDS or other diseases becomes a matter of conflict. Then there is another area where India has been showing discontent and that is agricultural policy of EU. It is seen as establishing camouflaged isolationism through the high subsidies provided to European farmers at the cost of the competitiveness of agricultural exports from poorer countries with a large rural population. The debate on the Indian Civil Nuclear Liability Act happened recently. The debate was on civil nuclear supplies which the Indian Parliament passed in 2010. It is quite explanative of the issues and the intricacies underlying therein of the NTS when they are not only bracketed with cosmic trade interests but also to major controversies, both at home and abroad. The EU was more disinclined compared to France and the United Kingdom to support the US initiative to offer India a 'Civil Nuclear Deal' and which could provide access to updated civil nuclear technology through a special status outside the Non-Proliferation Treaty which further adjusted with the IAEA and the Nuclear Suppliers Group. All EU countries finally voted in its favour and thus the EU has decided to support the joint research projects on civil nuclear energy. After the nuclear deal was signed, the Indian Civil Nuclear Liability Act 2010 opened a new debate, as supplier countries are anxious about the financial implications of a hypothetical nuclear accident. More broadly, the legitimacy of nuclear energy itself as a clean energy is also being contested by opponents in India and abroad, particularly after the Fukushima accident in Japan. There are other decisive issues where the interests of India and the EU (or the established powers at large) diverge, though they do not necessarily conflict. The issue of global food prices has a much greater impact on food security in developing countries than in Europe. The need for effective regulation of the global financial system – a must for an insecure global economy – is shared by all countries. Still, the internal divides or the varying types of prevalent national economic cultures draw different answers from different quarters. India, with a tradition of regulated finance, well-controlled banks and non-fully convertible currency is an interesting case indeed. In regard to

such a topic, beyond the policy choices, geopolitical perspectives have to be considered: in 2011, India did not support the European candidate for Director General of the IMF as a matter of principle (whereas China, finally, did the opposite), considering that multilateral key positions must be more evenly distributed between the established powers of the West and emerging countries. Geo-economics and geopolitics are therefore at play in a number of NTS-related issues, just as they are in global politics, as we have seen with the common IBSA position on Libya and Syria, a position closer to Russia and China than to Europe: national sovereignty still prevails above the responsibility to protect, and India, as many other countries, is wary of the Western propensity towards sanctions, the use of force and regime change. That does not mean that new blocs have formed with the BRICS on the one side – which, after the 2011 BRIC summit, enlarged by adding South Africa – and Europe and North America on the other. The sharp divide of the Cold War is over. The present global order is more and more complex, and more and more interdependent. India might side with China on one issue, but will never put its eggs in a single basket. Its multi-directional foreign policy is guided by a combination of short-term and long-term national interests, and the need for a better balanced multilateralism. This configuration allows the EU and India to do more together on a number of issues related to NTS. However, to enhance this cooperation and identify its critical areas, it would be useful to look more closely at NTS concepts. In this regard, it might be worthwhile to institutionalize a framework for a bilateral informed discussion between EU and Indian representatives. The NTS Asia initiative launched by the Centre for NTS Studies at the Rajaratnam School of International Studies of the Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, could be a source of inspiration, if not necessarily a model to duplicate, as there is no shortage of Indian expertise on the subject, a number of Indian think tanks having already addressed NTS issues, such as the Observer Research Foundation project ‘India 2022 Non-Traditional Security Threats’.^{xvii}

Common Ground as a Basis for Common Action: The Obstacles Remain

India and the EU belong to a multilateral order founded on the projection of democratic principles. Both have traditionally contributed substantially in areas such as peacekeeping under the UN flag and are now facing new threats such as terrorism, piracy, and cyber attacks, not to mention well-established threats associated with fragile states or climate change. India is launching its foreign aid agency, which opens new avenues for exchanging views and lessons. Africa has always been one of the focal points of EU external action, and

it is now seen as India's main area of expansion beyond its region. When it comes to regional cooperation, the fact that the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) has been incapable of translating rhetoric into action also offers possibilities for grounding cooperation between the two actors, since the EU can provide the necessary know-how, even if the European integration process is currently under strain. India and the EU can be considered 'natural' partners in international relations but are often driven by divergent geopolitical considerations and regional interests. Both India and the EU build their foreign policies based on the aspirations of citizens, which gives legitimacy to their foreign policies but also entails a series of constraints. They are both especially keen on their respective privileged – if not always simple – relations with the US, which also poses certain unintended difficulties for building bilateral relations between the two. Although the EU is generally considered by India as a successful model of economic and political integration, it has been viewed in certain cases through the prism of NATO and thus sometimes seen as an interventionist. This is problematic even for basic maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean, but no effective alternatives are offered by India when it comes to implementing the Responsibility to Protect (R2P). Some other issues and misperceptions are directly connected to each other's international goals and positions, from India's claim to a permanent seat in the UN Security Council (the EU's lack of internal consensus on the matter does not help) to the EU requesting more concrete commitment to multilateralism from India (whose enormous poverty challenge should be seen as a constraint despite its obvious economic success). India is considered by the EU Member States as an emerging global actor, yet it has been a recipient of aid until very recently. The partial rejection of European development aid by India – it is still welcome in the area of trade liberalisation, energy and the environment – will have a positive impact on external perceptions of India's capacity to perform internationally, which should in turn enable the partners to build a balanced relationship which takes full account of the interests of both sides. Some analysts are in fact calling for a new type of cooperation: business with emerging India, which is recognised as a middle-income country. Yet trade or the transfer of technology can be seen only as the foundations and not as a goal of the partnership. The context in which this relationship is developing has also changed dramatically in the last ten years since the rise of new global actors, including India, has given shape to a multi-polar world and also triggered new tensions. This should of course, be reflected in India-EU relations but should not serve the purpose of power politics; i.e. no

paradigm can be successfully built between the two countries with the aim of counterbalancing the power of others such as China. The financial and economic crisis has confirmed the relative decline of the West, while emerging economies are displaying spectacular dynamism, including in the case of India achieving greater internal economic cohesion, as signaled by Indian Forum participants. In this context, India is becoming more self-confident, while the EU has become more inward-looking as it concentrates on trying to solve internal financial tensions. Also, as a consequence of the different impacts of the crisis as they have experienced it, India and other new global actors will be called on to exercise greater responsibility toward the world order. The current financial and economic crisis afflicting the EU may paradoxically offer opportunities for a better understanding. There is perhaps a chance that both India and the EU can build on their respective weaknesses. There has been discussion in the EU recently about how the BRICS countries might help the EU out of the economic crisis beyond the support package they offered through the IMF; some analysts are already warning that Europe's commitment to multilateralism and multiculturalism, and even to human rights and democracy worldwide, is weakening in the midst of the crisis. India, for its part, is effectively rising. Still, certain basic values such as democracy or human rights are perceived as too vague and abstract by the immense majority of its citizens as they struggle for survival. From Brussels, India may seem unconcerned about deepening its relations with the EU, but it may well be that it is not interested in a more 'introspective' EU. In this context, both entities are experiencing a radical and parallel – but of course different – transformation of their foreign policies: the EU, regarding its need to fulfill the requirements of the Lisbon Treaty in the midst of a deepening crisis, and India regarding its increasingly prominent role in the world while facing acute internal challenges. They could reinforce one another by making their Strategic Partnership worthy of its name. The main obstacle may indeed be 'ontological' since neither India nor the EU seems to be, at the end of the day, fully-fledged 'strategic' international actors themselves; but they may well at some point realise that they need to work more closely together to address their respective internal problems more effectively, even if it entails redefining themselves as genuine strategic actors.

Conclusion

Enhancing India-EU cooperation in critical areas of non-traditional security issues is an obvious necessity. There is already a sound basis for expanding existing cooperation. What is

lacking, perhaps is a comprehensive framework under the existing agenda, to promote bilateral debate not just about the various issues already identified but also about the correlations between them and between NTS and other fields that are crucial to the Strategic Partnership, be they trade or traditional security. In her New Delhi speech in June 2010, Catherine Ashton already identified critical areas in need of more intense cooperation: piracy in the Indian Ocean; counter-terrorism; Indian participation in EU crisis-management operations; dialogue on regional issues including Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka; priority areas such as climate change, energy, and trade, joint research on the development of clean technologies and renewable and clean energy, trade remaining a cornerstone of our strategic partnership'.^{xviii}

In his remarks following the 11th EU-India summit regarding EU-India cooperation, the President of the European Council, Herman Van Rompuy, reiterated the common will to unlock 'the enormous potential in our bilateral relations, to bring the Strategic Partnership launched in 2004 to a higher level, by 'making it wider (in the areas to be unfolded)' and 'to make it deeper (in those already launched)'. This policy choice at the strategic partnership level is also valid in the expanding field of non-traditional security. Last but not least, this broader and deeper dialogue and Cooperation between EU and India on NTS has to be developed about the conversation and cooperation established by each side with other partners as well, in so far as the very definition of NTS recognises the challenges to be addressed as global.

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