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05 November 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR SCUSA 73

SUBJECT: US Policy Towards India in Support of Indo-Pacific Strategy

1. **Issue:** The United States must take action to support India as a partner in our vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific while promoting democracy and economic development to counter revisionist powers.
2. **Strategic Analysis:** India and the PRC's rising economic competitiveness has upset the Indo-Pacific power balance and fostered revisionist policies that threaten economic stability and Indian sovereignty. While Indian administrations have ebbed and flowed in democratic permanence and international support for domestic policy, India and the U.S. still share fundamental democratic values.
3. **Relevant National Interests:** Closer U.S.-Indian economic ties, increased Indian involvement in the Quad, and improved diplomatic relations each provide paths to enhance stability in the Indo-Pacific region, grow India's global competitiveness, protect global supply chains, and counter PRC aggression.
4. **Strategic Options:**

Option 1: Economic Investment and Collaboration – Collaborate with India in the development of climate technologies and adaptation strategies within the manufacturing, research, and development sectors through public-private partnerships. American investment in the growing Indian manufacturing sector and the 'Make In India' campaign provides an alternative to inexpensive overseas manufacturing in the PRC. Collaborative research into strategies of climate adaptation are cost-effective and practical methods that address India's growing environmental pressures including water scarcity and soil degradation. The funding for this proposal would be sourced from USAID or other emergent climate aid programs.

Option 2: Diplomatic Engagement – Strengthen U.S.-India diplomatic relations by (a) confirming an ambassador to India; (b) expanding access to F-1 and other visas, Green Cards, and the Quad STEM Fellowship; and (c) negotiating the easing tariffs with India. This will grow both American and Indian economies and will build personal ties between the two nations. Reluctance may emerge with regards to tariff reduction due to India's protectionist economy, and expanding visa access may require significant increases in State Department personnel and funding.

Option 3: Military Cooperation - Promote U.S.-India military cooperation by (a) making Australia a permanent member in the Malabar exercises; (b) ensuring Indian participation in the SEACAT exercises through multilateral agreements; and (c) creating an annual conference between Quad members to promote technological information sharing and cybersecurity cooperation. This policy will increasing maritime growth in the Quad and interoperability to

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advance Indian naval capacity, but it could incite an aggressive PRC response and Indian nationalists may view the attempts as “westernizing” and refusing cooperation efforts.

5. **Recommendation:** We recommend focusing on economic assistance and cooperation to develop solar energy systems and climate resiliency within India. This advances sustainable energy proliferation, counters the influence of the PRC which currently leads the world in the production and distribution of photovoltaic equipment, and promotes interest in Western aid in sustainable energy transitions. This approach sets a precedent for the inception of a mutually beneficial relationship.

Additionally, we recommend promoting public-private partnerships between U.S. corporations and the Indian manufacturing sector. With India’s focus on moving away from an agricultural focused economy, this will strengthen ties between the U.S. and Indian economies, provide a legitimate alternative to manufacturing within the PRC, and help centralize global supply lines within friendly powers to promote stability and security of trade.

We further recommend research and development of collaborative strategies to assist India in adapting to shifting climate conditions and the resulting environmental pressures. India and the greater region of South Asia is the most vulnerable to the effects of climate change due to high rates of population growth, natural resource degradation, and increasing food insecurity. These environmental pressures will likely exacerbate existing sectarian conflicts that have led to growing international reservations on the strength of democratic institutions and domestic policy within India. We suggest that the U.S. assist India to remedy their environmental pressures with emphasis on food and water insecurity. Through sharing technical knowledge and expertise on proven methods of revitalizing agricultural systems including agroforestry and soil carbon sequestration.

6. **Implementation:** Initial implementation of this policy will be done in conjunction with Indian policymakers, requiring diplomatic cooperation between the two countries, and could be best initiated by the appointment and confirmation of a U.S. ambassador to India. American aid from USAID or other emergent climate programs needs to be secured to develop photovoltaic energy equipment within India. This equipment will promote Indian implementation of green energy initiatives and its export to the region at large. To further serve the purpose of climate change adaptation, research and development information can be commenced with adaptation strategies to India’s growing food and water scarcity. With sufficient U.S.-India cooperation, these strategies and technologies may be advanced to an international scale. Cooperation within the manufacturing sector will be initially promoted by diplomatic negotiations with India regarding the budding private-public relationship. U.S. private partners will have to be lobbied to incentivize the development of helpful relations within this sector. We will then determine the necessary amount of government contribution to the project and will work to provide appropriate budget adjustments.
7. The point of contact for this memorandum is CDT Vishnu S. Kumar at vishnu.kumar@westpoint.edu or 714-391-3009.

India: Courting Asia’s Rising Power
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