U.S.-India Security Burden-Sharing?

The Potential for Coordinated Capacity-Building in the Indian Ocean

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Preface

Building a partnership with India is central to U.S. security interests in the Indian Ocean (IO). The United States seeks to work with India to promote stability in a region of rising commercial and strategic importance. U.S. policymakers view India as an "anchor"[1] or "pillar"[2] of stability in the Asia-Pacific. Given declining defense budgets, however, the United States will have fewer resources for its forces and partner capacity-building in this vast region. Envisioning India as a "provider of security in the broader Indian Ocean region,"[3] the United States is naturally eager to pursue burden-sharing opportunities with India as a means to this end.

India for its part understands that the United States expects it to assume a greater leadership role in the IO and appreciates the importance of its growing economic and naval capabilities. In 2010, then-Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao spoke about the growing view that "a robust Indian naval presence is seen as a necessary contribution to a cooperative regional security order" and discussed "the cooperative burden-sharing of naval forces to fight piracy off the coast of Somalia" as an example of India's contributions to IO security.[4]

This report examines the potential for the United States and India to coordinate on the provision of security assistance and capacity-building in the IO as a form of security burden-sharing. We examine the South Asian littoral countries of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives. At present, though, U.S.-India burden-sharing in the Indian

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[1] U.S. Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense*, Jan. 5, 2012, p.2.

[2] Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman, "The United States and India: An Indispensable Partnership for the 21st Century," Remarks at the American Center, New Delhi, India, Apr. 2, 2012.

[3] U.S. Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*, 2.

[4] Foreign Secretary Nirupama Rao, "India as a Consensual Stakeholder in the Indian Ocean: Policy Contours," National Maritime Foundation, Nov. 19, 2010.

Ocean is only notional as a logical next step in the U.S.-India strategic partnership. U.S.-India coordination on security assistance to Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives would represent an important change to the approaches and tools in U.S. and Indian relations with these IO countries. It would also be a new aspect of U.S. bilateral and military-to-military relations with India.

This report may be of interest to analysts investigating how the United States and India can take their growing relationship and converging interests forward in the maritime realm and for the betterment of South Asian littoral countries.

We conducted this research mostly in the first half of 2012, including trips to India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives. The authors wish to thank the officials and experts interviewed who were generous with their time and insights.

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Summary

The Indian Ocean (IO) is growing in strategic importance due to substantial trade and energy flows along the sea lines of communication and through strait chokepoints. In an era of decreasing defense budgets, the United States will be more judicious in applying limited resources to build partnerships with countries in this vast region. A robust policy and academic discussion has emerged about the need for the United States to pursue a strategy of "offshore balancing," following two costly land wars in Asia. By relying on "primarily naval and air engagements,"[5] an offshore strategy suggests the United States pursue burden-sharing or "burden-shifting"[6] with like-minded countries to lessen their free-riding off the American provision of the public good of security. Professor Christopher Layne describes an offshore balancing strategy as "getting other states to do more for their security so the United States can do less."[7]

India is a relatively new strategic partner of the United States due to its burgeoning economy, democratic political system, and the rise of China. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has written that "the United States is making a strategic bet on India's future—that India's greater role on the world stage will enhance peace and security."[8] Secretary Clinton goes on to describe India's central importance within the Obama administration's "vision for a more economically integrated and politically stable South and Central Asia, with India as a linchpin." In the January 2012 Department of Defense (DOD) Strategic Guidance, India featured prominently: "The United States is also investing in a long-term strategic partnership with India to

[5] Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, speech to the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York, Feb. 25, 2011.

[6] Christopher Layne, "The (Almost) Triumph of Offshore Balancing," *The National Interest*, Jan. 27, 2012.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, "America's Pacific Century," *Foreign Policy*, Oct. 11, 2011.

support its ability to serve as a regional economic anchor and provider of security in the broader Indian Ocean region."[9] Given the United States' new "pivot" or "rebalance" to Asia, India appears to be the logical partner for the United States in the IO.

Meanwhile, India's central geographic position, long-standing socio-cultural ties to other IO countries, and soaring economy have further elevated the country's standing in the region. India conducts security cooperation and assistance activities to further its regional relationships, as does the United States. In consideration of these parallel efforts, this study is motivated by a desire to see how the United States could pursue burden-sharing with India – especially given the climate of austerity in which the United States finds itself. A complementary, overarching goal is to find additional vehicles through which both countries can coordinate, especially in navy-to-navy ties, which are generally seen as having the greatest potential to advance overall bilateral relations. The November 2011 U.S. DOD *Report to Congress on U.S.-India Security Cooperation* explains that "the Department of Defense is continually looking for ways to expand defense cooperation with India."[10]

In this study, we draw conclusions about the art of the possible with regard to the potential for the United States to coordinate with India in the IO. In particular, we analyze possibilities regarding three South Asian littoral countries: Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives. We also consider two countries outside South Asia—Seychelles and Mauritius—and in the outer IO to take a holistic approach to security coordination in the region.

Finally, we investigate four potential areas of U.S.-India naval coordination: counterpiracy, counterterrorism (CT), maritime domain awareness (MDA), and humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR). These areas were prioritized during the 2011 U.S.-India Defense Policy Group (DPG) meeting between U.S. Under Secretary of Defense for Policy Michèle Flournoy and Indian Defense

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[9] U.S. Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense*, Jan. 5, 2012, 2.

[10] U.S. Department of Defense, "Report to Congress on U.S.-India Security Cooperation," Nov. 1, 2011, 8.

Secretary Pradeep Kumar. According to the 2011 DOD report to Congress on U.S.-India security cooperation, they are considered to hold "great potential over the next five years" as areas for cooperation.[11]

This effort marks a substantive regional analysis that relies heavily on information gleaned directly from policymakers and experts from India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives. The United States would be wise to explore a realistic future role for its navy in the Indian Ocean – a domain historically regarded as a transit route from less placid destinations both eastward and westward. Academics such as John Mearsheimer have observed that U.S. security policy since World War II has aimed to maintain the United States' unparalleled position of hegemon in Asia, where no other power can become a peer competitor.[12] However, this ambition is at odds with the 21st century reality of declining defense resources. While the subject of India contributing to burden-sharing has been discussed since at least 2007,[13] India's increasing capabilities in the past few years point to the potential for its role in the IO region, if not on a wider-scale. Scholar Walter C. Ladwig has also written of India's changing aspirations: "New Delhi has already demonstrated a desire to play a leading role in Indian Ocean security, and cooperation on regional security could be the 'next big thing' to drive forward Indo-U.S. relations."[14]

Consequently, this research advances the larger discussion by finding tangible ways to foster bilateral naval relations with India through regional coordination. Such thinking recognizes the limitations on future U.S. defense spending and sees the potential for India to exert a greater regional presence, yet strives to maintain the United States' naval primacy in Asian waters. Interview respondents in South Asia

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[11] Ibid., 2 and 7.

[12] John J. Mearsheimer, "Structural Realism," in *International Relations Theories: Discipline and Diversity*, Tim Dunne, Milja Kurki, and Steve Smith, eds. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 83.

[13] Xenia Dormandy, "Is India, or Will It Be, a Responsible International Stakeholder?" *The Washington Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (2007), 119.

[14] Walter C. Ladwig III, "A Neo-Nixon Doctrine for the Indian Ocean: Helping States Help Themselves," *Strategic Analysis* 36, no. 3 (2012), 392.

often responded with bewilderment, due to the newness of the idea of U.S.-India coordination on capacity-building in the region.

Findings

We conclude that India, at present, would resist U.S. efforts to carry out burden-sharing efforts in the IO due to a combination of attitudinal and structural challenges. First, the concept is so new that views have not been fully thought out in response to the question about the potential for U.S.-Indian coordination in the smaller IO countries. Second, Indian respondents largely reject a U.S. capacity-building role in the IO because the United States is seen as fundamentally an extra-regional actor, and the South Asian littoral states of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives constitute the near abroad of India. Another hurdle is India's decided preference for multilateral coordination within a United Nations (UN) mandate. Finally, a vocal segment of Indians fear that coordinated U.S.-Indian naval activity would appear too anti-China.

On the other hand, we determine that there is potential for burden-sharing in the IO over the long term. Given the economic and strategic forces drawing the two countries together, U.S. coordination with India in the IO will likely happen over time. In our discussions with current and retired Indian officials and experts, even those who are critical of aspects of U.S. defense ties or skeptical of the benefits of U.S. coordination in the IO, are optimistic about the relationship and offer suggestions. They insist that coordination will come with time, and that the United States must be patient.

The United States will continue to experience frustration if it seeks coordination with India at a rate that is faster than India's bureaucratic capacity to absorb requests to engage. Maintaining current efforts through exercises, defense trade, and other activities will entrench bilateral naval relations with India and provide much benefit to U.S. interests with minimal additional effort and cost, thus serving U.S. needs in an era of constrained budget resources.

Analytic approach

To determine the potential for the United States and India to coordinate on the provision of security assistance and capacity-

building in the IO, the study employs a three-pronged approach. First, we examine U.S. and Indian economic, political, and security relations with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives. In this discussion, we analyze factors that can facilitate and hinder possible U.S.-India security burden-sharing. Second, we undertake a systematic analysis of the military capabilities of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives, including separate U.S. and Indian efforts in security cooperation with each of these three countries and an assessment of gaps and overlaps in capabilities provided by the United States and India. Third, we survey official and expert perspectives from the region and evaluate the possibility of coordinated U.S.-India security cooperation in the IO. Finally, we propose some ideas for the United States to consider if burden-sharing with India is pursued.

To conduct the research for this study, we drew on various sources of information, including the following:

- Semi-structured interviews with roughly 90 Indian, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Maldivian, and U.S. officials and experts from January to April 2012, in New Delhi, India; Dhaka, Bangladesh; Colombo, Sri Lanka; Male, Maldives; and Washington, D.C. and Honolulu, Hawaii.[15] Except when respondents' identities are stated, we conducted interviews on a not-for-attribution basis. Appendix A lists the organizations and government agencies across all five countries with which respondents are affiliated. *Please note that their opinions referenced in this report do not represent the official views of their organizations or government agencies.*
- Ten public and private think tank events and conferences mostly in Washington, D.C., and New Delhi from October 2011-May 2012. Each meeting gave us the opportunity to pose study-specific questions to high-ranking government officials and influential experts from South Asia.
- Open-source research including databases (IHS *Jane's*, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), BBC

[15] CNA interviews in Maldives were conducted after President Mohamed Nasheed resigned from office.

Monitoring, NewsBank), books, academic journals, think-tank publications, South Asian regional media and blogs, and annual reports from India's Ministries of Defence and External Affairs websites.

Roadmap to the report

This report proceeds in five parts. The first, scene-setter, section details the background, sensitivities, and other factors the United States must consider if it seeks security coordination with India in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives. The second chapter examines trends in security assistance and cooperation that the United States and India have extended to each of these three countries and evaluates duplications and deficiencies in each smaller IO country's maritime arsenal. The third and fourth sections present views from India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives on the subject of potential U.S.-India coordination in the IO. The fifth chapter makes recommendations for the United States in pursuing burden-sharing with India in the Indian Ocean.

Scene setter: Background, sensitivities, and considerations

India's historical relations with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives

India's historical relations with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives are deep and complex—encompassing interactions over millennia and overlapping ethnicities, languages, religions, cultures, and colonial experiences. Despite the ancient and intimate links, modern state-to-state relations are recent—roughly 50 years old.

India shares a peculiar proximity with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives. India has what could be termed "near exclusive" land and/or maritime borders with these three states. India naturally shares only maritime borders with the two island countries of Sri Lanka and the Maldives and has been described as their "sole neighbor."[16] Except each other, Maldives and Sri Lanka have no immediate neighbors other than India.

The "peculiar proximity" is even more pronounced in the case of India and Bangladesh. Indian states surround Bangladesh on the west, north, and east, along an approximately 2,500- mile border (except for a roughly 200- mile stretch along the southeast corner where Bangladesh and Burma share a border). Bangladesh's territory is open in the south to the Bay of Bengal where it shares maritime borders with only Burma and India. If Bangladesh territory is "encircled" by India, India is "separated" by Bangladesh; though not quite to the extent that West and East Pakistan once were separated on the subcontinent. Peninsular India is essentially separated from

[16] C. Raja Mohan, "The Sole Neighbor," Centre for Policy Research foreign policy blog, undated, http://www.cprindia.org/blog/foreign-policy/3579-sole-neighbour.

India's northeastern states by Bangladesh—except for access through the narrow Shiliguri Corridor.

Today's physical relationship between India and Bangladesh has a historical dimension. Bangladesh actually emerged from what is today India. It was first partitioned from the province of Bengal by the British in 1905 (reunited in 1911) and then split off as East Pakistan in 1947 at the time of British India's partition into independent India and Pakistan. Finally, East Pakistan became today's Bangladesh when it was separated through secession from Pakistan and military intervention from India during the India-Pakistan War of 1971/Bangladesh War of Independence.

India's physical centrality and its interwoven history with these three countries is a structural reality. This reality continues to shape relations today. Another important factor is the religious and ethnic dimensions of India's relationships with these countries. Both Bangladesh and Maldives are Muslim-majority countries (the others in South Asia are Pakistan and Afghanistan) and concern about possible Islamic radicalization and support for terrorism—including the role of Pakistan—is a growing factor in India's relations with them. In fact, for India, security concerns about Islamic radicalism pre-date 9/11: they have been growing since the 1980s because of developments in neighboring states such as Bangladesh and Maldives (not to mention Pakistan).

On the ethno-religious front, the critical issue in India–Sri Lanka relations has been the treatment of Sri Lanka's minority Tamil population (which is predominantly Hindu but includes Christians and Muslims) during Colombo's nearly 30 year war against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) insurgency. The treatment of the Tamil population in Sri Lanka resonates strongly in India's domestic politics because some 70 million Tamils live in India, mostly in the state of Tamil Nadu just across the narrow Palk Straits from Sri Lanka; likewise, politics in India's Tamil Nadu state impinge upon Sri Lanka. Allegations of support from Tamil Nadu for the Tamil insurgency in Sri Lanka have ebbed and flowed. Indian security policy has been implicated directly by unusual linkages between South Asia's ethno-religious conflict, political instability, and military action. A case in point is the 1988 episode in which Tamil insurgents supported a coup in Maldives that led to India's military intervention,

which will be discussed below. The bottom line is that the ethno-religious element of India's relations with Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in particular are a fundamental and often complicating factor in bilateral relations.

Two other factors also pose challenges in developing contemporary bilateral relations between India and each of these countries. The first is a massive asymmetry between India's size, population, economy, and military capacity and those of all of its neighbors. The second is the dislocations of colonialism as well as each country's post-independence efforts to develop new national identities, governance institutions, and modern economies. Power asymmetries inevitably complicate international relations but the "deep history" dislocated by colonialism and post-independence state- and nation-building intensify sensitivities and further exacerbate India's relations with neighbors Bangladesh and Sri Lanka (much less so with Maldives). Add to that clumsy and insensitive policies and tumultuous domestic politics on all sides. As a former Bangladesh Finance Minister once said about South Asian international relations, "India has all the pathologies of a dominant state and its neighbors have all the pathologies of small states. Relations are not easy."[17]

India's current bilateral relations with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives are embarking in each case on something of a "new era"—though identifying periods in India's relations with its South Asian neighbors is somewhat arbitrary and periods of worse or better relations with neighbors have come and gone. The current era is distinct in the sense that in late 2011an Indian prime minister visited Bangladesh for the first time in 12 years and Maldives for the first time in nine years. An Indian prime minister has not visited Sri Lanka since 2008 when Colombo hosted a South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit—though Sri Lanka's President, during his 2010 visit to India, extended an invitation to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh to do so. Here it is worth noting that the power asymmetry between India and these neighbors noted above is reflected in the fact that while Indian leaders rarely visit their small neighbors, the neighbors' leaders regularly visit New Delhi.

[17] Satu Limaye, *The United States and South Asia after the Cold War* (Asia Society, 1994).

There are some prospects for India's relations with these neighbors to improve, possibly leading to more institutionalized, sustainably productive, and even incrementally more integrated relationships. Underlying this possibility are a number of drivers related to India (e.g., economic growth); to the countries themselves (e.g., government change in Bangladesh, Maldives' transition to democracy, and end of Sri Lanka's civil war); and to bilateral decisions to try and institutionalize ties and changes in the international system (e.g., improved U.S.-India relations, China's rise, and greater salience of the Indian Ocean and maritime issues). However, given the long history of complicated and cool relations and unpredictable domestic politics in all of the countries, a linear upward trajectory in relations is unlikely. Just in the period of this tasking, a government change in Maldives and Bangladesh is once again confronting acute political uncertainty.

India's relations with Bangladesh

Historically, India and the area and people constituting today's Bangladesh are part of a common civilization going back thousands of years. As noted earlier, the two countries' peculiar proximity highlights a mutual dependence: India needs transit rights across Bangladesh in order to develop its insurgency-plagued and under-developed northeastern states, and Bangladesh depends on India to stabilize common borders and share water from the common rivers that run through their lands.

India's contemporary relations with Bangladesh begin with support, including military intervention, for the latter's struggle for independence from Pakistan in 1971. Events surrounding East Pakistan's secession from Pakistan and the roles played by India during the Bangladesh War of Independence are complex and remain enormously controversial—especially in Bangladesh (where a leader of a major Islamic party was put on trial for alleged crimes during the struggle for independence). In the subsequent 40 years, bilateral India-Bangladesh relations have been troubled for many reasons, including differences over sharing common river waters, border management, illegal immigration from Bangladesh into India, insurgencies affecting both countries, and trade. These have been exacerbated by domestic politics in each country—and

especially by the swings from comparatively pro- and anti-India political parties and intermittent military coups in Bangladesh.

Since Sheikh Hasina of the Awami League took office in January 2009 following her party's landslide election victory in the late 2008 Bangladesh national elections, India and Bangladesh have embarked on what both countries characterize as a "new phase" of relations.[18] Prime Minister Hasina's January 2010 visit to India was followed by a landmark visit of Indian Prime Minister Singh to Bangladesh in September 2011 (the first by an Indian prime minister in 12 years). A basic but critical element of India's approach has been to try and institutionalize the relationship. Hence, while Prime Minister Singh expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina for "breaking new ground in our bilateral relations,"[19] he immediately noted that that "Our friendship is with the people of Bangladesh. We wish to work with all sections of the people and all shades of public opinion…"[20] The main vehicle for institutionalizing the relationship is the signing of a Framework Agreement for Cooperation on Development that in turn created a Joint Consultative Committee (JCC). The first meeting of the JCC took place on May 7, 2012 and in turn created additional mechanisms for institutionalizing the relationship. These include making the JCC, currently a meeting at the foreign minister level, an annual event as well as launching annual foreign office consultations (at the foreign secretary level) and a biannual consultation at the level of Director General/Joint Secretary.

Institutionalizing ties is important to moving the relationship forward—but even more important to sustaining it. In the past, India-Bangladesh ties have been deeply affected by domestic politics. India's ties with Bangladesh have been better under Awami League

[18] Joint Statement by India and Bangladesh on First Meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Consultative Commission, May 7, 2012, http://meaindia.nic.in/mystart.php?id=100019336&pid=2687.

[19] Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's Address at Dhaka University, Sep. 7, 2011, http://pmindia.nic.in/speech-details.php?nodeid=1057http://pmindia.nic.in/press-details.php?nodeid=1294.

[20] Ibid.

governments in Dhaka and worse under ones led by the Bangladesh National Party (BNP) or the military. On India's side, domestic politics involving West Bengal have constrained bilateral relations. During Prime Minister Singh's 2011 visit to Dhaka, for example, a compromise on the Teesta River was derailed by opposition from the chief minister of India's West Bengal state—the only Indian chief minister of states surrounding Bangladesh who did not travel to Dhaka with Prime Minister Singh.

India and Bangladesh are today grappling with several key issues. Prime Minister Singh stated categorically "The effective management of our borders is probably the biggest challenge we face in developing our bilateral relations."[21] Border control—which spills over into domestic politics—has strong salience, due to a number of factors, including illegal migration from Bangladesh into India, violent incidents leading to casualties of civilians and security personnel along the border, cross-border insurgency activities (particularly in India's northeastern states), and terrorism. A protocol signed during the visit, and which the Indian prime minister termed "historic," is meant to help address unresolved issues regarding enclaves, areas under "adverse possession" and un-demarcated areas. Meanwhile, construction of a barbed wire and concrete barrier across parts of the roughly 2,500-mile border continues.

A second major issue complicating India-Bangladesh relations is the sharing of waters from the rivers that flow through their respective territories. These disputes are to be dealt with on the "principles of equity, fair play and no harm to either party" but during the September 2011 India-Bangladesh summit no agreement was reached on the sharing of the waters of the Teesta River (though the Indian prime minister promised that the Tipaimukh dam project in Manipur, India will not adversely affect Bangladesh). Despite ongoing differences, the 1996 Ganga Water Treaty between India and Bangladesh has withstood political changes in both countries—suggesting that eventually resolution or at least management of differences over water sharing is possible. However, even regarding the sharing of Ganga waters, there remains occasional acrimony with

[21] Ibid.

some Bangladeshis charging that Indian actions are not equitable or fair and do harm to Bangladeshi interests.

A third ongoing issue of concern in the bilateral relationship involves Indian accusations that militants operating from and in Bangladesh support terrorism in India. The Indian government has charged that Pakistan-backed terrorists operate out of Bangladesh. In the November 2011 meeting of the heads of government, Prime Minister Singh appealed for cooperation, citing the "paramount importance that we work together to confront this challenge [of extremism and terrorism]" but acknowledge "the immense cooperation India has received from Bangladesh in this area…"[22] In the past, the two countries have also accused each other of assisting insurgencies in respective territories either through active support or by insufficient efforts to deal with the use of each other's territory by insurgents. These complaints have ebbed in recent years. However, there are ongoing insurgent activities across all of northeast India —and, given the unclear delineation of borders as well as nature of the terrain, it is quite likely that both countries will continue to have to deal with each other in addressing mutual complaints. There are ongoing army-to-army and border forces mechanisms for consultation and action. Terrorism and insurgency, flowing from their peculiar land borders, give primacy to military and security relations between the two countries' armies.

A fourth issue in the bilateral relationship concerns economic relations—particularly efforts to further integrate the two economies and Bangladesh's concerns about its large trade deficit with India. To address Bangladeshi complaints about the trade deficit, Prime Minister Singh pledged his government to provide "greater market access to Bangladeshi products in India by removing both tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade."[23] Immediately and unilaterally announced was removal of all "46 textile tariff lines of greatest sensitivity to Bangladesh from the negative list for Least Developed Countries under South Asian Free Trade Area."[24] Also in an effort to

[22] Ibid.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid.

address the trade deficit, India has sought to expand investment in Bangladesh in order to boost exports from the country to India and extended a $1 billion credit line to develop projects focusing on transport infrastructure—particularly railways. India-Bangladesh economic relations are an increasingly important element of the bilateral relationship but are also important to regional integration and to developing India's poor northeastern states. It remains unclear whether expanded economic ties will help create a more institutionalized relationship and political amity between the two countries.

Finally, a maritime boundary line in the Bay of Bengal between the two countries is unresolved, but was submitted to the Hague-based Permanent Court on Arbitration in 2009. This maritime boundary has received more attention since the discovery of large amounts of energy resources in the Bay of Bengal and the settlement of the disputed Bangladesh-Burma maritime boundary in March 2012. A ruling on the India-Bangladesh maritime boundary is expected in 2014.

In short, there have been recent improvements in India's relations with Bangladesh for increased bilateral security cooperation generally and in the maritime area specifically, but the implications of these improvements are unclear. During Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's and Prime Minister Singh's visits, no major security agreements were signed—and no public mention was made of maritime cooperation. Given the immediacy, violence and domestic salience of land-based issues in the bilateral relationship (i.e., contested borders, violent incidents, water sharing, insurgencies, terrorism, transit access across Bangladesh to India's northeastern states, and smuggling), India and Bangladesh are likely to continue to prioritize them. However, if and as India-Bangladesh relations improve and progress is made on these issues, the scope for security cooperation in general and on maritime issues in particular may well increase.

The two countries have a basis for expanding ties on maritime issues. For example, there have been important high-level exchanges of naval officers (particularly since 2009 when the Awami League took office), long-standing training of Bangladesh naval officers in Indian military institutions, and continued Bangladesh participation in the annual Milan series of exercises with India. The outcome of the

maritime boundary dispute currently under arbitration may also influence maritime cooperation. Much will depend on whether recently improved ties can be sustained in the future.

India relations with Sri Lanka

India–Sri Lanka relations extend deep into each other's history and culture. However, with the Sri Lankan government's defeat of the Tamil insurgency in May 2009, India clearly considers a new era to have begun. It is telling that in the second paragraph of its January 2012 update of bilateral relations, the Indian Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) jumps from discussing the 2,500-year history of the relationship to describing relations since the end of the armed conflict.[25] The long conflict has had enormously complicated and horrific impacts on both countries. Just one well-known example is the assassination of Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi by a Tamil suicide bomber while Gandhi was campaigning in Tamil Nadu state in May 1991. The Indian government's direct involvement in the conflict came with the dispatch of an Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) to Sri Lanka from 1987 to 1990 (a decision that no doubt lay at the core of Gandhi's later assassination). The United States, according to a former U.S. diplomat and specialist on the region, "gave its blessing to the venture" referring to the IPKF.[26]

Although the armed conflict has ended, the issue of the treatment of ethnic Tamil citizens of Sri Lanka continues to complicate bilateral relations—though not nearly as much as during the past roughly three decades of terrorism and conflict. In March 2012, India voted in favor of a United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) resolution criticizing Sri Lanka for its post-insurgency reconciliation and rehabilitation efforts—while claiming to have softened potentially harsher language and gaining emphasis in the resolution for Sri Lankan sovereignty. Many explanations have been offered for India's support of the resolution ranging from pressure by the United Progressive Alliance partner the DMK in Tamil Nadu; to U.S. pressure; to genuine unhappiness at the ongoing reconciliation and

[25] "India-Sri Lanka Bilateral Relations," Ministry of External Affairs, India, Jan., 2012, http://mea.gov.in/mystart.php?id=50044525.

[26] Kux, op. cit., 412.

rehabilitation process. A well-connected Indian analyst has suggested that the central government of India "used" the cover of Tamil Nadu pressure or support for the resolution to vote in a way it felt it had to, given its sincere concerns about the treatment of Tamils and the intransigence of the current Sri Lankan government. The Indian government has offered an official and public explanation of its vote.[27] While there has been considerable criticism within India and in Sri Lanka about India's vote, Sri Lankan officials seem to have downplayed the Indian vote, attributing it to domestic pressures in India, and do not appear to view the vote by itself as constraining the development of future ties.

Unlike in the case of India's bilateral relations with Bangladesh and Maldives, an Indian prime minister has not visited Sri Lanka recently. The last visit by an Indian prime minister to Sri Lanka was in 2008. However, as in India's relations with Bangladesh and Maldives, Sri Lanka's government leaders have visited India —most recently President Rajapaksa visited India in June 2010, just a year after the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam were crushed in a brutal military conflict and after a major electoral victory at home. During that visit a 45-point India-Sri Lanka Joint Declaration was issued.

An important element of the declaration was the announcement of steps to institutionalize the bilateral relationship further. One such step was agreement to establish new Indian Consulates General in Jaffna and Hambantota. For its part, Sri Lanka would explore expanding representation in India beyond the High Commission and two consulates in Chennai and Mumbai —though no additional cities were announced at the time and none have been announced. A new annual defense dialogue was also announced. The two countries also agreed to explore the establishment of a "joint information mechanism" to consider "the possibility of oil and gas fields straddling the India Sri Lanka Maritime Boundary."[28] Among the mechanisms the two countries sought to "revive" are the Joint

[27] Explanation of vote at the UNHRC on Promotion, Reconciliation and Accountability in Sri Lanka, Ministry of External Affairs, India, Mar. 22, 2012, http://meaindia.nic.in/mystart.php?id=100519138.

[28] India-Sri Lanka Joint Declaration, Jun. 9, 2010, http://meaindia.nic.in/mystart.php?id=530515869.

Working Group on Fishing (to deal with fisherman inadvertently crossing the maritime boundary) and the India-Sri Lanka Joint Commission.

Much of the substantive focus of the joint declaration naturally was on the next steps in handling Sri Lankan national reconciliation and a political settlement in the wake of the end of the Tamil insurgency as well as immediate needs for humanitarian relief, rehabilitation, and resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). India promised to support construction of 50,000 housing units to assist these priorities.

Regarding the economic and development aspect of renewed ties, a feature is the significant commitment of Indian concessionary financing, totaling about $800 million, for railway projects in Sri Lanka. The two sides also pledged to build on the progress achieved by the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement. Other development-related initiatives covering the private sector, energy, agriculture, and science cooperation were also considered. Several educational and cultural programs were also discussed and agreed upon—including the establishment of a Center for Contemporary India Studies at the University of Colombo with government of India support.

In terms of security cooperation, India-Sri Lanka ties are well developed, including in the maritime area (see the chapter discussing security assistance to Sri Lanka). The 2010 Joint Declaration promised to "enhance high-level military exchanges and training of military personnel as well as impart additional training in Indian institutions for the newly recruited police personnel."[29] The first annual defense dialogue was held on January 31, 2012, and according to press reports, discussions focused on regional security, maritime issues in the Indian Ocean, and expanded training for Sri Lankan security personnel. An official Indian MEA summary of bilateral relations posted in January 2012 notes that "the commonality of concerns of both countries, including with respect to

[29] Ibid.

the safety and security of their sea lanes of communication, informs their bilateral exchanges in [the defense and military] field."[30]

A specific element in the expanded India–Sri Lanka naval relationship is potentially important to U.S.–India cooperation with Sri Lanka. According to an analysis published by a researcher at India's Ministry of Defense (MOD)-sponsored Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), New Delhi and Colombo made a "*decision to empower the Sri Lankan Naval Commander to deal directly on urgent matters with Indian naval authorities* [emphasis added] on issues in the maritime domain."[31] This analysis states that "this new approach" is to prevent fishing disputes from souring bilateral relations and to address human smuggling as well as illegal entry of arms and drugs. According to CNA interviews of officers involved from both Sri Lanka and India, this new course appears to be working well. Sri Lankan government officials add that senior-level guidance has been given to the Sri Lanka Navy to treat the fishing incidents with care to prevent escalation.

It is also worth noting that occasionally there is criticism in India about naval cooperation with Sri Lanka. For example, following the largest-ever India—Sri Lanka naval exercises in September 2011, and the first since 2005, a leader of a political party in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu argued:

> India, which has been renovating the Kankesanthurai port in Sri Lanka at a huge cost, is about to extend training and other assistance to the Sri Lankan Navy. When the whole of Tamil Nadu is demanding that India have no relations whatsoever with Sri Lanka, it is improper for the Indian Navy to engage itself in joint naval exercises with the same country.[32]

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[30] "India-Sri Lanka Bilateral Relations," Ministry of External Affairs, India, Jan. 2012, http://meaindia.nic.in/mystart.php?id=50044525.

[31] Hemantha Dayaratne, "A New Phase in India-Sri Lanka Relations," Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, *IDSA Comment*, Jan. 3, 2011.

[32] Shanaka Jayasekara, "Implications of India's Decision on Sri Lanka UNHCR Resolution," *South Asia Masala*, Australian National University, Apr. 5, 2012, http://asiapacific.anu.edu.au/blogs/southasiamasala/category/by-country/sri-lanka/.

Questions are regularly raised in the Lok Sabha (the lower house of Indian parliament) about India's various activities and policies regarding Sri Lanka, but military-to-military cooperation and, particularly, the training of large numbers of Sri Lankan officers at Indian institutions have remained unaffected.

Tamil sentiments in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu will continue to be a factor in India's political relations with Sri Lanka (as is evident in the UNHRC vote); however, these ethnic sentiments expressed as part of Indian domestic politics have not derailed long-standing India—Sri Lanka military cooperation, including in the maritime area.

India's relations with Maldives

India's historical relations with Maldives stretch into antiquity given their relative positions. Contemporary relations date from Maldives' independence from the United Kingdom in 1965. India established a resident High Commission in 1980 and Maldives did so in India in 2004. An important historical event in contemporary bilateral relations was India's assistance in November 1988 in preventing the toppling of the Maldivian government of President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom—allegedly by a group of Maldivian businessmen with backing from the Peoples' Liberation Organization of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE). The coup, launched from Sri Lanka, was put down by Indian military intervention, with the implicit political support of many countries, including the United States (which also provided military assistance).[33] Another important recent event in the India-Maldives relationship was the substantial humanitarian assistance provided by India following the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami.

November 2011 marked a milestone in India's relations with Maldives when Prime Minister Singh traveled to Male for the first visit by an Indian prime minister in nine years. Maldivian leaders have regularly traveled to India to meet with government leaders, reflecting the asymmetry in relative importance. In a pre-departure statement, the

[33] Dennis Kux, *India and the United States: Estranged Democracies, 1941-1991*: (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2002), 415-416.

prime minister declared that since the previous visit "relations have been significantly transformed."[34] Earlier, India's External Affairs Minister, who traveled to Male to prepare for the SAARC and bilateral summit, described bilateral relations between India and the Maldives as on a "high growth trajectory in recent times."[35] Prime Minister Singh became the first foreign head of state or government to address the People's Majlis (parliament) in its 78-year history. The one-day India-Maldives bilateral summit took place immediately after the 17th SAARC Summit held November 10-11. It is not clear whether the Indian prime minister would have made a bilateral visit to Maldives if there had not been a SAARC summit to attend as well.

During the visit, the two countries signed a Framework Agreement for Cooperation on Development that was described as "a blueprint for cooperation in areas such as trade and investment, food security, fisheries development, tourism, transportation, information technology, new and renewable energy, communications and enhancing connectivity by air and sea."[36]

Prime Minister Singh highlighted India's developmental and economic support to the island-nation. He announced financial and construction assistance for a major renovation of the 200-bed Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital as well as for a Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies. Three other developments project which the Indian external affairs minister referred to in his July visit included "establishment of a Development Finance Institution in Maldives with the help of an Indian institution, promotion of the Maldives as a film shooting destination and the creation of enabling infrastructure for

[34] Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's statement prior to his departure for Maldives, Nov. 9, 2011, New Delhi, http://pmindia.nic.in/press-details.php?nodeid=1325.

[35] Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's statement at the Media Interaction after bilateral talks with President of Maldives, Nov. 12, 2011, Male, Maldives, http://pmindia.nic.in/speech-details.php?nodeid=1082.

[36] Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's address at the People's Majlis, Nov. 12, 2011, Male, Maldives, http://pmindia.nic.in/speech-details.php?nodeid=1083.

setting up an Information Technology village in Maldives."[37] Indian economic and development support to Maldives has been ongoing. Earlier, India helped establish the Faculty of Engineering and Technology, which can train about 200 students a year. India has also played an increasingly important financial assistance role in the Maldives. In 2008 India provided a $100 million standby credit facility to the country. And during Prime Minister Singh's November 2011 visit another $100 million was extended to Maldives as well as $40 million for housing construction. In the previous year, the State Bank of India subscribed to the entire $100 million of bonds floated by the Maldives Monetary Authority.

Bilateral security cooperation in the Indian Ocean was a very public and explicit focus of Prime Minister Singh's November 2011 visit to the Maldives. This reflected over a decade of increasing maritime security cooperation. Some 11 of 40 paragraphs in the released text of the prime minister's speech to the People's Majlis addressed security cooperation in the Indian Ocean. He called the two countries "natural partners" in ensuring the peace and prosperity of the Indian Ocean—which he characterized as India's "extended neighborhood." The common challenges were identified as "extremism and religious. fundamentalism, piracy, smuggling and drug trafficking to name a few."[38] He also recognized unique challenges to the Maldives in the form of "poaching in the coral reefs and illegal commercial fishing by foreign trawlers."[39] The two countries agreed to what was labeled a "multi-pronged" approach to addressing these challenges.

Some of the "prongs" were described in Article V of the Framework Agreement on Cooperation for Development:

> To cooperate on issues of concern to each other arising from their unique geographical location which include piracy, maritime security, terrorism, organized crime, drugs

[37] Remarks by External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna at Joint Press Conference at Male, Jul. 28, 2011, http://meaindia.nic.in/mystart.php?id=510117884&flg=1.

[38] Prime Minister Singh, op. cit., Nov. 12, 2011.

[39] Ibid.

> and human trafficking, the Parties shall strengthen their cooperation to enhance security in the Indian Ocean region through coordinated patrolling and aerial surveillance, exchange of information, development of effective legal framework and other measures mutually agreed upon. They will intensify their cooperation in the area of training and capacity building of police and security forces.[40]

The police forces in Maldives play a prominent role in national security. Given this, India's announcement that it would support the construction of a National Police Academy is significant. It is also noteworthy that this offer was made in the context of building capacity in the Maldives; this suggests that India would have a hands-on, long-term commitment.

In addition, PM Singh and Maldivian President Mohamed Nasheed signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Combating Terrorism, Drug Trafficking, Disaster Management and Coastal Security providing for joint and expanded cooperation. According to an official Indian statement, this agreement also covers cooperation on climate change, piracy and "other threats."[41] At a regional level, the two countries agreed to participate in activities to enhance cooperation on MDA, surveillance, exchanges of information, training and a cooperative security framework.

While democratization over the past half-decade in the Maldives has created a favorable context for India's highest-level political outreach to the island-country (symbolized by Prime Minister Singh's 2011 visit after a nine-year gap), at least so far the inherent turbulence of establishing a democracy there has not interrupted New Delhi's emphasis on expanded ties. During his November 2011 visit PM Singh stated: "The advent of full democracy in Maldives has also thrown open new opportunities for cooperation between our two

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[40] Framework Agreement on Cooperation for Development between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Maldives, Nov. 12, 2011, http://meaindia.nic.in/mystart.php?id=530518529.

[41] Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's statement at the Media Interaction after bilateral talks with President of Maldives, Nov. 12, 2011, Male, Maldives, http://pmindia.nic.in/speech-details.php?nodeid=1082.

countries."[42] He made a point of noting that the country had adopted a new constitution in 2008, leading to the first-ever presidential elections followed by multi-party parliamentary elections in 2009 and then elections for City, Atolls, and Island councils. He also praised the independence of the judiciary and the freedom of the media.

However, in early 2012, political perturbations in Maldives led to the resignation of President Nasheed and a new government led by Vice President Waheed took office. India played a direct, active role in this transition, while the United States and United Kingdom played a consultative role. Despite the tumult, India has moved quickly to establish relations with the new political alignment in Male, inviting President Waheed for a five-day visit to New Delhi in May 2012. During that visit, both countries "reiterated their commitment to uphold all bilateral agreements and understandings reached during Prime Minister Singh's visit to Maldives in November 2011. They agreed to strengthen the close and multifaceted bilateral cooperation encompassing a wide range of areas."[43] The two leaders also specifically "welcomed the successful conduct of the five day India-Maldives-Sri Lanka Joint Coast Guard exercise—DOSTI XI off the coast of Male (Maldives) in April 2012."[44] The fact that there was no interruption in this cooperation as a result of the political turbulence in the Maldives is an important indicator that security cooperation and higher-level political cooperation have been institutionalized.[45]

Assessment of India's recent relations with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives

Several points emerge from the preceding review and analysis of India's current relations with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal.

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[42] Ibid.

[43] Joint Statement by India and the Maldives on the Visit of the President of Maldives to India, May 14, 2012, http://meaindia.nic.in/mystart.php?id=190019400.

[44] Ibid.

[45] As of this writing, it is too early to tell whether the controversy in December 2012 over Male's cancellation of an Indian company's contract to develop Ibrahim Nasir International Airport will have an impact on bilateral security cooperation.

1. *New phase of increased interaction* – India's relations with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives have entered a new phase of increased interaction during the past two to three years. India's Prime Minister has visited Bangladesh and Maldives after about a decade-long lapse. India hosted Sri Lanka's President in 2010 and received an invitation to visit Sri Lanka for the first time since 2008 (the visit has not yet occurred). Leaders of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives have regularly visited India. Whether the increased interaction will be sustained is a critical and open question.

2. *Institutionalizing the new era* – India appears to be seeking to institutionalize the new era in these bilateral relationships using multiple tools such as Framework Agreements for Cooperation on Development (with Bangladesh and Maldives); Memoranda of Understanding; new consulates (e.g., India's consulates in Jaffna and Hambantota, Sri Lanka, and new Sri Lankan consulates in India); and a "revival" of existing, or creation of new, dialogue mechanisms. One of India's leading strategic analysts and a former member of the National Security Advisory Board calls the recent Indian policy "the return of treaty diplomacy."[46]

3. *Domestic constraints* – Domestic factors in India on the one hand and in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives on the other have facilitated the new era in ties but also continue to constrain relations. Efforts at institutionalizing relations noted above may help "insulate" disruptive effects on bilateral relations of domestic politics in the future. In one recent "test case," India did not allow a change in government in Maldives in early 2012 to interrupt its efforts to implement agreements and initiatives launched under the predecessor government just a year ago. It remains to be seen what the outcome of current political turbulence in Bangladesh will bring—and in turn what impact it will have on bilateral relations with India. Similarly, in Sri Lanka, how domestic reconciliation and rehabilitation

[46] C. Raja Mohan, "The Return of Treaty Diplomacy," Center for Policy Research, date not given, http://www.cprindia.org/blog/foreign-policy/3582-return-treaty-diplomacy.

proceeds is likely to remain an important variable in the two countries' attitudes toward each other. Within India, the likely continued weakness of coalition governments at the center and the growing power of regional parties, including those in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, will continue to bear on relations with Bangladesh and Sri Lanka respectively.

4. *Enhanced economic ties* – India increasingly has emphasized bilateral and regional connectivity and trade integration combined with comparatively generous economic, financial and development assistance with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. In a recent speech on India's foreign policy, External Affairs Minister S.M. Krishna explained that India has been implementing a policy of "asymmetric engagement in providing greater market access to our neighbours, which enables integration in a mutually beneficial manner."[47] These economic relations are not problem-free—as in the case of the large Bangladesh trade deficit with India. However, India is not likely to reverse its course on continuing to offer inducements and assistance for greater integration between itself and the other South Asian states. Enhanced economic ties could also serve as a way to institutionalize relationships and prevent them from being buffeted by stormy politics.

5. *Greater space for security cooperation* – The new phase in bilateral ties has opened up space to enhance and expand security cooperation, including on maritime issues, and especially with Sri Lanka and Maldives. India's military and defense cooperation with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives has been long-standing and ongoing and includes training of various security forces at Indian military institutions. Military and defense cooperation with Bangladesh is likely to remain focused on land and border issues though, as noted, some high-level naval visits have taken place during the past three years of improved relations. It is important to keep in mind that defense and military relations (including those on

[47] Address by External Affairs Minister on "India's External Environment and Current Foreign Policy Challenges" at the Institute of South Asian Studies, Singapore, Mar. 9, 2012.

maritime issues) are an important and growing element of all three relationships. However, except perhaps in the case of Maldives, security cooperation on maritime issues does not rise to the top priority in overall bilateral relations.

6. *Strategic vision in South Asia?* – For all the recent activity in India's relations with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives, evidence that India has a strategic vision that underlies the outreach is mixed. For nearly 30 years now India has been emphasizing a theme of either "non-reciprocal" or "asymmetric" engagement in which Indian overtures and concessions need not be matched by neighbors. This approach has particularly applied to economic relations. But apart from this theme and the growing declaratory commitment to connectivity and integration, how much effort India will invest into its South Asian political relationships remains unclear. There are some hints that India is beginning to think more ambitiously. In an October 2011 speech to India's military leadership, Minister of Defense A. K. Anthony stated that the Indian Navy has been "mandated to be a net security provider to island nations in the Indian Ocean Region."[48] And in an address to the Third Asian Relations Conference at the Indian Council of World Affairs, India's National Security Advisor, Shivshankar Menon, suggested that regional countries "start considering cooperative security frameworks and architectures for this sub-region, and what conditions would be necessary to make them successful." He continued, "There are a host of issues such as terrorism, *maritime security* [emphasis added] and cyber security which require cooperative solutions."[49] On the other hand, many Indians see their country's future as better served by doing enough to prevent the worst outcomes in the

[48] Defense Minister A.K. Antony remarks to Indian Navy and MOD, Press Information Office, Ministry of Defence, Government of India, Oct 12, 2011, Release ID 76590, http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=76590.

[49] National Security Advisor Shiv Shankar Menon, "Transforming South Asia," speech to the Third Asian Relations conference, New Delhi, March 9, 2012.

immediate neighborhood while seeking to shore up relations and interests beyond South Asia.

7. *The China factor* – As for the China factor in India's South Asia relations, in public discourse there are persistent references to China's activities being a driver of India's reactive efforts not to "cede" its immediate neighborhood to China. However, references to the China factor in India's official documents are inconsistent, opaque and guarded. A review of India's MOD annual reports from 1999—2000 onward shows that China was first included in the section "Our Neighbors" in 2000—2001. Also, that year's report states:

> Nations with a vision have already diverted substantial energies and resources to building up their assets in the form of coastal facilities, the merchant marine, ports, harbours, and mining infrastructure. Indeed, India is also moving in this direction.[50]

While there is sufficient evidence to conclude that worries about China do animate Indian activity, there are also non-China factors that explain India's outreach—such as the recent domestic developments in neighboring countries that have facilitated an opening. Though China has long been making inroads into South Asia (from its relationship with Pakistan in the 1950s, to its arms sales to Bangladesh in the 1980s, to its arms sales to Nepal in the 1990s), India's approach to South Asia has been episodic (witness the decade it took to visit near-neighbor Bangladesh) and lacking in institutionalization. In this sense, China is surely a driver of India's more serious attitude toward South Asia, but it is not the only or sufficient factor.

U.S. security interests in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives

The United States has played a critical role in South Asian affairs in the post-1945 era. However, South Asia has been a relatively low priority in global U.S. foreign and security policy.

[50] Ministry of Defence Annual Report, 2000-2001, Government of India, section 1.41, pp. 11-12, http://mod.nic.in/reports/welcome.html.

U.S. interests in the sub-region have been advanced by a shifting (and sometimes overlapping) combination of policy tools. These have included crisis management during India-Pakistan conflicts; episodic "alliances" with Pakistan and even very brief alliances with India during the 1962 Sino-Indian Border War; sanctions and embargoes imposed in response to conflict, democratic lapses or nuclear misbehavior; close cooperation with other important powers such as the former Soviet Union, China, United Kingdom, and Saudi Arabia; significant development assistance to address poverty, governance and other domestic deficiencies; and observer-level participation in SAARC starting in 2007.

Against this background, U.S.—India coordination on security cooperation in the provision of security assistance and capacity-building as a form of burden-sharing would constitute a novel tool in advancing U.S. security interests in the region. Earlier U.S.—India cooperation regarding South Asia was largely "passive" on the part of the United States—as shown by its "blessing" to India's 1987—1990 intervention in Sri Lanka, deferring (with naval assistance) to India's military response to the 1988 Maldives coup; and "discreet silence"[51] on India's response of restricting imports to land-locked Nepal following a treaty dispute and Kathmandu's purchase of Chinese weaponry in 1989—1990. Only in the case of Bangladesh's emergence as an independent state in 1971 did the United States and India work at cross purposes —leading to one of the most negative episodes in U.S.—India bilateral relations. And of course U.S. — India differences regarding Pakistan remain; however, unlike in the past, there are also considerable shared U.S. and Indian interests regarding Pakistan.

U.S. security relations with South Asian countries have focused heavily on Pakistan and occasionally Afghanistan. Its security relations with India are growing from a nearly non-existent base. U.S. security interests have been regularly pursued through military and defense cooperation with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives (see "Trends in security assistance and cooperation" for details on such U.S. cooperation). But for a number of reasons U.S. bilateral relations, including security ties, with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives have

[51] Kux, op.cit., 415.

been limited. Maldives and Bangladesh did not become independent until 1965 and 1971, respectively, and direct U.S. interests have been viewed as limited by either the very small scale of the countries (Maldives) or constraints to pursuing broader objectives due to development deficiencies, political turbulence, non-democratic politics or civil conflict (Bangladesh and Sri Lanka).

Past U.S.–India security interaction in the specific cases of Maldives, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka has been mixed. In the Maldives case, despite being approached first, the United States deferred to and supported India in militarily responding to a 1988 attempted coup. In the case of Bangladesh, U.S.-India differences have been severe with the United States not supporting Bangladeshi independence during the United States "tilt" towards Pakistan in alignment with China during the 1971 India-Pakistan War that created Bangladesh. In the case of Sri Lanka, both the United States and India have traditionally supported the government's efforts to defeat the Tamil insurgency and the United States made no objections to the dispatch of the IPKF to Sri Lanka at the request of the government during 1987—1990. Though it was not security cooperation per se, U.S. and India cooperation directly and indirectly assisted Maldives and Sri Lanka in the use of their respective military assets in HA/DR missions following the December 2004 tsunami.

Secretary Clinton visited Bangladesh in May 2012; this was the first visit by a U.S. Secretary of State since Colin Powell visited in 2003. She was preceded to the region by Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs Andrew Shapiro. In the case of the Maldives, in the early 2012 political tumult that led to a new government taking office, Washington was comparatively active—sending the Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs, Robert Blake, to Male in mid-February 2012 while keeping close consultations with New Delhi. While the United States has been critical of the end-state prosecution of Sri Lanka's civil war and has basically cut-off military cooperation, a visit in May 2012 by Sri Lanka's foreign minister to Washington at the invitation of Secretary Clinton has in fact laid the basis for rebuilding relations as Sri Lanka's reconciliation and rehabilitation process continues. It may not be coincidental that Sri Lanka's former army chief, General Sarath Fonseka, who is credited with bringing the Tamil insurgency to an end, and whom the United

States has called a "political prisoner," was released soon after the Sri Lankan foreign minister's visit to Washington. One month earlier, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Plans, Programs and Operations, Walter D. Givhan, visited Sri Lanka for consultations—focusing on demining activities in the north and east that would allow residents to return to their homes in safety.

Before turning to an analysis of U.S. security interests vis-à-vis Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives specifically, it will be useful to set these security interests in the broader context of current U.S. policy approaches to relations with South Asia. As will become evident, there are several overarching themes that inform the current American security approach to South Asia, and directly relate to U.S.-India coordination on security assistance to these South Asian countries.

The most important priority for the United States vis-à-vis South Asia is building a United States—India strategic partnership. In 2011, Assistant Secretary Blake identified this objective as the second of the Obama Administration's three priorities for his regional portfolio: the first was to support international efforts in Afghanistan, and the third was to develop more durable and stable relations with the Central Asian countries.[52]

The goal of a strategic partnership with India encompasses a view that India is the central regional power and that U.S.-India bilateral cooperation should form the basis of an approach to South Asia. This assessment has emerged gradually since roughly the mid-1980s, well before India's economic reforms, higher gross domestic product (GDP) growth rates and more active foreign and defense policy began to make it more of a reality. The 1980s were a particularly critical era because of India's demonstrated flexing of its military and diplomatic muscles across the region and the United States' passive acceptance of it (though not complete comfort with it). After a post-Cold War lapse in ties starting in the early 1990s, the theme was

[52] Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert O. Blake, "The Obama Administration's Priorities in South and Central Asia," speech to the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy at Rice University, Jan. 19, 2011.

resurrected in the latter 1990s. A clear expression of this assessment was made in 1997 by then Deputy Secretary of State R. Nicholas Burns who, in a *Foreign Affairs* article stated "India is, of course, the region's largest country and its dominant economic and military power. We are now *working closely with India for the very first time* [emphasis added] to limit conflict and build long-term peace throughout South Asia. We see India as a stabilizing force in an often violent and unstable part of the world."[53]

The U.S. National Security Strategy of May 2010 explicitly calls for working "with India to promote stability in South Asia and elsewhere in the world."[54] Unlike in the past, U.S. officials are not reticent about publicly and favorably comparing India's power trajectory with that of its neighbors. Speaking to an audience at Rice University, Assistant Secretary Blake said, "The growth of India has overshadowed the progress made in all of these [South Asian] countries."[55]

The current U.S. approach also emphasizes a "leadership" role for India. Secretary Clinton was remarkably forthright in a 2010 speech in Chennai, saying, "[India's] leadership in South and Central Asia is critically important" and specifically detailing India's activities in the case of Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Maldives —as well as Nepal.[56] If the United States works closely with India while enhancing its own bilateral engagement with South Asian countries, it can help those countries from being overly reliant on a rising India —thus preserving a role for the United States that is parallel and cooperative with them rather than being dependent upon India. South Asian countries themselves no doubt welcome U.S. engagement for its own benefits but also because it mitigates their reliance on India.

The United States has *not* indicated a desire to take a more direct role bilaterally with the region (in addition to or as a substitute for

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[53] R. Nicholas Burns, *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 2007.

[54] National Security Strategy of the United States of America, May 2010, 44.

[55] Assistant Secretary of State Robert O. Blake, op. cit., Jan. 19, 2011.

[56] Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, "Remarks on India and the United States: A Vision for the 21st Century," speech at the Anna Centenary Library, Chennai, India, Jul. 20, 2011.

working closely with India).[57] However, in this context, it should be noted that the United States sees greater engagement with regional institutions as necessary given their emergence (especially in Asia) but also as a path to helping build norms, rules and institutions that are consistent with American interests and values. Hence, the United States sees SAARC as a tool "to elevate cooperation with regional organizations as an integral part of the U.S. strategy for global engagement."[58] After the November 2011 SAARC Summit, Assistant Secretary Blake announced:

> In keeping with Secretary Clinton's QDDR guidance to enhance our engagement with important regional institutions, we've also appointed our Ambassador in Katmandu, where the SAARC secretariat is located, to serve as our liaison to SAARC and to explore how we might be able to do more with SAARC, both with the secretariat, but also with some of the regional SAARC institutions, such as the SAARC University in New Delhi.[59]

Many have suspected that India's initial overture to the United States to become an observer at SAARC was largely a response to Pakistan's successful inclusion of China as a SAARC observer.

The United States also views enhanced South Asia relations through integration as helping facilitate India's power and thus its ability to play an even wider, and also welcome, role in Asia-Pacific security. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State (DASS) for South and Central Asian Affairs Geoffrey Pyatt told an audience at Emory

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[57] For example, when a reporter asked if the United States was looking to have a summit with SAARC along the lines of the ones it has with the European Union or with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, Assistant Secretary of State Blake demurred, saying, "No, we're not. I mean, as I say, we're an observer country and we welcome that role, but we're not seeking to enhance our role in any way." Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert O. Blake, On the Record Briefing on His Recent Trip to the Republic of Maldives and the 17th South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Summit, Nov. 14, 2011.

[58] Principal Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Geoffrey Pyatt, speech to the "Emerging India Summit," at Emory University, Feb. 25, 2011.

[59] Assistant Secretary of State Robert O. Blake, op. cit., Nov. 14, 2011.

University in February 2011 that India must have "success in navigating its complicated regional [South Asian] relationships…[and] India's emergence as an Asian power…will only benefit from faster progress in social and economic integration in South Asia."[60] The United States has stated its support for India's vision of regional integration. In April 2012, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman told an American Center in New Delhi audience, "India's vision of an integrated and prosperous region – articulated eloquently by Prime Minster Singh nearly five years ago – is one we wholeheartedly share and support."[61]

In this Asia-Pacific context, with the growing salience of the Indian Ocean and maritime concerns, the U.S. government believes that India and South Asia are of increasing importance. Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman said in April 2012:

> We support Indian leadership in Asia…we view India as a pillar of economic and political stability in the Asia Pacific...And engagement in Asia means across all of Asia, including the Indian Ocean region.[62]

That South Asia is being seen as part of the Asia-Pacific or Indo-Pacific maritime continuum is a "revival" of American strategic thinking dating back to the 1950s when Asia was seen holistically — stretching from the North Pacific to the Arabian peninsula.

The link between this new strategic vision and the role of India has become routine. In the February 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review,

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[60] Pyatt, op. cit., Feb. 25, 2011.

[61] Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Wendy Sherman, "The United States and India: An Indispensable Partnership for the 21st Century," Remarks at the American Center, New Delhi, India, Apr. 2, 2012.

[62] Ibid. In addition, Assistant Secretary Blake told a Rice University gathering in January 2011 "And South Asia, with India as its thriving anchor, is a region of growing strategic and commercial importance to the United States in the critical Indian Ocean area." Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert O. Blake, "The Obama Administration's Priorities in South and Central Asia," speech to the James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy at Rice University, Jan. 19, 2011.

the United States indicated for the first time its objective that India "…will contribute to Asia as a net provider of security in the Indian Ocean and beyond." India has echoed this objective—although narrowed the scope (see above). The theme was echoed in the January 2012 U.S. Department of Defense report *Priorities for 21st Century Defense*. The report's fifth paragraph begins with the statement that "U.S. economic and security interests are inextricably linked to developments in the arc extending from the Western Pacific and East Asia into the Indian Ocean region and South Asia."[63] And, based on this assessment, "the United States is also investing in a long-term strategic partnership with India to support its ability to serve as a regional economic anchor and provider of security in the broader Indian Ocean region."[64]

Another element of U.S. policy that applies to the approach to South Asia relates to evolving force posture. Future U.S. force posture in the Asia Pacific region is to be "broadly distributed," "flexible," and "sustainable."[65] The United States has publicly stated that it is seeking to distribute its force posture more evenly from the concentration in Northeast Asia to South and Southeast Asia. Hence, enhanced relations with countries in South Asia will expand opportunities to achieve this objective.

Finally, domestic developments in South Asia, too, have opened space for the United States to increase its role in the region. Principal DASS Geoffrey Pyatt told an Emory University audience, "Today, for the first time, almost all the countries on India's eastern periphery—Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Nepal—have democratically elected governments in place, stabilizing South Asia and helping India to think more ambitiously about its role in South East Asia."[66] It is noteworthy that the benefit for the United States of democratic governments is taken as a given, but what is highlighted is the utility

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[63] U.S. Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense,* Jan. 3, 2012.

[64] Ibid.

[65] President Barack Obama, "Remarks by President Obama to the Australian Parliament," speech at Parliament House, Canberra, Australia, Nov. 17, 2011.

[66] Pyatt, op. cit., Feb. 25, 2011.

of democratic development in the region for India's role and ambitions. This suggests, as noted above, that the U.S.-India partnership is a driving consideration of the current U.S. overall approach to South Asia.

These themes in U.S. policy towards South Asia constitute the "background" of current U.S. security interests with the specific countries of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives. We now turn to an examination of U.S. security interests specifically with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives.

U.S. security interests in Bangladesh

The United States' broad security interests in Bangladesh have emphasized political stability, democracy, and protection of human rights. Since 9/11, the United States has also paid more attention to the prospects of Islamic radicalization in the country and the links between Bangladesh Islamists to militant groups elsewhere (Former Secretary of State Colin Powell's 2003 visit was primarily driven by this concern). In the defense and military areas of security, the United States has focused on maritime security, disaster relief, peacekeeping, and military professionalization by providing training to Bangladeshi military officers in various U.S. institutions.

Recent developments in U.S.-Bangladesh relations have reiterated elements of ongoing cooperation, opened potential new areas and sought to create a more institutionalized basis for consultations. Secretary Clinton's May 2012 visit was the first by a U.S. Secretary of State since Colin Powell's visit in 2003. No U.S. President has visited the country since President Clinton went there in 2000. During Secretary Clinton's visit, a Joint Statement on U.S.-Bangladesh Partnership Dialogue was issued. The statement specifically referred to the two countries' "dedication to deepening dialogue in security cooperation, including in combating terrorism, violent extremism, and transnational crime, such as narcotics trafficking, piracy, and trafficking in person and arms."[67] Secretary Clinton also reiterated that Bangladesh is "a key friend and contributor to global security,"

[67] *Joint Statement on U.S.-Bangladesh Partnership Dialogue,* United States Department of State, May 5, 2012.

given its role as the world's largest troop contributor to the United Nations' worldwide peacekeeping operations.[68] The statement calls for annual Foreign Secretary/Under Secretary-level consultations on these and other issues.

Earlier, Assistant Secretary of State Andrew Shapiro held the first security talks between the two countries. He characterized the U.S.-Bangladesh bilateral defense relationship as one of the most robust in South Asia and stated "Bangladesh is a key player in maintaining security in the Bay of Bengal."[69] He also highlighted regional counter terrorism efforts and the ability to respond to natural disasters.

Burma constitutes a comparatively new consideration in U.S.-Bangladesh relations—beyond long-standing U.S. concern about Rohingya refugees. Secretary Clinton was asked "whether Washington is trying to bring Bangladesh into [a] U.S.-India axis to protect security in the Bay of Bengal and explore oil and gas in the Bay of Bengal after [the] Bangladeshi victory in the maritime boundary case against Myanmar."[70] The Secretary did not respond directly to the question of bringing Bangladesh into a U.S.-India "axis" but instead focused on how legal settlement of maritime borders between Bangladesh and India and Burma would help the country harness resources for economic development. With ongoing reforms in Burma as well as the U.S. decision to restore full diplomatic relations, Secretary Clinton promoted further integration—reiterating the overall U.S. emphasis to integrate South Asia with its neighbors to the east. She said, "We also discussed how both the people of Bangladesh and its neighbors, Burma and India, are making progress together. Bangladesh is ideally geographically situated to serve as a land bridge for trade between the dynamic Asia Pacific region and the huge economic potential of South Asia."[71]

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[68] Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, Remarks with Bangladeshi Foreign Minister Dipu Moni, May 5, 2012.

[69] Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs Andrew Shapiro, "Talks with India and Bangladesh," Remarks to the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Apr. 24, 2012.

[70] Clinton, op. cit., May 5, 2012.

[71] Ibid.

For the subject of this study, another notable theme in recent U.S.-Bangladesh relations has been U.S. support for the current trajectory of India-Bangladesh relations. Assistant Secretary Blake told an audience:

> The welcome improvement of relations between Bangladesh and India is something we have encouraged for many years. Sheikh Hasina's landmark visit to New Delhi in January 2010 and Prime Minister Singh's visit to Dhaka in September 2011 are the most visible examples of the two countries' remarkable efforts to cooperate and build new bridges, presenting a credible model for regional cooperation throughout South Asia and beyond.[72]

Meanwhile, Principal DASS Geoffrey Pyatt emphasized the same theme of regional cooperation, common goals of India and Bangladesh, and U.S. support for these ties.[73]

U.S. security interests in Sri Lanka

Counter-terrorism, largely in the context of the Sri Lankan war against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), has been the prime area of U.S. security interest in Sri Lanka over the past three decades. The United States was the first country to name the LTTE as a foreign terrorist organization in 1997. Since then, the U.S. government has worked to investigate and prosecute individuals providing material support to the LTTE and identify sources of terrorist financing to prevent misuse of U.S. financial institutions. With the end of war in May 2009, the United States has widened the scope of its security interests in and activities with Sri Lanka.

The United States has provided funds and equipment for demining efforts in the northeast of the country. In July 2010, after a gap of several years, a U.S. Navy ship visited Sri Lanka, allowing interaction between U.S. sailors and marines and their Sri Lankan counterparts.

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[72] Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert O. Blake, "Remarks at the University of Virginia," Nov. 17, 2011.

[73] Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Geoffrey Pyatt, "The Impact of the President's Trip to India and East Asia," speech to the U.S.-India-Singapore Policy Forum, Singapore, Feb. 10, 2011.

A U.S. and Sri Lankan military and civilian team of health specialists provided free medical care and rebuilt a local school. According to the U.S. embassy in Colombo, "The U.S. has provided over $34.5 million to aid Sri Lanka's demining activities since 1993. In 2011, the U.S. donated $2.5 million for demining, and increased this support to $5 million in 2012. The U.S. Government will continue to assist Sri Lanka in its demining activities to allow Sri Lankan families to move back to their homes."[74]

In April-May 2012, DASS for Plans, Programs and Operations Walter D. Givhan visited Sri Lanka. The visit was significant given 2007 suspension of Foreign Military Financing (FMF) assistance on Sri Lanka due to allegations of human rights abuses by government troops. Though from the Department of State's Bureau of Political Military Affairs, DASS Givhan's portfolio includes provision of executive leadership, management, and guidance for U.S. government global security assistance programs and policies. If and when restrictions are removed, the establishment of relations through such visits provides a mechanism to re-engage.

Beyond assistance to Sri Lanka itself, the United States has increasingly emphasized the importance of Sri Lanka (and Maldives) in the context of the Indian Ocean. Speaking at the East West Center in April 2012, Assistant Secretary Blake stated "both nations are strategically located along the busiest shipping lanes of the Indian Ocean, a region emerging as a central strategic arena in which enduring U.S. interests are increasingly at play."[75] It is worth noting that U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) worked with the Sri Lanka Navy to hold a 2011 South Asia Maritime Security Conference in Colombo.

As in the case of India-Bangladesh relations, the United States has gone to some lengths to hail the benefits of closer India-Sri Lanka

[74] Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Plans, Programs and Operations Walter D. Givhan, Press Release, Embassy of the United States Sri Lanka and Maldives, May 2, 2011.

[75] Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert O. Blake, "Key Developments in South Asia," Remarks at the East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, Apr. 27, 2012.

relations. In a speech at the University of Virginia, Assistant Secretary Blake said:

> The success of the Sri Lanka-India bilateral free trade agreement shows this is likely a misplaced fear [that some South Asian states cannot compete with India]. In the 11 years their bilateral free trade area has been in effect, total volume of trade between these two countries has quadrupled, with Sri Lankan exports to India increased more than Indian exports to Sri Lanka. Increased trade has been followed by increased investment, as a number of prominent Indian companies have invested in Sri Lanka, and several well-known Sri Lankan garment companies are now investing in India.[76]

U.S. security interests in Maldives

As discussed above, historically, U.S. security interests in the Maldives have not been significant (in 1988, the United States deferred to India in responding to a military coup in the country but provided naval support). Dennis Kux has characterized the incident as "a good example of U.S.-Indian cooperation that did not infringe on U.S. interests."[77] Recent statements by U.S. officials suggest a growing interest in Maldives. So do actions such as sending Assistant Secretary of State Blake from the United States to Male in mid February 2012 in the context of political protests in the island-country. The two countries have emphasized cooperation on counterpiracy, CT, countering narcotics trafficking, and providing HA/DR. But U.S. concerns about Islamic radicalism have also been mentioned. In testimony to a congressional committee, Assistant Secretary Blake stated, "Maldives is situated on the front lines of common threats including Somali piracy, narco-trafficking and the recruitment and training grounds of Al Qaeda and Lashkar-e-Taiba."[78]

The Maldives' broader security contributions have also been welcomed by U.S. officials. Assistant Secretary Blake noted:

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[76] Blake, op. cit., Nov. 17, 2011.

[77] Kux, op. cit., 416.

[78] House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Middle East and South Asia Hearing Testimony by Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Robert O. Blake, U.S. Department of State, Apr. 6, 2011.

> Since the first democratic elections in Maldives in 2008, our two countries have steadily built a robust political and security relationship. In addition to providing maritime and airspace access, Maldives consistently stands with the United States on the international stage on a number of important issues on which we enjoy shared values. With the support of the United States, Maldives successfully ran for a spot on the UNHRC in 2010, effectively depriving Iran of a seat. And since joining the UNHRC, it has co-sponsored numerous forward-leaning resolutions supporting U.S. positions on Iran, Syria, Sudan, and Libya.[79]

The United States has moved quickly to consolidate relations with the new government in Maldives since the political turbulence of early 2012. News reports indicate that the United States has not pressed for early elections. Similarly, India has also moved quickly to cement relations with the new government. This is not to suggest that the United States has "followed" India's policy in working constructively with the new Maldives government; rather, it is meant to note that the political change in the country has not affected U.S. cooperation with the Maldives and does not differ from the policy of India.

Assessment of U.S. security interests in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives

The preceding review and analysis of current U.S. approaches to South Asia, and specifically security interests in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Maldives suggests some key points:

1. Building a U.S.-India partnership looms large in U.S. security interests in South Asia. The U.S. seeks to work with India to promote South Asian stability, views India as the "first among equals" and even as a potential "leader" and model for regional countries, and sees New Delhi as an "anchor" or "pillar" of a stabilized and integrated South Asia. This is a first step to making possible India's enhanced role in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean arena. These India-focused elements of the U.S. policy approach to security interests in South Asia buttress the notion of India as a "net security

[79] Blake, op. cit., Nov. 17, 2011.

provider" and of U.S.-India burden sharing vis-à-vis South Asia.

2. At the same time, U.S. "re-engagement" with South Asia, in parallel and cooperation with India, helps the United States build its own ties with South Asian countries, offering an avenue to prevent their over-dependence on India.
3. The United States is working to institutionalize its relations with the smaller South Asian countries, noticeably Bangladesh and Maldives. As the reconciliation process continues in Sri Lanka, there may be greater efforts to institutionalize political and security relations with Colombo.
4. U.S. outreach to Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives has been noticeably thin on new economic and financial assistance initiatives. Certainly, bilateral assistance is being offered to these countries for basic development and special needs (e.g., demining post-conflict areas of Sri Lanka) but the trade and investment element is not a significant factor for the United States in its relations with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives. This is an important difference with India.

Factors facilitating and hindering U.S.-India security cooperation and burden-sharing

Before turning to factors that facilitate and hinder U.S.-India coordination on security assistance to Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives, we will discuss some of the basic structural differences between India and the United States regarding South Asia. These structural differences do not constitute insurmountable obstacles to U.S.-India coordination on security assistance, but they do form a background for understanding the attitudinal and policy frameworks as well as the sensitivities that could affect efforts at coordination. These are shown in table 1.

Table 1. Key U.S. and Indian structural differences regarding South Asia

"Structure"	United States	India
Geography	United States shares no land, maritime borders (Diego Garcia makes United States proximate resident).	India shares land or maritime borders with all (except Afghanistan). India's "peculiar proximity" to BD, SL, and Maldives
History	Recent, minimal interactions	Long, deep connections of ethnicity, language, religion, colonialism Recent state-to-state relations
Countries and region	Post-1945 state and region-creation facilitates post-war U.S. foreign and security policy organization, planning.	Post-1945 state and region-creation undercuts historical coherence, creates new "foreign" relations, but preserves centrality of India.
Bureaucratic Organization	South Asia was never a unified, stand-alone element in the U.S. government (e.g. NESA, SCA). Observer role in SAARC (from 2007) Except in UN and SAARC, few organizational overlaps with South Asia countries other than India (e.g., G20, East Asia Summit)	Government of India consistently includes South Asia as "immediate neighbors" and sometimes includes China. Full member of SAARC Engages South Asian countries in multiple organizations (BIMSTEC, BCIM, MGC, CHOGM, NAM).
Strategic approach	Low-priority, indirect, episodic, crisis-management Cooperation with other major powers (e.g., USSR, PRC) to "manage" South Asia India and Asia-Pacific-centric approach to South Asia. South Asia now on continuum of Asia-Pacific/Indo-Pacific.	Highest priority, direct, daily; extension of domestic politics Traditionally resists *any* major power role—unilateral or combined; if unsuccessful, attempts balance among major powers. India-South Asia relations are not prioritized to relations with United States or "Look East." South Asia part of immediate neighborhood, not stepping stone to Asia-Pacific/Indo-Pacific (only through "extended neighborhood").

Given these key U.S. and Indian differences regarding South Asia, what factors facilitate and hinder U.S.-India security cooperation and burden-sharing? Table 2 summarizes these factors.

Table 2. Factors facilitating and hindering U.S.-India security burden-sharing

Facilitating Factors	Hindering Factors
U.S.-India relations are improving. United States has "big expectations" —for India as a "net security provider" and in "burden-sharing."	United States wants better relations faster than India does (e.g., India's non-alignment 2.0). India sensitive about being "net security provider" to others — willing to do so unilaterally. Indians generally sensitive about sharing other country's burden (akin to some Australians' discomfort about being labeled "deputy sheriff").
United States and India are increasing engagement with South Asia—both thinking about wider "Asia-Pacific" interests.	U.S. South Asia policies are India-centric/Asia-Pacific oriented. India's South Asia policies are more India/South Asia-centric, *not* U.S.-centric or heavily Asia-Pacific oriented. India regards itself as "inevitable anchor" for regional integration. United States is seen as important to India's global engagement, not its South Asia engagement. There is a U.S.-India stand-alone dialogue on Asia-Pacific but not on South Asia.
U.S. policy documents increasingly reference India's role across South Asia, Asia-Pacific, IO.	India welcomes U.S. recognition of its great power status, but seeks autonomy. U.S. reference to wider role for India is very recent—2010 Quadrennial Defense Review.
Broad U.S. and India approaches to South Asia aligned.	Asymmetric interactions with BD, SL and Maldives: India engages through all services (army, navy, coast guard, police); multiple overlapping mechanisms (bilateral, SAARC, BIMSTEC, etc.); strong domestic resonance—India's own turf; greater degree of institutionalized relationships.
U.S. and Indian efforts at institutionalizing South Asian relationship proceedings	Political developments in BD, SL, and Maldives may change suddenly.
Indian Ocean area of common concerns	India welcomes but also worries about attention to Indian Ocean.
Common wariness about China	India especially wants to avoid being seen as countering China.
Past, passive "cooperation" on SL and Maldives/ major differences on BD	India wary of increased U.S. or U.S.-India "coordinated" role on its home turf. South Asia is area where United States has deferred to India—and now seeks Indian "leadership"—so why coordinated activities? Indian government system (limited civilian bureaucratic capacity/expertise and weak military/MOD/Navy) India domestic politics (weak central coalition, strong regional parties—strong impact on relations with BD/SL)

This discussion has reviewed several sets of key factors: current Indian and U.S. relations with Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Maldives, and

some of the structural differences between New Delhi's and Washington's approaches to South Asia; and factors that could facilitate and hinder U.S.-Indian coordination on the provision of security assistance to the three South Asian countries. The following concludes with a brief assessment of key considerations.

Assessment of key considerations

1. U.S.-India coordination on security assistance to Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives would represent an important change in the approaches, tools and drivers of their respective relations with the smaller countries in South Asia.
2. In the past, U.S. and Indian relations regarding Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Maldives have been based on an asymmetry of interests: India has had greater interests than the United States. This has permitted the United States to take a "distant" or even "supportive of India" stance as in the case of the 1988 Maldives coup or Indian intervention in Sri Lanka from 1987-1990. In the case of Bangladesh struggle for independence where Indian and U.S. interests were more commensurate (but different), the United States and India had a difficult episode in relations. Despite much better overall U.S.-India relations today, a change in the calculus of relative interests in South Asia – suggested by an increase in U.S. interest in coordinating with India on Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives – could create frictions if insensitively handled.
3. India's attempts to institutionalize more substantive, sustainable and integrated relations with South Asia will provide it with more space to shape mechanisms for cooperation (e.g., India-Maldives-Sri Lanka trilateral), which could reduce the room for the United States Moreover, since India will be calibrating multiple, meaningful interests in South Asia, it will pursue maritime security cooperation as one of many priorities but not the leading or only one.
4. The United States can afford to be "transactional" in its relations with South Asia in a way that India cannot. For the United States, outcomes regarding South Asia are unlikely to have a first-order impact on domestic politics, national security or foreign policy. Enhanced U.S. relations with South Asia are a "good to have" not a "need to have." For India, South Asian involvements will always have domestic, security,

and foreign policy impacts, ranging from managing government coalitions, to using armed forces for anything from border protection to military intervention.

5. The structural differences between U.S. and Indian approaches to South Asia cannot be altered – but they do not need to be surmounted to facilitate U.S.-India cooperation on maritime security assistance to South Asia countries. Mostly, they are important to appreciate because they create different assumptions, attitudes, and policy frameworks on the part of U.S. and Indian officials towards the region.

Two broad sets of factors will shape the prospect of U.S.-India coordination on maritime security assistance to the South Asian countries of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives. The first is the overall trajectory of the U.S.-India relationship. In this context, issues such as the depth, scope and pace of U.S.-India relations, the ongoing navy-to-navy relationship, and attitudinal and governmental obstacles affecting the whole relationship will be relevant. The second factor is more specific: the extent to which both countries agree to coordinate on capacity-building.

The next chapter, "Trends in security assistance and cooperation," will identify duplication and deficiencies in both U.S. and Indian maritime security cooperation with these three countries. In this context, there will be a tension between coordinating the "front end" (i.e., U.S. and India coordinate beforehand on what capacities to provide) and the "back end" (i.e., the two navies build cooperation around existing capacities). For India, it may be politically easier to build cooperation around existing capacities than to justify coordination with the United States in India's backyard.

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Trends in security assistance and cooperation

In this chapter, we first examine the military capabilities of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and the Maldives, with a focus on maritime forces. We then discuss the recent history of security assistance and cooperation between the United States and India and the three South Asian states. For each country, we conclude with an analysis of these partnerships. We examine both the area of overlap, where American and Indian assistance efforts duplicate each other, and that of deficiency, where outside assistance would be helpful but is not provided by either country.

Bangladesh

Capabilities, roles, and missions

Although Bangladesh's armed forces are fairly large in terms of numbers and equipment, their capabilities are considered to be fairly limited due to a lack of cohesion, poor financial planning, and low morale. Inter-service coordination is largely absent and the concept of combined operations is not well understood by political leaders. The lack of a national defense doctrine further hampers the service's effectiveness. The military does not currently have mechanisms in place for rapid deployment. The military perceives its main tasks to include protecting national borders, airspace, and territorial waters from possible aggression by neighboring states, and ensuring internal security against insurgencies and terrorist attacks.[80] The total strength of the armed forces is between 160,000 and 190,000, with the army's force strength estimated at between 126,000 and 150,000 personnel.[81]

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[80] It is worth noting that Bangladesh is proud of deploying two ships (the frigate BNS *Osman* and a large patrol craft, BNS *Madhumati*) to support the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

[81] "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – South Asia," *Jane's*, May 11, 2011. International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance: Asia*, 112:1 (2012), 229-231.

The army is the priority service; its main real-world task is to counter internal insurgencies. The army also participates extensively in UN peacekeeping operations (UNPKOs). In fact, it is the largest provider of troops for such operations. It currently has more than 1,000 troops deployed in four operations (Congo, Sudan/South Sudan/Darfur, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire) and smaller numbers in three others. Like the army, the air force has a fairly limited combat capability, further hampered by the government's focus on the army as the top priority for funding.

The Bangladesh Navy (BN) is a professional force dating back to the founding of the country in 1971. The BN's missions are focused on protecting shipping and resources in the country's maritime exclusive economic zone (EEZ), including fisheries and offshore energy resources. Although overall capabilities are limited, they are sufficient for these goals. The BN's current strength is approximately 24,000 personnel. It currently operates five frigates, although three of these are 1950s-vintage British ships that will soon be decommissioned. The BN plans to replace these ships with two Chinese Jiangwei-class frigates. The fleet's flagship is the BNS *Bangabandhu*, an Ulsan-class frigate purchased from South Korea in 2001 and armed with a Chinese FM-90N surface-to-air missile system. The BN also recently acquired two offshore patrol vessels with helicopter decks from the United Kingdom. After a refit that included the installation of new engines, these were commissioned in March 2011. There are seven other offshore patrol vessels – six British Island-class ships and one South Korean Sea Dragon, all built in the 1990s. The BN also operates nine fast missile craft, seven fast attack craft armed with torpedoes, 12 fast attack craft armed with guns, four ASW fast attack craft, and five large coastal patrol craft. Mine countermeasures are conducted by five minesweepers that double as patrol craft. Amphibious lift capability is provided by five Chinese Yuch'in-class mechanized landing craft, two utility landing craft, a logistics landing craft, and three domestically built Landing Craft, Vehicle, Personnel (LCVP). These vessels are used primarily to provide humanitarian assistance during floods and typhoons.[82]

[82] "Jane's World Navies – Bangladesh," *Jane's*, Feb. 28, 2012.

The discovery and development of offshore oil and gas resources has led Dhaka to conclude that the BN needed additional patrol ships. In addition to the new frigates and offshore patrol vessels discussed above, the BN has ordered two 600-ton missile corvettes from China. Five 50-meter patrol craft are being built domestically under Chinese license, with all set to be delivered by the end of 2013. The BN has a long-term plan to build another 20 such ships, but no contracts beyond the initial five have been signed to date. Future procurement plans under consideration include an additional three Chinese-built guided-missile frigates, four Turkish-built guided-missile corvettes, three diesel submarines, and two domestically built utility landing craft.[83]

The BN is also in the middle of standing up a separate naval air wing, which so far consists of two AW-109 light multipurpose helicopters acquired in mid 2011. These will be operated from the BNS *Bangabandhu* frigate and used primarily for search and rescue, surface surveillance, and maritime security. Two Dornier 228 maritime surveillance aircraft are on order from Germany, with delivery expected in mid 2013.[84] Discussions are under way to purchase three Harbin Z-9C anti-submarine helicopters from China and two King Air maritime patrol aircraft from the United States.[85]

The Bangladeshi Coast Guard (BCG) is a relatively young service, stood up under the Ministry of Home Affairs in 1995. The BN had been performing various coast guard duties until the role became too demanding, leading to the creation of the BCG. Under the authority of the Ministry of Home Affairs, the BCG's 900 personnel are all seconded from the BN for a three-year period.[86] Primary missions include counterpiracy, counter-smuggling, protection of fisheries and

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[83] Shakhawat Liton, "Navy Eyes Sub, New Frigates," *The Daily Star*, Jun. 24, 2009, http://www.thedailystar.net/newDesign/news-details.php?nid=93936.

[84] Greg Waldron, "Bangladesh Navy Buys Two Ruag Do 228NGs," Jul. 21, 2011, http://www.flightglobal.com/news/articles/bangladesh-navy-buys-two-ruag-do-228ngs-359769/.

[85] "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – South Asia," *Jane's*, Nov. 22, 2011.

[86] International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance: Asia*, 112:1 (2012), 229-231.

offshore energy resources, search and rescue, and humanitarian assistance operations. According to its webpage, the BCG operates four fast attack craft, three coastal patrol craft, six riverine patrol craft, two high-speed boats, and five Defender-class rapid-response boats.

Counterterrorism

Bangladesh's maritime counterterrorism force is known as Special Warfare Diving and Salvage (SWADS). It is modeled on the U.S. Navy's SEAL teams and on South Korea's Combat Swimmers organization. Its missions include hostage rescue, extractions and insertions, intelligence gathering, and underwater demolition. SWADS uses 16 Defender boats and assorted rigid-hulled inflatable boats (RHIBs). In recent years, much of the equipment and training for SWADS has been provided by the United States (see below). According to the website *bdmilitary.com*, SWADS also has access to helicopters and submersibles.[87] Unlike the rest of the Bangladesh military, SWADS regularly trains for joint operations with the army's 1st Paratroop Commando Battalion.[88]

Counterpiracy

Piracy is a serious problem in the Bay of Bengal, though generally on a smaller scale than in the Gulf of Aden or the Straits of Malacca. For the moment, it remains primarily a local rather than an international concern. Countering this threat is one of the main missions of the BN, and one for which it is relatively well suited, with a range of inshore and offshore patrol boats capable of stopping pirate attacks. The planned acquisition program described above will further enhance the navy's capabilities in this area. The question remains, however, whether the BN is sufficiently well trained to accomplish this task. Recent exercises with India and especially with the United States

[87] Bangladesh Military Forces, "Bangladesh Navy Special Warfare Diving and Salvage (SWADS)" http://www.bdmilitary.com/index.php?option =com_content&view=article&id=324&Itemid=138.

[88] U.S. Navy International Programs Office, "Country Summary Paper on Bangladesh," Sept. 2011.

may indicate the seriousness of the BN's intent to improve capabilities in this area.

Maritime domain awareness

Until recently, the BN's MDA capabilities have been quite limited. This is likely to change in the near future with the acquisition of a number of new maritime patrol aircraft and an increase in the number of helicopter-carrying frigates and patrol vessels.

Humanitarian assistance/disaster relief

The BN has an adequate HA/DR capability, including a number of amphibious and patrol craft whose crews are experienced in providing assistance to coastal inhabitants during typhoons and monsoon-caused flooding. Recent participation in events such as the multi-national MILAN exercises shows that this area of operations remains a priority for the navy.

U.S.-Bangladesh security assistance and cooperation trends

The United States provides security assistance to Bangladesh, primarily in the areas of maritime security, disaster relief, peacekeeping, and military professionalization. The security cooperation relationship between the two countries has deepened in recent years as a result of an increase in U.S. attention to South Asia and a greater focus on counterterrorism cooperation in the region. The importance of the relationship was highlighted in November 2009 during a series of visits to Bangladesh by three high-ranking military commanders from the United States. During these visits, the commander of the U.S. Army in the Pacific (USARPAC), the commander of the Navy's Seventh Fleet, and the Director for Strategic Planning and Policy at PACOM, each met with senior military and government officials in an effort to enhance bilateral cooperation on humanitarian assistance, security and counterterrorism, and peacekeeping operations. The discussions focused on interoperability, readiness in the region, security force assistance, and bilateral approaches to maintaining regional stability.

Another high-level visit, by the commander of the U.S. Pacific Air Forces (PACAF), took place in November 2010 and included a

meeting with the Prime Minister of Bangladesh.[89] USARPAC Commander Lt. Gen. Francis Wiercinski attended the SHANTI DOOT 3 exercise in March 2012. Most recently, the two countries have launched a bilateral security dialogue, which began with a visit by Andrew Shapiro, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, in April 2012. After the visit, Secretary Shapiro characterized the relationship as one of the most robust in South Asia.[90]

In recent years, the two countries have conducted a series of bilateral exercises in Bangladesh. A number of these focused on maritime security concerns. A series of four exercises labeled TIGER SHARK took place between November 2009 and September 2010. In the first exercise, 59 BN commandoes received training in counterpiracy and counter terrorism operations. Although TIGER SHARK 2 focused on land forces, TIGER SHARK 3 was a month-long multi-service exercise that sought to enhance interoperability between the two countries' military forces in a number of areas, including "combat diving, infiltration and ex-filtration techniques, rappelling, helicopter operations, vessel boarding search and seizure, small boat maintenance and repair, maritime navigation, small unit tactics, and small boat handling and tactics."[91] TIGER SHARK 4 was a comprehensive joint operations exercise designed to promote interoperability in major CT operations. It was built on the experience of the first three exercises and included the participation of 500 Bangladeshi and 350 U.S. military personnel from all four services.[92]

In addition to the TIGER SHARK series, the guided missile frigate USS *Ingraham* visited Chittagong in March 2010 and conducted helicopter landing exercises with the BN. Two weeks later, the MCM ship USS *Patriot* visited Chittagong. In September 2011, the BN

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[89] "U.S. Keen To Train Bangladesh Armed Forces, Official Tells PM Hasina in Dhaka," *The Daily Star*, Nov. 10, 2010.

[90] Shapiro, op. cit., Apr. 24, 2012.

[91] "U.S.-Bangladesh Joint Exercise Underway," UNBconnect, Jun. 20, 2010, http://www.unbconnect.com/component/news/task-show/id-23663.

[92] "Bangladesh-U.S. Training Exercise Tiger Shark-4 Sept 19-26," UNBconnect, Sept. 14, 2010, http://www.unbconnect.com/component/news/task-show/id-29853.

participated for the first time in the Cooperation Afloat Readiness and Training (CARAT) exercise with the U.S. Navy. The U.S. side sent the guided missile destroyer USS *Kidd*, the frigate USS *Ford*, the mine countermeasures ship USS *Defender*, and the dive and salvage rescue ship USNS *Safeguard* for the exercise, while the BN ships participating included the frigates BNS *Bangabandhu* and BNS *Bijoy* and the offshore patrol vessel BNS *Sangu*. The ships practiced helicopter operations, shipboard communications and maneuvering drills, surface gunnery exercises, and tactical freeplay events. The exercise also included shore events focused on dive training, riverine warfare, ship-boarding training, and medical and community service projects.

Besides these maritime exercises, the two countries have conducted a number of bilateral and multilateral exercises involving the other services. The most recent of these was SHANTI DOOT 3, completed in March 2012 in Bangladesh with participants from 16 countries. This exercise had a focus on improving the conduct of peace support operations. In March 2012, Admiral Robert Willard, the PACOM commander, announced in congressional testimony that the United States had placed special forces assist teams in Bangladesh and several other countries in South Asia for the purpose of CT cooperation.

Training assistance for the Bangladesh military is funded primarily through the International Military Education and Training (IMET) and the Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program (CTFP). Bangladesh has been participating in the IMET program since 1977. In recent years, funding has held steady at roughly $1 million per year, with a primary focus on professional military education (see table 3).[93] Bangladeshi officers participated in invitational Professional Military Education (PME) programs in 2011; some were in maritime programs at the Naval Command College, the Naval Staff College, and the U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College. Several also attended defense management courses and CT courses

[93] U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, "Security Assistance to Bangladesh," Jun. 27, 2011; updates in email communications, Jan. 2013.

through the Expanded IMET (E-IMET) program.[94] The FY 2013 request is slightly less than the previous few years at $900,000.

Table 3. Security assistance funding to Bangladesh (in thousands of USD)

Program	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
FMF	248	990	990	2,014	590	1,500	2,957	2,200
IMET	1,035	930	934	821	787	1,009	994	994
GPOI	925	700	2,014	1,000	1,500	0	0	TBD
1206	N/A	0	0	7,200	8,545	7,011	8,300	14,364
CTFP	296	365	319	472	443	432	451	445

After a gradual increase from $170,000 in 2004 to $472,000 in 2008, CTFP funding for training the Bangladesh military has held steady at approximately $450,000 over the last five years. Since the start of the program, more than 60 Bangladeshis have attended training programs funded by CTFP, ranging from regional seminars on terrorist financing to graduate degree programs at military command and staff colleges in the United States. In 2004-2006, nine maritime security courses were held in Bangladesh through the U.S. Coast Guard Training Center. Since then, courses have continued to take place in Bangladesh on occasion, while Bangladeshis frequently have been invited to participate in CTFP-funded courses in the United States and elsewhere.[95] In 2010-2011, CTFP, the Defense Institution Reform Initiative, and the government of Bangladesh organized four working group meetings to develop a national counterterrorism strategy for Bangladesh.

Bangladesh began participating in the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI), which funds training for peacekeeping operations, in 2005. This is an especially important program for Bangladesh as it is currently the top contributor to UN peacekeeping missions. In Bangladesh, GPOI funding has supported general and specialized

[94] U.S. Navy International Programs Office, "Country Summary Paper on Bangladesh," Sept. 2011.

[95] *Regional Defense Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program,* Reports to Congress, Fiscal Years 2004-2011.

training for military peacekeepers, as well as some improvements and refurbishment of the Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operations Training. In 2010, Bangladesh became a partner with the Center of Excellence for Stability Police Units, a GPOI-funded joint venture with the government of Italy. Since then, Bangladeshi police officers have received training here. From 2005-2009, annual GPOI funding for Bangladesh ranged from $700,000 to $2 million. No new GPOI funds were given to Bangladesh in 2010 or 2011, in order to spend down available prior-year funds. However, nearly $5 million was given in 2012.

While the Bangladesh military has gotten most of its equipment from China, it has purchased some aircraft and related equipment from the United States. Specifically, in 2000 the Bangladesh Air Force bought four C-130B transport aircraft from the United States (see the SIPRI Arms Transfers data in table 4). In 2011, it signed a contract to buy engines from the United States for the Do-228 maritime patrol aircraft it is acquiring from Germany, according to the SIPRI Arms Transfers Database. In addition, Bangladesh is planning to procure five 38-foot Metal Shark boats through the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program. Three of the boats will be used as ambulances, while the other two will have a standard configuration. In addition, Bangladesh submitted a request in June 2010 for the transfer of five Secretary-class cutters and five Island-class patrol boats through the U.S. Excess Defense Articles (EDA) program. It is expected that one Secretary-class cutter will transfer in 2013. The patrol boats will not become available until 2014 at the earliest.

Table 4. Equipment transfers from U.S. and India to Bangladesh, 2000-2011

From India	From United States	Year
None	4 TPE-331 engines for Do-228 MP aircraft	2011 (not yet delivered)
	4 C-130B Hercules transport aircraft	2000

Bangladesh started receiving FMF assistance in 2005. Funding has gradually increased from $248,000 in 2005 to almost $3 million in 2011. Since its initiation, the program has focused primarily on providing patrol boats for the BCG. The first five Defender-class patrol boats were delivered in June 2010. An additional 16 Defender-

class boats are being acquired through Section 1206 funding allocated in 2008.[96] The State Department expects this program to continue through at least FY 2014, at which point they plan to have provided a total of 34 patrol and ambulance boats with associated communications equipment. Bangladesh has agreed to take on sustainment responsibilities for these ships.[97]

Bangladesh began to receive security assistance through the Section 1206 program in 2008. Since that year, the program provided at least $7 million per year in equipment and technical assistance to Bangladesh, and jumped to roughly $14.4 million in 2012. In the first two years, the focus was on establishing and equipping a Navy Special Operations Force. In addition to the 16 patrol boats discussed above, Bangladesh was provided with twenty-two 7-meter RHIBs and five Zodiacs, which were delivered in 2011. In 2010, the United States provided funding to build the capacity of the BN SWADS to support CT operations, including an additional four RHIBs, various communications gear, and related training. Finally, in 2011, the United States funded various communications and electronics equipment, vehicles, weapons and ammunition, personal equipment, and engineering equipment, all designed to develop interoperability between SWADS and the 1st Paratroop Commando Battalion for joint counterterrorism operations.[98]

India-Bangladesh security assistance and cooperation trends

India-Bangladesh defense cooperation has traditionally been limited by mutual suspicion and border tensions. Relations were particularly poor under the Bangladesh National Party (BNP) government from 2001 through 2006. Tensions were caused by a whole range of issues, including border delimitation, water supply, illegal migration, trade and transit, and suspicions about foreign assistance to insurgencies in both countries. The caretaker government that came into power in

[96] Section 1206 authority allows DOD to provide equipment, supplies, and training to foreign countries for counterterrorism and stability operations.

[97] U.S. Department of State, op. cit., Jun. 27, 2011; U.S. Navy International Programs Office, op. cit., Sept. 2011.

[98] Ibid.

Bangladesh in 2007 began to restore cooperation, focusing its security policy on confidence-building measures. Relations warmed further after the election of the Awami League government in late 2008. Bilateral military cooperation is focused primarily on securing the lengthy land border and on enhancing cooperation in counterinsurgency operations. Maritime cooperation is limited to occasional joint exercises. At the same time, a large proportion of BN officers are trained in Indian military academies; the bonds formed at these schools may provide an opportunity for increasing cooperation in the future should the demand signal for such cooperation be given by the two countries' political leaders.

Table 5. Senior defense officials' visits between India & Bangladesh, 2007-2011

From India To Bangladesh	From Bangladesh To India
Navy, 6/11+	Army, 11/11+
Navy, 4/11+	Navy, 1/11
Army, 12/10	Army, 3/10+
AF, 1/10+	Army, 1/10+
Army, 7/08+	Army, 10/10
	Army, 10/09
	Navy, 7/09+
	AF, 4/09+
	Army 2/08+

Sources: India MOD annual reports, BBC Monitoring reports

+ indicates top official in attendance

As part of the effort to revitalize defense cooperation, in recent years there have been frequent meetings between high level defense officials from India and Bangladesh. Since 2008, the Chief of the Bangladesh Army has visited India four times (see table 5). The chiefs of the other services have also visited India, and India's service chiefs have visited Bangladesh. Bilateral military staff talks have also been held annually since 2009.[99] During a meeting between the Bangladeshi and Indian Chiefs of Naval Staff in July 2009, they discussed the possibility of increasing cooperation in HA/DR, search and rescue (SAR), and training. The Indian Chief of Naval Staff also offered to assist Bangladesh in shipbuilding. In January 2011, a high-level Bangladesh Navy delegation visited India's Southern Naval Command to discuss avenues for strengthening mutual cooperation in professional training. The Indian Navy Chief also visited Bangladesh in April 2011. However, maritime security cooperation is not a priority for the developing security relationship

[99] Government of India, MOD Annual Reports for 2009-2012.

between India and Bangladesh. It is worth noting that during the visits of PM Hasina to India in January 2010 and of PM Singh to Bangladesh in September 2011 maritime security issues were not addressed.[100]

India has not provided military equipment to Bangladesh since relations began to deteriorate in the mid 1970s. The warming of relations since the election of the Awami League government in December 2008 has led to proposals to resume cooperation in this sphere. Indian leaders have made a number of proposals for potential arms sales to Bangladesh and have offered to modernize existing Bangladeshi equipment at Indian facilities. In conjunction with Prime Minister Hasina's visit to India in January 2010, Indian generals proposed that India replace China as a major supplier of arms and ammunition to Bangladesh. Around the same time, the Indian Air Force offered to work with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited to help modernize Bangladesh's MiG-29 aircraft and Mi-17 helicopters. Similar discussions arose during preparations for Prime Minister Singh's visit to Bangladesh in 2011.[101] So far, all of these discussions have brought few results. The one exchange of equipment that has occurred in recent years was largely symbolic: during his visit to Bangladesh in June 2011, the Indian Army Chief brought with him two 3.7 inch howitzers and a modern lab of 50 computers for troop training, which India donated to the Bangladesh military.[102]

Although troops often engage in joint patrols on their land border, India and Bangladesh have not undertaken joint maritime operations. India has occasionally undertaken HA/DR in response to natural disasters in Bangladesh, including airlifting medical supplies in the aftermath of a severe cyclone in November 2007. In January 2008, the Indian Navy deployed the landing ship *Gharial* and two

[100] "Delhi Issues 65-Point Statement," *The Daily Star*, Sep. 7, 2011.

[101] Shishir Gupta, "India May Start Army Supplies to Bangladesh," *Hindustan Times Online,* Sep. 6, 2011.

[102] "Indian Army Chief in Bangladesh to 'Deepen' Bilateral Military Ties," *BBC Monitoring South Asia,* Jun. 20, 2011.

LSTs with relief supplies and food to help Bangladesh recover from another cyclone.[103]

The Indian and Bangladeshi militaries regularly conduct bilateral exercises of various kinds. Most of these are army exercises focused on increasing interoperability in counterinsurgency and counterterrorism tactics. An entire series of joint military exercises is planned for 2012.[104] Naval exercises are less frequent, though the BN regularly sends warships to the multi-national MILAN exercise hosted by India every other year. In recent years, this exercise has focused on HA/DR interoperability. Indian Navy training ships *Tir* and *Krishna* and Indian Coast Guard (ICG) ship *Varuna* visited Chittagong in February 2010 to conduct training activities. In April 2011, ICG ships *Vajra* and *Raziya Sultana* visited Chittagong for a bilateral exercise. In addition, hundreds of BN personnel have received training at Indian military educational facilities since Bangladesh became an independent state. India occasionally sends its naval personnel for training in Bangladesh as well.[105]

Although bilateral military cooperation between India and Bangladesh has increased substantially in recent years, most of this cooperation is focused on increasing security along the countries' long land border by improving counterinsurgency capabilities and promoting mutual confidence-building measures among the two states' border guards. Maritime cooperation is very much a secondary concern for both countries, with activities limited to the occasional high-level visit, Bangladeshi participation in the biannual MILAN exercise, and the training of BN officers in Indian military academies.

Analysis of duplication and deficiencies

There is very little duplication in the maritime security assistance that India and the United States are providing to Bangladesh. In part, this is due to the limited nature of India-Bangladesh maritime security cooperation. India has focused on enhancing the relationship

[103] Government of India, Ministry of Defense, "Annual Report 2007-2008."

[104] "Indian Salute to Bangladesh Army," *The Daily Star*, Nov. 24, 2011.

[105] "Bangladesh Naval Delegation Visits Southern Naval Command," Frontier India News Network, Jan. 17, 2011.

between the two countries' ground forces, with maritime cooperation receiving fairly little attention by comparison. The cooperation that does exist is largely aimed at providing general professional training to BN officers and engaging in exercises designed to improve interoperability between the two countries in HA/DR operations. The focus of U.S. security assistance, meanwhile, is on enhancing Bangladesh's capabilities in counterterrorism operations. This has been accomplished by helping its military planners design a CT strategy, providing equipment and training to special forces units, and conducting joint exercises involving both Bangladeshi and U.S. forces. This de facto division of responsibilities is effective and should continue, with India perhaps taking greater responsibility for working with Bangladesh to improve its HA/DR capabilities while the United States expands its work on counterterrorism with both special forces and regular navy units.

Neither country has paid much attention to working with Bangladesh to improve its MDA and counterpiracy capabilities. Bangladesh's plan to significantly expand and modernize its naval fleet over the next decade should go a long way toward improving its counterpiracy capabilities without the need for significant foreign assistance. Both countries should work with Bangladesh to make sure that the new ships and their crews are well trained to conduct counterpiracy missions. In addition, as it plans for the acquisition of new ships, Bangladesh badly needs to develop a naval doctrine that will ensure that these ships are used to their greatest potential. However, it may be that this doctrine can only be produced after the development of a general military doctrine that defines the navy's role in the country's overall defense strategy. Coming off the success of its recent effort to help Bangladesh develop a CT strategy, the United States is well placed to assist in the development of both doctrines.

MDA is the most significant area in which Bangladesh could use foreign security assistance in the near term. Neither India nor the United States has focused on providing equipment and training to Bangladesh in this area. Due to the extent of piracy and smuggling in the Bay of Bengal, there is a need for an integrated system of coastal and ship-based radars, together with Automated Information Systems (AIS) equipment and a control center that is equipped to receive an integrated picture from these sources. Given its experience assisting other regional countries in this sphere and its existing security

cooperation relationship with Bangladesh, the United States is best positioned to provide this assistance. Training in equipment use and maintenance will also be required if the system is to remain effective in the long run. Depending on local sensitivities, it may be beneficial to explore the possibility of integrating the picture from such a system with information received from Indian sensors. However, given the history of mistrust between India and Bangladesh, such integration needs to be approached carefully by both sides.

Sri Lanka

Capabilities, roles, and missions

For the bulk of its history, the Sri Lankan military has focused on internal security, primarily involving its role in the 26-year war against the LTTE insurgency. The final phase of this conflict, from 2006 to 2009, saw it achieve a comprehensive victory by virtue of two factors: extensive inter-service coordination; and improvements in the Sri Lanka Navy's ability to greatly reduce the LTTE's ability to smuggle weapons into the country by sea. Since final victory was achieved in 2009, Sri Lanka has been reevaluating the role of its armed forces in the new peacetime environment. Given the high cost of maintaining a large military, significant cuts in the size of the military are likely to come in the near future. However, they are likely to affect the army more than the navy or air force.

The total strength of the military is estimated at 160,000 personnel, with 118,000 serving in the army, 15,000 in the navy and 28,000 in the air force. An additional 62,000 personnel serve in various paramilitary units such as the home guard and the national guard.[106] Most of the army's equipment is of Chinese manufacture, though some older items bought from the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom remain in service. The army has been a significant contributor to international peacekeeping operations and this

[106] International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance: Asia*, 112:1 (2012), 281-282.

commitment is likely to increase with the end of the active counterinsurgency mission.[107]

Like the rest of the military, the air force is currently engaged in a post-war strategic reassessment as it shifts from a focus on internal security toward counterterrorism. As part of this shift, the air force has been seeking to increase its airborne surveillance and intelligence-gathering capabilities. Most of its equipment is of Chinese, Russian, or Israeli manufacture, though it does have some U.S.-made maritime reconnaissance aircraft and utility helicopters. It currently has 28 combat-capable aircraft, including eight F-7 fighters, five MiG-29 fighters, six Kfir C-2 and two Kfir C-7 ground attack aircraft, and seven MiG-27M ground attack aircraft. Reconnaissance aircraft include two Beechcraft 200T King Air and one Cessna 421, as well as an unknown number of Israeli-built EMIT Blue Horizon 2, Israel Aircraft Industries Searcher 2 and Scout unmanned aerial vehicles. Transport aircraft include two C-130 Hercules, five An-32B, and nine Y-12. Helicopters include eleven Mi-24/Mi-35 attack helicopters, and eight Mi-17, four Bell 206, eight Bell 212, and eight Bell 412 transport and utility helicopters.[108]

Until recently, the primary mission of the Sri Lanka Navy (SLN) was to intercept weapons being smuggled into LTTE-controlled territory. With the end of the war, the SLN is looking to increase its capabilities in MDA, offshore patrol, and counterpiracy, while retaining a focus on anti-smuggling operations. The SLN is organized into six geographic districts. Its order of battle currently includes five offshore patrol vessels of various classes, four of which can carry helicopters. These ships are used for surveillance and interception of illegal arms smuggling and to monitor naval activity within territorial waters. Two Israeli-made fast missile boats, equipped with anti-ship missiles, provide the main attack capability against enemy ships. The navy also operates 15 Chinese-made fast gun boats, though only 8-11 of these may be operational.

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[107] "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – South Asia," *Jane's,* Aug. 19, 2011.

[108] International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance: Asia,* 112:1 (2012), 281-282; "Jane's World Air Forces – South Asia," *Jane's,* Nov. 18, 2011.

The bulk of the SLN's ships are fast attack craft. There are over 50 of these ships, including 26 locally built Colombo class, 5 U.S.-made Trinity class, and 23 Israeli-made Dvora, Super Dvora and Shaldag classes. Six Super Dvora III craft were acquired in 2010. These ships were the mainstay of the fleet during the war against the LTTE when they were used both as escorts and for offensive operations against Sea Tiger suicide craft. The navy also operates a range of landing craft, including a Chinese-built tank-landing ship, four amphibious landing craft, three fast personnel carriers, and one air-cushioned landing craft. There are also over 200 inshore patrol craft and speedboats of various kinds, used for patrol and harbor defense missions, including more than 100 domestically made speedboats used by elite maritime special forces units. The navy does not currently have a dedicated naval aviation branch, but it receives support from the air force for maritime surveillance and other maritime air support needs. Earlier proposals to create a separate naval air arm have been shelved because of cost considerations.[109]

The Sri Lanka Coast Guard was set up in 2009 as a separate department in the Ministry of Defense. Prior to that, there was a coast guard unit that operated as part of the Ministry of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources. The coast guard is expected to gradually take over the Navy's shallow-water patrol functions, freeing the latter for patrolling territorial waters. It is still a fairly small institution with approximately 1,000 officers and sailors, many of whom are seconded from the navy. The first of five domestically produced 14-meter ships for the coast guard was commissioned in March 2010.[110] The coast guard is in the process of establishing shore bases around the perimeter of the island. To date, 10 bases have been established in the southwestern section of the island and one on the Jaffna Peninsula. An additional 18 shore bases on other parts of the island are in the planning stage.[111]

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[109] International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance: Asia*, 112:1 (2012), 281-282; "Jane's World Navies, Sri Lanka," *Jane's,* Feb. 6, 2012.

[110] "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – South Asia," *Jane's,* Sep. 9, 2011.

[111] Sri Lanka Coast Guard, "Deployment," http://www.coastguard.gov.lk/index.php?id=12.

Counterterrorism

As a result of its long fight against the LTTE, which pioneered suicide bombing in the 1980s, the Sri Lanka military has extensive experience in counterterrorism. Each of the military services has its own special forces unit. The navy's unit is the Special Boat Squadron, modeled on the British Special Boat Service, with a total strength of 600 personnel. In addition to maritime counterterrorism operations, it also performs amphibious raids, reconnaissance, combat swimmer missions, and small boat operations. When necessary, it can conduct land-based counterterrorism operations on its own or in conjunction with the army's commando or special forces regiments.

Counterpiracy

Counterpiracy has not historically been a priority for the SLN. With the conclusion of the war, the SLN is reevaluating its core missions. As a result, counterpiracy is likely to become a high priority in the near future, especially given the gradual spread of the geographic reach of pirate ships operating out of Somalia. For the moment, this mission can be carried out primarily by the navy's five offshore patrol vessels. Plans to increase domestic shipbuilding capability to produce ships of up to 60 meters in length may indicate that Sri Lanka plans to expand the size of its blue-water fleet in order to improve its capabilities to patrol its territorial waters.[112]

Maritime domain awareness

Sri Lanka has a reasonably good MDA capability, based largely on a linked network of radar and AIS equipment that was donated by the United States several years ago. These systems are connected to SLN headquarters via a secure data link. In addition, SLN vessels conduct frequent patrols of the country's shoreline. This capability was sufficient to detect most LTTE weapon-smuggling missions in the final years of the war. At the same time, the capability was designed to detect ships approaching the coastline, rather than those passing through Sri Lankan territorial waters. The capability is thus better suited for counterterrorism than for counterpiracy operations.

[112] "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – South Asia," *Jane's,* Sep. 9, 2011.

Humanitarian assistance/disaster relief

In the aftermath of the civil war, the Sri Lankan military had a significant amount of first-hand experience in dealing with internally displaced persons. While its actions were not necessarily up to international standards, the experience nevertheless indicates that this is an area in which the Sri Lankan military can serve when necessary. Its experience in conducting peacekeeping operations in Haiti, Congo, South Sudan and elsewhere may also be helpful in this regard. In the event of a natural disaster, such as a tsunami, near the coast, the navy should be able to use its helicopters, inshore patrol craft, and landing ships to provide assistance fairly quickly, assuming that its own bases are not destroyed by the disaster. The SLN was able to respond after the 2004 tsunami.

U.S.-Sri Lanka security assistance and cooperation trends

Sri Lanka and the United States had a fairly solid military cooperation program from the 1980s until late 2007. At that time, cooperation virtually ground to a halt because the United States argued that human rights violations were occurring as part of Colombo's war against the LTTE. Up to that point, Sri Lanka regularly bought U.S. military equipment and received a significant amount of security assistance funding from the United States, at least by Sri Lanka's standards and expectations. The two countries regularly conducted joint military exercises and had just a few months earlier signed a framework agreement on non-lethal logistic support that allowed the two countries to transfer and exchange logistics supplies, support and refueling services during peacekeeping missions, humanitarian operations and joint exercises.[113]

In December 2007, the United States suspended all export licenses for defense articles and services with the exception of technical data or equipment related to maritime and air surveillance and communications. As a result, FMF, FMS, and Section 1206 funding was suspended beginning in the 2008 fiscal year. This not only prevented the Sri Lankan military from acquiring weapons such as

[113] Robert Karniol, "Sri Lanka and U.S. Sign Logistics Agreement," *Jane's Defence Weekly,* Mar. 21, 2007.

air-to-air and air-to-ground missiles, rocket launchers and various types of bombs, but also kept it from acquiring non-lethal military equipment such as coastal radars, firefinding radars, night-vision devices and parts for its U.S.-made transport aircraft and helicopters.[114]

Cooperation began to resume gradually after the war in mid 2009 and was initially limited to humanitarian assistance and related training. As late as March 2010, the United States turned down a request by the Defense Ministry to provide advanced training for Sri Lankan military officers, citing human rights concerns.[115] The next month, however, the Sri Lankan military and the U.S. Navy conducted a joint humanitarian exercise in Trincomalee. The training included advanced trauma medical care, safe disposal of unexploded ordnance, coping with post-traumatic stress, and preventive health care. It included participants from Sri Lanka's Disaster Management Center, its Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition, and the U.S. Special Operations Command Pacific.[116]

Cooperation accelerated further after Sri Lanka's foreign minister visited the United States in May 2010. In July 2010, the USS *Pearl Harbor* made a port call in Trincomalee, and the following month U.S. officials completed the handover of an advanced data link system facility that was designed to enhance Sri Lankan maritime air surveillance capabilities and was described as potentially a significant boost to bilateral cooperation in this field.[117] In October 2010, the U.S. government announced that it would resume FMF funding for

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[114] Jon Grevatt, "U.S. Confirms Suspension of Export Licenses for Sri Lanka," *Jane's Defence Industry*, Feb. 1, 2008.

[115] Chris Kamalendran, "No U.S. Military Training for Sri Lanka," *The Sunday Times* (Colombo), Mar. 28, 2010.

[116] "U.S., SL Forces in Humanitarian Exercise," *Daily Mirror* (Colombo), Apr. 17, 2010.

[117] "U.S. Naval Ship Arrives in Sri Lanka on 'Goodwill' Visit," *BBC Monitoring South Asia*, Jul. 14, 2010; "Air Force Expects Enhancing Surveillance Activities with U.S.," *Daily Mirror* (Colombo), Aug. 23, 2010.

Sri Lanka, provided that Colombo would take measures to investigate allegations of human rights abuses during its war with the LTTE.[118]

In June 2011, Admiral Willard met with the Chief of the SLN on the sidelines of the Shangri-La Dialogue in Singapore and assured him of continued U.S. support in the post-war era.[119] The next month, the SLN, PACOM, and the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) Center for Civil Military Relations co-hosted the South Asia Maritime Security Conference in Colombo. The conference, funded through the CTFP program, was attended by senior officers and maritime security professionals from Bangladesh, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Australia and the United States. In August 2011, the Pacific Airlift Rally 2011 exercise was conducted in Sri Lanka. Organized jointly by PACAF and the Sri Lanka Air Force, this field training exercise also included participants from Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Canada, Congo, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Maldives, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

In October 2011, USS *Ford* visited Sri Lanka to conduct naval exercises that included ship boarding and inspection techniques and damage control drills. U.S. naval officers also held a seminar on naval justice and law. In March 2012, Admiral Willard announced in Congressional testimony that the United States had located special forces assist teams in Sri Lanka and several other countries in South Asia for the purpose of counterterrorism cooperation.

Training for the Sri Lankan military has been provided primarily through the IMET and CTFP programs. Claims that the Sri Lankan military committed war crimes against Tamil civilians during its fight against the Tamil Tigers rebel group have resulted in restrictions on the types of training assistance that can be provided to the Sri Lankan military. Since the conclusion of that conflict in 2009, these restrictions have gradually been eased and the amount of funding increased.

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[118] Jon Grevatt, "Sri Lankan PM Proposes Larger Defence Budget for 2011," *Jane's Defence Industry*, Oct. 20, 2010.

[119] Shamindra Ferdinando, "U.S. Pacific Chief Assures Support for SL Navy," *The Island,* Jun. 10, 2011.

Sri Lanka has received IMET funding continuously since at least 2006, with annual funding ranging from $400,000 to $950,000 (see table 6).[120] The United States provided higher levels of funding after the conclusion of the Sri Lankan civil war in 2009. The $952,000 given in 2011 was spent on training students primarily through E-IMET, as the Sri Lankan Army was not allowed to participate in PME courses until 2012. Students attended a six-month course at the U.S. Marine Corps Command and Staff College in 2011.[121] The FY 2013 request is similar as last year at $626,000.

Table 6. Security assistance funding to Sri Lanka (in thousands of USD)

Program	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
FMF	990	990	0	0	1,000	998	500
IMET	529	483	603	419	731	952	665
GPOI	400	750	300	0	0	0	0
NADR	-	400	1,479	6,600	4,400	2,500	4,804
1206	10,883	7,400	0	0	0	0	0
CTFP	388	402	472	443	432	451	445

Sri Lanka has been a major recipient of CTFP funding for many years. As seen in Bangladesh, annual funding for this program in Sri Lanka has held steady, averaging roughly $400,000 in the past decade. Between 2004 and 2010, two CTFP-funded events were held in Sri Lanka: a Mobile Education Team on civil-military responses to terrorism in 2006, and an exchange of subject matter experts in 2008. In 2011, two events were held in Sri Lanka: a workshop on media dynamics and public affairs in terrorism and the South Asia Maritime Regional Seminar. CTFP has long funded participation in the yearlong National Defense University (NDU) International Counterterrorism Fellows Program by Sri Lankan Army officers. In recent years, officers from the Sri Lanka Navy and Coast Guard have also received extended training in the United States, with one

[120] U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, "Security Assistance to Sri Lanka," Jun. 27, 2011; updates in email communications, Jan. 2013.

[121] U.S. Department of State, op. cit., Jun. 27, 2011; U.S. Navy International Programs Office, "Country Summary Paper on Sri Lanka," Sept. 2011.

attending the Naval Staff College in 2010 and officers enrolled in advanced coursework at NPS in 2011.[122]

In 2007 and 2008, over 1 million dollars in GPOI funding was allocated to providing training to the Sri Lankan military to build capacity for peacekeeping operations. Following allegations that the military was involved in war crimes against civilians during its fight against the LTTE, GPOI activities were suspended and have not been resumed so far. In the two years that GPOI funding was provided, 60 peacekeepers and seven trainers received training through this program.[123]

Sri Lanka has received various kinds of U.S.-produced military equipment over the years, both through assistance programs and through direct sales. Since 2000, Sri Lanka has bought four Bell-412 helicopters, three radars, an AGS aircraft, and a Reliance patrol craft through the FMS and EDA programs, according to SIPRI and Defense Security Cooperation Agency data (see SIPRI Arms Transfers data in table 7). With the exception of two of the helicopters, these purchases were all made prior to the resumption of active hostilities in the Sri Lankan civil war. The sale of two helicopters, which were transferred in December 2011, for $6.7 million, each marked the resumption of active arms sales from the United States to Sri Lanka.[124] The former U.S. Coast Guard patrol craft was a gift to the SLN, though Sri Lanka spent $6.9 million on a complete refurbishment of the vessel that included new electronics, an onboard computer system, surveillance equipment, an automated laundry, and an air-conditioned operations room. Upon arrival in Sri Lanka, the ship was equipped with Chinese weapons.[125]

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[122] *Regional Defense Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program,* Reports to Congress, Fiscal Years 2004-2011.

[123] U.S. Department of State, op. cit., Jun. 27, 2011; Nina M. Serafino, "The Global Peace Operations Initiative: Background and Issues for Congress," *Congressional Research Service Report,* Jun. 11, 2009.

[124] Gareth Jennings, "Sri Lanka Receives New Bell 412 Helos," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, Dec. 2, 2011.

[125] Iqbal Athas, "U.S. Blocks Chinese Weapons Purchase by Sri Lankan Navy," *Jane's Defence Weekly* Jan. 5, 2005.

Table 7. Equipment transfers from U.S. and India to Sri Lanka, 2000-2011

From India	Year	From United States	Year
2 Vikram patrol boats	2007-8	2 Bell-412 helicopters	2011
4 Indra air-surveillance radars	2006-7	1 HF SWR-503 sea search radar	2007
1 King Air HISAR AGS aircraft	2002	1 HF SWR-503 sea search radar	2004
1 Sukanya patrol boats	2000	2 AN/TPQ-36 Firefinder arty locating radars	2003-4
		2 Bell-412 helicopters	2002

Sri Lanka has generally received about 1 million dollars per year of FMF funding, with the amount declining to $500,000 in 2012. In 2008 and 2009, FMF funding was suspended. Allegations of war crimes in the final months of the war led Congress to impose restrictions on FMF funding, which was limited to support for air and maritime surveillance in 2009 and humanitarian demining operations in 2010 and 2011. In 2012, the restrictions were amended to again allow support for maritime surveillance programs.[126] The FY 2013 request is slightly less at $450,000.

Prior to the imposition of restrictions on U.S. military assistance to Sri Lanka, a large amount of assistance was provided through Section 1206 counterterrorism funding. In 2006, Sri Lanka received a linked network of radar and AIS equipment worth a total of $9.4 million that was designed to provide it with a reasonably good MDA capability. They also received ten RHIBs worth $1.4 million and training in their use. Although the funding for this equipment was allocated in 2006, the equipment was only transferred in November 2007.[127] In 2007, Sri Lanka received $7.4 million for body armor, maritime security training, and a maritime data link to support the Athena radar system. The data link system facility was finally completed in August 2010. Since 2008, Section 1206 assistance to Sri Lanka has been suspended because of human rights concerns.[128]

[126] U.S. Department of State, op. cit., Jun. 27, 2011; updates in email communications, Jan. 2013.

[127] Tim Fish, "U.S. Delivers RHIBs and Surveillance System to Sri Lankan Navy," *Jane's Navy International,* Dec. 1, 2007.

[128] U.S. Department of State, op. cit., Jun. 27, 2011; U.S. Navy International Programs Office, op. cit., Sept. 2011.

Finally, the United States has provided substantial assistance for humanitarian demining programs in Sri Lanka, under Nonproliferation, Anti-Terrorism, Demining, and Related (NADR) funding. This assistance began in 2007 and grew rapidly, reaching $6.6 million in 2009. The amount given thereafter has declined, with $4.8 million in 2012. This assistance has been used both to fund actual demining operations being conducted by various international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and to provide equipment to Sri Lankan military demining units.[129] In November 2010, the United States transferred $500,000 of equipment to the Sri Lanka Army intended to assist demining operations underway in the northern part of the country. This equipment included four trucks with demining equipment, five land-cruiser ambulances stocked with medical equipment and gurneys, and seven large troop transport trucks.[130]

India-Sri Lanka security assistance and cooperation trends

Given its geographic location, it is not surprising that India is an important security partner for Sri Lanka. In the past, security cooperation was at times limited by political tensions surrounding the treatment of Sri Lankan Tamils by that country's government; however, since the conclusion of war against the LTTE, both countries have decided that establishing a partnership between their militaries is to the benefit of both sides.

[129] U.S. Department of State, op. cit., Jun. 27, 2011.

[130] "U.S. Gives Vehicles, Equipment to Sri Lanka for De-mining Operations," *BBC Monitoring South Asia,* Nov. 26, 2010.

Indian and Sri Lankan senior defense officials often exchange visits (see table 8). While the Sri Lankan civil war was in progress, these meetings were less frequent and were usually centered on Indian efforts to press the Sri Lankan government to reach a political solution with the LTTE.[131] Since the LTTE was defeated in early 2009, such meetings have become much more frequent and have focused on increasing military cooperation and maritime interoperability. This phase of cooperation began with a visit by India's national security advisor and foreign minister to Sri Lanka in May 2009, shortly after the LTTE was defeated. Meetings became more frequent after a visit to India by Sri Lanka's President Rajapaksa in May 2010. During his visit, the two sides signed agreements to initiate reciprocal visits between Indian and Sri Lankan military personnel and for the Sri Lankan military and security forces to have access to the most advanced military training available in India. This visit was soon followed by a visit to Sri Lanka by the head of the Indian Navy. A similar visit by the chief of the Indian Army followed in September 2010. The heads of the two countries' navies exchanged reciprocal visits in the fall of 2010 and the head of the Indian Coast Guard visited Sri Lanka that November. As a result of these visits, the two sides agreed to create institutionalized mechanisms for regular high-level and staff-level consultations between the two countries' militaries.

Table 8. Senior defense officials' visits between India & Sri Lanka, 2007-2011

From India To Sri Lanka	From Sri Lanka To India
NSA, MOD 6/11+	Army, 11/11+
AF, 1/11+	Navy, 10/10+
Navy, 12/10+	MOD, 8/10+
MOD, 12/10+	Army 3/08+
CG, 11/10+	MOD, 9/07+
Army, 9/10+	MOD, 5/07+
Navy, 6/10+	
AF, 9/10	
Navy, 9/09	
NSA, 5/09+	
MOD, 6/08+	

Sources: India MOD annual reports, BBC Monitoring reports

+ indicates top official in attendance

These mechanisms now include annual service-level staff talks. Air force staff talks began in 2009, and army and navy staff talks both

[131] Iqbal Athas, "Indian Officials Urge Sri Lanka to Seek Political Resolution to LTTE Conflict," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, Jun. 25, 2008.

began in 2011.[132] The most recent naval staff talks, held in September 2011 at Sri Lanka naval headquarters, focused on taking preventive measures to curb drug trafficking, as well as arms and human smuggling in Palk Bay and the Palk Straits and enhancing maritime security. A bilateral annual defense dialogue was agreed to in 2010, and the first meeting in February 2012 focused on maritime security issues in the Indian Ocean. The maritime relationship between both countries' navies and coast guards is particularly close: the Indian Southern Naval Commander and the Sri Lankan Northern Naval Commander meet every six months at sea along the international maritime boundary, with senior coast guard and intelligence officials from both countries also present. The Indian Coast Guard has assisted its counterpart in Sri Lanka in developing its capabilities to reduce the incidence of drug smuggling, illegal fishing and illegal migration.[133]

The bilateral maritime cooperation relationship has been described by then-Sri Lankan Vice Admiral Thisara Samarasinghe as:

> a role model for co-operation between two navies on a common problem. We maintain a friendly relationship and have been supported from training to the provision of vessels. I am authorized to communicate with my Indian counterparts at any time.[134]

This relationship has allowed the two sides to resolve practical issues. For example, they developed a mechanism to pre-empt any problems when a ferry service was launched between the two countries in the summer of 2011. The two sides have also established a Joint Working Group on Fisheries that has met several times to resolve tensions about infringement of territorial waters by fishing vessels from the two countries.

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[132] Indian MOD Annual Report 2011.

[133] "India Offers to Help Sri Lanka Coast Guard Operations," *BBC Monitoring South Asia,* Nov. 11, 2010.

[134] Sergei DeSilva-Ranasinghe, Interview with Vice Admiral Thisara Samarasinghe, Commander, Sri Lanka Navy, *Jane's Navy International,* Aug. 19, 2010.

Although India has not historically been a major supplier of equipment for Sri Lanka's military, it has sought to play a more significant role in this market as its domestic defense industry has developed in recent years. In 2000, India provided a Sukanya-class patrol boat to assist the SLN in its fight against LTTE rebels. According to SIPRI's Arms Transfers Database, a plan to donate a second boat was canceled after India shifted its policy toward the conflict. In 2006-2007, India provided four Indra II-PC 2-D air defense radars to the Sri Lanka Air Force at no cost.[135] India also provided technicians to train Sri Lankan personnel to operate the radars. After the radars failed to detect a March 2007 LTTE air attack, India supplied 40-mm L-70 close-range anti-aircraft guns to Sri Lanka to counter potential future LTTE air attacks.[136] The radars and guns were both classified as defensive equipment to avoid domestic protests by India's Tamil population.[137] There were also reports that India was planning to upgrade and re-arm former Indian Army Soviet-built BRDM-2 armored vehicles, though it is not clear whether or not the deal was completed. These were originally armed with Malyutka (AT-3 'Sagger') anti-tank guided missiles, and were to be upgraded to the 9K113M Konkurs-M (AT-5b 'Spandrel') and equipped with an aiming system produced by Bharat Electronics.[138] To counter the LTTE naval arm, India also transferred naval platforms and equipment to the Sri Lankan military. In February 2007, a Vikram-class patrol boat that formerly belonged to the Indian Coast Guard was quietly transferred to the SLN.[139] A second ship of the same class was transferred in August 2008, though because of domestic sensitivities in India it was not officially commissioned until August 2009. A subsequent report indicated that the Indian Coast Guard may have initially planned to temporarily lease the ships to Sri

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[135] Iqbal Athas, "Sri Lanka Bolsters Air Defences," *Jane's Defence Weekly,* May 16, 2007.

[136] "India Supplies Air Defence Guns to Sri Lanka," *Jane's Country Risk Daily Report,* Oct. 29, 2007.

[137] "Military Pact with Colombo in Limbo," *The Hindu,* 5 June 2009.

[138] David C Isby, "India Plans Konkurs-armed BRDM-2 for Sri Lanka," *Jane's Missiles & Rockets,* Jan. 29, 2008.

[139] Mrityunjoy Mazumdar, "Sri Lanka Finally Commissions Ex-Indian OPV," *Jane's Defence Weekly,* Sep. 3, 2009.

Lanka, though the SLN has given no indications that it plans to return them to India.[140]

After the LTTE's defeat, India sought to increase military cooperation with Sri Lanka. India announced bids to restore the Kankesanthurai and Point Pedro ports, as well as repave and modernize the Palaly Airfield, all of which are located in areas on the Jaffna Peninsula formerly controlled by the LTTE.[141] In April 2010, Sri Lanka gave permission for the Indian Air Force to have exclusive use of the runway that the LTTE built at Iranaimadu in Kilinochchi. India has also provided Sri Lanka with shoulder-fired Igla ground-to-air missiles and it has also purchased military equipment from Sri Lanka. Most recently, Sri Lanka-based SOLAS Marine won a 300 billion Rupee contract to provide 80 high-speed patrol boats for the Sagar Prahari Bal shallow-water patrol branch of the Indian Navy. The delivery of these boats is to be completed in 2013.

During the Sri Lankan war against the LTTE, joint maritime operations between the Indian and Sri Lankan navies were largely focused on countering LTTE naval activities. As early as 2003, the Indian Navy agreed to provide logistical support to efforts by the SLN to track and stem LTTE ship movements off the country's northeast coast.[142] In October 2004, the two countries signed a defense cooperation agreement that included a provision authorizing the two sides to conduct "maritime surveillance to prevent illegal activities affecting both countries."[143] In June 2007, the two countries formally agreed to coordinate patrols of their maritime boundary in the Palk Strait. Until that time, such coordination took place on an informal basis.[144] During this period, India was widely reported to provide Sri

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[140] Rahul Singh, "India Wants Warships It Lent to Sri Lanka Back," *Hindustan Times,* Nov. 11, 2009.

[141] Sergei DeSilva-Ranasinghe, "Reconciliation Quest - Sri Lanka's Security After the Conflict," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, Jul. 15, 2011.

[142] Iqbal Athas, "Indian Navy Will Help Sri Lanka to Monitor Ships," *Jane's Defence Weekly,* Jan. 22, 2003.

[143] Iqbal Athas, "Sri Lanka, India DCA Falls Short of Expectations," *Jane's Defence Weekly,* Nov. 3, 2004.

[144] Robert Karniol, "India, Sri Lanka to Co-ordinate Palk Strait Patrols," *Jane's Defence Weekly,* Jun. 13, 2007.

Lanka with intelligence that was used by the latter to track and destroy LTTE supply ships.[145] The Indian military has also provided humanitarian assistance to Sri Lanka: in 2009 it dispatched medical teams on three occasions to regions affected by the conflict with the LTTE, and in 2006 it sent two coast guard ships to neutralize an oil slick in Galle harbor.[146] Since the conflict ended, India has provided Sri Lanka with assistance in completing hydrological surveys, most recently of the Kankesanthurai harbor.[147]

The Indian and Sri Lankan militaries have a long history of conducting joint training activities. Though cooperation was largely frozen for 15 years after India's disastrous intervention in Sri Lanka's civil war in 1987, frequent joint training programs have been conducted since 2002. In July 2002, India agreed to provide counterterrorism training for 100 special forces personnel from the Sri Lanka Army, with the goal of helping them protect oil storage tanks in Trincomalee.[148] In 2005, the two countries' navies and coast guards conducted their first joint exercises since the resumption of military cooperation.[149] In September 2007, INS *Krishna* conducted training for SLN personnel. During this event, 42 cadets and midshipmen received at-sea training in navigation, seamanship, damage control and firefighting.[150]

Since 2009, bilateral naval exercises have been quite frequent. In October 2009, four warships from the SLN, Indian Navy and Coast Guard conducted the CADEX 2009 joint naval exercises off the Sri Lankan coast. This three-day exercise included training in seamanship, coastal navigation, helicopter landing, firefighting and

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[145] "The West and the Beleaguered Tamil Tigers," *Jane's Intelligence Digest,* Nov. 13, 2007.

[146] Government of India, Ministry of Defense, "Annual Report 2006-2007" and "Annual Report 2009-2010."

[147] Sandeep Dikshit, "India To Normalise Defence Ties With Sri Lanka," *The Hindu,* Aug. 27, 2010.

[148] Iqbal Athas, "India to train Sri Lankan special forces in counter-terrorism," *Jane's Defence Weekly,* Jul. 17, 2002.

[149] "In Brief - Joint exercise for India and Sri Lanka," *Jane's Defence Weekly,* Dec. 21, 2005.

[150] Government of India, Ministry of Defense, "Annual Report 2007-2008."

damage control. The cadets also practiced searching suspicious vessels using small boats of the Special Boat Squadron. In April 2010, the Indian Navy landing ship *Magar* visited Trincomalee for an exercise with the Sri Lankan patrol boat *Samudura*. They conducted training in communication, navigation, damage control and firefighting. In July 2010, the destroyer INS *Delhi* visited Colombo in conjunction with a visit by the Indian Navy chief to Sri Lanka. In October 2010, four Indian training ships visited Colombo as part of a training cruise. In December 2010, the destroyer INS *Mysore* and tall ship INS *Tarangini* participated in the SLN's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations in Colombo. In September 2011, the two countries held their largest bilateral naval exercise, named SLINEX II, with the participation of six Indian and 11 Sri Lankan warships off the coast of Trincomalee. The exercise included training in seamanship, maritime interdiction operations, VBSS, SAR, close-range anti-air firing, replenishment at sea, and helicopter operations. This was the first time since 2005 that this exercise had been held. A Sri Lankan Coast Guard ship participated in the biannual India-Maldives coast guard exercise named DOSTI, which took place in April 2012. In addition to holding frequent naval exercises with Sri Lanka, India provides a significant amount of classroom training for Sri Lankan naval officers and cadets. In December 2010, India's Defense Secretary offered 1,400 training placements for Sri Lankan security personnel in Indian military schools.[151]

In addition to bilateral cooperation with India, SLN and Indian Navy representatives participate in a number of multilateral maritime cooperation initiatives. India sent representatives to the international maritime security conferences held in Galle, Sri Lanka in 2010, 2011, and 2012. In fact, Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa announced at the Galle Dialogue in December 2012 that India, Sri Lanka, and Maldives are expected to sign a security cooperation agreement on improving maritime domain awareness. Sri Lanka in turn participates in the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) first organized by India in 2008. The symposium's most recent activity, a workshop on operational issues, was held in Sri Lanka in February 2012. Sri Lanka

[151] "India to Help Reopen Airport, Harbour in North Sri Lanka," *BBC Monitoring South Asia,* Dec. 29, 2010.

has sent warships to the last three iterations of the biannual multinational MILAN exercise hosted by India in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The most recent iteration was held with the goal of improving regional interoperability in HA/DR operations.

Analysis of duplication and deficiencies

Both India and the United States should devote more attention to providing assistance in the area of MDA. As the SLN shifts from a focus on counter-smuggling operations in the aftermath of the defeat of the LTTE, it is likely to develop a greater focus on missions such as counterpiracy and protection of territorial waters and natural resources. In this environment, especially given Sri Lanka's geographic location, assistance in improving its capabilities to detect ships entering its territorial waters would go a long way toward improving security in the region.

Because of congressionally mandated restrictions, the United States currently has a fairly limited security cooperation relationship with Sri Lanka. The lifting of some restrictions may lead to an increase in cooperation. The effort should be carefully calibrated to avoid duplicating assistance being provided by India, which has a deep and multi-faceted relationship with the Sri Lanka Navy and Coast Guard. The best opportunity for the United States would be to provide additional equipment and training for coastal radar surveillance systems, since this type of assistance is currently exempted from congressional restrictions and would be useful in improving Sri Lanka's counterpiracy capabilities. It is also not an area of particular focus for Indian assistance at the moment.

Maldives

Capabilities, roles, and missions

Since independence, Maldives has not faced any state-based external threats. For this reason and due to limited resources, it has not maintained traditional military services, such as an army, navy, or air force. Instead, Male relies on the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) to maintain internal security and counter potential threats to the country's exclusive economic zone – including nearly 1200 sprawling islands – from non-state actors. It can also be used to reinforce the domestic police force in the event of internal unrest.

The MNDF consists of approximately 2,400 active personnel and comprises a coast guard, a marine corps, special forces, and an air element. The vast majority of the personnel (close to 2,000) serve in the ground forces, which nevertheless suffers from a lack of armored vehicles and other equipment. Insufficient transport capacity, critical to maintaining a functioning military in a country made up of widely scattered islands, also hampers the ground forces' functionality. [152]

The coast guard is the best equipped and most effective element of the military. It has a total strength of 400 people. Equipment consists of eight patrol craft, one fast landing craft, and four rigid-hull inflatable boats. The main missions are to prevent illegal landings and smuggling.[153] The single, 40-ton Landing Craft Mechanized vessel is built in Sri Lanka and commissioned in 1999. It is used for ferrying troops and supplies around the archipelago. The largest patrol craft is the Trinkat-class *Huravee*, a 260-ton ship transferred from India in 2006 and designed for fast and covert operations against smugglers, gun-runners and terrorists.[154] The ship was refitted in India in 2010 so that it can accomplish maritime patrol missions as well.[155] Two 60-ton Ghazee-class ships, purchased from the Colombo shipyard in 1998, are used for fishery protection and SAR tasks. Three 40-ton Tracker II-class patrol boats, purchased used in 1987 from the U.K. Customs service, are used for fisheries protection and security patrols. Finally, two 20-ton patrol boats, in service since the early 1980s, are used for security and SAR operations.[156] As the risk of piracy has increased in recent years, the country's leaders have discussed the possibility of establishing a separate navy, though no steps to this end have been taken as of 2012.

The air element is subordinate to the coast guard and consists of fewer than 50 personnel and one Dhruv utility helicopter donated by

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[152] "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – South Asia," *Jane's*, Feb. 7, 2012.

[153] "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – South Asia," *Jane's*, Oct. 20, 2011.

[154] Maryam Omidi, "Indian, Maldives Ministers Stress Equal Footing of Defence Ties," *BBC Monitoring International Reports*, Aug. 23, 2009.

[155] "Maldives Coast Guard Ship Back from Refit in India," *BBC Monitoring South Asia,* Feb. 25, 2010.

[156] "Jane's Fighting Ships," *Jane's,* Feb. 3, 2011.

India in April 2010. This lack of personnel and equipment means that the air element is insufficient for the transport needs of the ground forces. In past emergencies, such as the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the Maldives was mostly dependent on foreign assistance to deliver aid. The air element's missions include protecting national airspace, monitoring suspicious activities in national waters, and conducting search and rescue, medical evacuation, and surveillance. It can also be used for transport in an emergency.[157]

Counterterrorism

Although the government considers terrorism to be one of the gravest potential threats to the Maldives, until recently the MNDF did not have any dedicated CT capabilities. This has slowly begun to change. In November 2010, the MNDF, the police force, and other Maldivian security agencies conducted a CT training exercise named North Star. In June 2011, MNDF personnel participated in a bomb and improvised explosive device disposal course conducted by the Sri Lanka Army.[158]

Counterpiracy

In recent years, the MNDF Coast Guard has been focused on counterpiracy as a core mission. To this end, the MNDF acquired the *Huravee,* a fast patrol craft from India in 2006. This ship, in combination with other patrol craft, provides a basic counterpiracy capability for the MNDF.

Maritime domain awareness

The MNDF has a limited MDA capability. Given the extent of the country's territorial waters and the potential for illegal activity in Maldivian maritime territory, improving MDA has become a focus for the Maldives government. Until recently, MDA was limited to coast guard patrols and observation of suspicious vessels by local fishermen. During times of heightened alert, India sends aircraft and patrol ships to enhance Maldives' indigenous MDA capability. In 2009 the government reached an agreement with India to set up a network of radars on all 26 atolls and link them to Indian coastal

[157] "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – South Asia," *Jane's,* Jun. 6, 2011.

[158] "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – South Asia," *Jane's,* Nov. 11, 2011.

surveillance systems. Eventually, these radars are to be linked to the central control room in India's planned coastal command.[159] However, Maldivian officials cite bureaucratic delays in India in installing the radar stations.[160]

Humanitarian assistance/disaster relief

In the past, Maldives was largely dependent on India and other maritime powers for disaster response. This was made clear in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami, when local forces proved incapable of providing required humanitarian assistance across the archipelago and were forced to depend on Indian assistance.[161] Recognizing that the country's geography required an improvement in HA/DR capabilities, the MNDF has focused on improving capabilities in this area. The coast guard and marine corps training schools, both established in May 2011, will prominently feature HA/DR in their curricula.[162] The MNDF has also sent staff in recent years to the MILAN multi-national disaster management exercise run biennially by the Indian Navy. The MNDF has also recently stated that it hopes to prepare its troops to take part in international peacekeeping operations in order to further strengthen their capabilities.[163]

U.S.-Maldives security assistance and cooperation trends

In the last five years, the United States has provided limited assistance for the improvement of Maldivian maritime capabilities. U.S. military assistance for Maldives in the last decade has increased as the U.S. government has come to recognize the importance of Indian Ocean shipping lanes for its strategic security. Senior U.S. defense officials visiting Maldives have repeatedly stated their commitment to cooperation with Maldives' government and military on issues such as

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[159] Rahul Bedi, "India Strengthens Military Co-operation with the Maldives," *Jane's Defence Weekly,* Aug. 21, 2009.

[160] CNA interview, 2012.

[161] Rhoda Margesson, "Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami: Humanitarian Assistance and Relief Operations," CRS Report for Congress, Feb. 10, 2005.

[162] "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – South Asia," *Jane's,* Nov. 11, 2011.

[163] Ibid.

countering terrorism, narcotics trafficking, and piracy in the Indian Ocean. In one of the most recent visits, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (DASD) for South and Southeast Asia Robert Scher mentioned maritime security and HA/DR as potential areas for bilateral cooperation between Maldives and the United States.

Most U.S. security assistance to Maldives has focused on improving its counterterrorism capabilities through CTFP and Section 1206 funding streams (see table 9).[164] General assistance for improving military capabilities has come through IMET funding, which has been the most consistent source of assistance, gradually growing from $100,000 to $200,000 per year over the last decade.[165] The FY 2013 request at $176,000 is slightly less than last year, but similar to the 2011 level. This money is used to send Maldivian military personnel to U.S.-based training programs in medicine, intelligence, anti-corruption, and international maritime training. The funding has also been used to send MNDF officers to basic officer, logistics officer, and sergeant courses and to officer candidate school. In 2011, IMET funding was used to send a student to attend each of the following courses: Defense Resource Management Course, Infantry Squad Leader and Infantry Unit Leader Enlisted Professional Military Education, and Drill Instructor Course.[166] In addition, IMET funding was provided for the following PME programming: International Maritime Officer Course, Officer Candidate School, Sergeants Course, Senior Non-Commissioned Officer Advanced Course, and Basic Officer Course.[167]

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[164] U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, "Maldives: Security Assistance," Feb. 2011; updates in email communications, Jan. 2013.

[165] U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Security Cooperation Agency, "Foreign Military Sales, Foreign Military Construction Sales and Other Security Cooperation Historical Facts," Sep. 30, 2010.

[166] U.S. Navy International Programs Office, "Country Summary Paper on Maldives," Sept. 2011.

[167] Ibid.

Table 9. Security assistance funding to Maldives (in thousands of USD)

Program	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012
FMF	0	0	0	400
IMET	145	203	179	193
1206	0	3,910	9,070	0
CTFP	90	100	473	473

Since 2008 Maldives has been a significant recipient of funds provided through CTFP. This funding has quickly increased in recent years, from $8,304 in 2008 to $473,164 in 2012. This program has sought to bring together professionals working on counterterrorism issues throughout the region to participate in training workshops such as the three-day "South Asia Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies (APCSS) Alumni Symposium on Combating Terrorism," held in Male in May 2010. This was the first CTFP event held in Maldives. Funding from CTFP allowed Maldivian officers to participate in the yearlong NDU International Counterterrorism Fellows Program, while other officers were enrolled in the NPS's Master's Program in Counter-Terrorism Policy and Strategy. In July 2010, NPS's Center for Civil Military Relations organized a five-day conference in Male, "Responses to Terrorism and Maritime Violence."[168]

Though eligible, Maldives did not receive assistance in the decade before 2011 through FMF or FMS. In 2012, the United States gave $400,000 in FMF funding to provide Maldives with counterterrorism, hostage rescue, and maritime interdiction equipment.[169] The FY 2013 requested amount is identical. Maldives has received some equipment through Section 1206 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). This included $3.9 million funded in 2010 for special operations forces counterterrorism and intelligence equipment and training, as well as Defense International Institute of Legal Studies (DIILS) training. In 2011, the amount more than

[168] For a complete list of Maldives' participation in CTFP-funded activities through 2011, see *Regional Defense Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program,* Reports to Congress, Fiscal Years 2008-2011.

[169] U.S. Department of State, op. cit., Feb. 2011; updates in email communications, Jan. 2013.

doubled to roughly $9.1 million, which was spent on AIS and Maritime Safety and Security Information System (MSSIS) equipment to enhance MDA ($3.4 million), waterborne transport for Maldives' special forces unit ($6.7 million), intelligence collection and analysis equipment for intelligence organizations ($303,000), and training for intelligence and special operations forces ($1.1 million).[170]

Until recently, the United States had not sent ships to Maldives or conducted joint exercises with the MNDF. In March 2012, however, Admiral Willard announced in congressional testimony that the United States had located special forces assist teams in Maldives and several other countries in South Asia for the purpose of counterterrorism cooperation. This is the first recorded instance of U.S. troops working in Maldives for non-training purposes since the humanitarian assistance operation that followed the December 2004 tsunami.

India-Maldives security assistance and cooperation trends

India is the most important foreign policy relationship for Maldives, by virtue of both geographic location and strategic interests. Over the last decade, Maldives has come to play an increasingly important role in India's security concerns as well. India's primary concern is the protection of vulnerable sea lanes that could be used by terrorists planning to launch attacks on Indian shipping or even its cities, as happened in Mumbai in 2008. The increasing frequency and widening geographic reach of attacks on shipping by Somali pirates is a second major concern for India. Both challenges have led India to focus its military interactions and security assistance programs vis-à-vis Maldives on improving maritime surveillance and increasing interoperability between India and Maldives in maritime patrol operations.[171]

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[170] Nina M. Serafino, "Security Assistance Reform: 'Section 1206': Background and Issues for Congress," *Congressional Research Service Report*, Jan. 13, 2012; U.S. Navy International Programs Office, op. cit., Sept. 2011; U.S. Department of State, op. cit., Feb. 2011.

[171] Vijay Sakhuja, "India and Maldives: Exploring Newer Vista for Cooperation," Indian Council of World Affairs, Aug. 19, 2009.

The importance both sides attribute to this relationship is demonstrated by the frequency of high-level visits by senior military and civilian personnel (see table 10). Between 2007 and 2011, the Maldives minister of defense visited India seven times and the head of the MNDF visited two times. During this period, the Indian minister of defense, national security advisor, army commander, and navy commander each made a visit to Maldives.[172] Most recently, the Maldives defense minister visited India in September 2011, and the Indian Navy Chief visited Maldives in January 2012.[173] The Indian minister of defense's visit to Male in August 2009 was particularly significant, resulting in the signing of a number of accords on cooperation in maritime surveillance. In April 2010, the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding on counterterrorism cooperation. In December 2012, India posted its first ever defense attaché in Male.

Table 10. Senior defense officials' visits between India & Maldives, 2007-2011

From India To Maldives	From Maldives To India
Army, 2/10+	MOD, 9/11+
MOD, 8/09+	Chief, 10/10+
Navy, 2/09+	MOD, 3/10+
NSA, 6/09+	MOD, 2/10+
	MOD, 10/09+
	Chief, 8/09+
	MOD, 2/09+
	MOD, 9/08+
	MOD, 1/07+

Sources: India MOD annual reports, BBC Monitoring reports

+ indicates top official in attendance

The president of Maldives visited India in October 2010 and February 2011, discussing security cooperation on both occasions. This was followed by a visit to India by the Maldives foreign minister in April 2011, during which plans for trilateral maritime patrols to counterpiracy and illegal fishing by Maldives, India, and Sri Lanka were announced. The Indian foreign minister visited Maldives in July 2011 to discuss security preparations for the upcoming SAARC summit. Prime Minister Singh came to Male in November 2011 for this summit and a subsequent bilateral meeting with President Nasheed. At this meeting, the two sides agreed to strengthen cooperation to enhance maritime security in the Indian Ocean

[172] Government of India, Ministry of Defense, Annual Reports for 2007-2011.

[173] Government of India, Ministry of Defense, "Annual Report 2011-2012."

region through coordinated patrolling and aerial surveillance, exchanges of information, capacity-building, and the development of an effective legal framework against piracy.

India has provided equipment for the MNDF on several occasions. Other than Sri Lanka, it is the largest supplier of maritime military equipment to Maldives, according to SIPRI Arms Transfers data (see table 11). In 2006, India provided to Maldives a Trinkat-class patrol craft designed for fast and covert operations against smugglers, gun-runners and terrorists. The package also included 60 million rupees for technical, materiel, and training assistance in the three years after the transfer.[174] In 2009-10, this ship was refitted for patrolling purposes at an Indian shipyard. In October 2011, it returned to India for three months for a refit. In April 2010, India also provided to Maldives a Dhruv helicopter, which is the sole aircraft in the MNDF air element. Some reports indicate that there were initial plans to provide two such helicopters, though in the end only one was transferred. The helicopter was overhauled in India in the spring of 2011. Finally and most significantly, in 2009 both countries reached an agreement for India to build radar stations across Maldives. These radars, when completed, will have substantially improved Maldives' MDA capability. They are not installed yet due to delays on the Indian side.[175] On various occasions, India and Maldives have discussed the possibility of India using the former British Gan Island air base, either as a listening post or as a base for reconnaissance and surveillance aircraft.[176] One unconfirmed report from June 2011 indicates that a private Indian company has been contracted to refurbish the base for India's use.[177] An Indian company was previously contracted to upgrade Hanimaahdoo Regional Airport in the northern part of Maldives to international standards and to help construct a harbor in Ihavandhihpolhu.

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[174] Katy Glassborow, "India Set to Transfer Patrol Boat to the Maldives," *Jane's Navy International,* Jan. 1, 2006.

[175] CNA interview with Maldivian officials, 2012.

[176] Sujan Dutta, "Navy Eyes Maldives: Counter to China's 'String of Pearls' Plan," *The Telegraph* (Kolkata), Aug. 20, 2009.

[177] "China-India Rivalry in the Maldives," *The Jakarta Post*, Jun. 17, 2011.

Table 11. Equipment transfers from U.S. and India to Maldives, 2000-2011

From India	Year	From United States
1 Dhruv/ALH Helicopter	2010	None
1 SDB Mk-5 Patrol craft	2006	

In the last five years, India has conducted multiple naval and air force operations in support of Maldivian maritime security. It has conducted several hydrographic and continental shelf surveys of Maldivian territorial waters. In the fall of 2006, INS *Nirdeshak* surveyed the eastern section of Maldivian territorial waters. It returned in November 2007 to survey the northern section and in January 2008 to do additional survey work. At the request of the Maldivian government, the Indian Navy again sent INS *Nirdeshak* to Maldivian waters in December 2009, this time to conduct a survey of North Male Atoll. In January 2010, India agreed to help Maldives conduct surveys of the continental shelf, to be used as part of its claim to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

India has frequently undertaken maritime surveillance operations in Maldivian territorial waters. These have sometimes been combined with port visits to Male. In April-May 2007, an Indian Dornier aircraft conducted surveillance patrols in the Maldivian EEZ. In September 2007, INS *Sharda* completed a surveillance mission in Maldives. It also visited Male to transfer three commercial off-the-shelf radars to Maldives. In May 2008, two Indian Navy ships on their way to an exercise off the coast of South Africa made a port visit to Maldives. In April 2010, ICG ship *Samar* visited Male in order to transfer a Dhruv helicopter to the MNDF.

In August 2009, India and Maldives signed an agreement that gave India permission to conduct routine surveillance operations in Maldivian territorial waters to deter piracy and smuggling. Since this agreement was signed, India has conducted such operations quite frequently. The first operation under this agreement took place in October 2009. This operation led to the capture of two rogue Iranian fishing vessels infringing on Maldivian territorial waters. In 2010, Indian Navy ships undertook maritime surveillance operations around Maldives in February, June, September and December. Surveillance was also carried out by Indian Navy aircraft in August and October 2010. Beginning in January 2011, such operations were

conducted jointly by Indian aircraft and Maldivian Coast Guard units.[178] India has also conducted independent and unaided patrol missions for Male, most notably from January to April 2011, when the Maldivian Dhruv helicopter underwent maintenance, and an Indian Dornier aircraft conducted maritime patrol operations in its place for six days a month.[179] In addition to these operations, India provided maritime security for the November 2011 SAARC summit held in Male. This three week operation included the frigate INS *Brahmaputra*, other warships and a Dornier-228 surveillance aircraft.[180]

The MNDF regularly sends personnel to participate in Indian-led military exercises and training opportunities. In September 2007, INS *Krishna* conducted training for Maldives Coast Guard personnel. During this event, five cadets received at-sea training in navigation, seamanship, damage control and firefighting. The Maldivian and Indian coast guards have conducted a regular series of exercises named DOSTI for two decades. The tenth iteration of this exercise was held in December 2009 in Maldivian waters. In April 2012, DOSTI XI took place off the coast of Male, with the purpose of training in maritime search and rescue, marine pollution response, and boarding operations. In addition to two Indian and three Maldivian coast guard ships, a Sri Lankan ship participated in the exercise for the first time. In December 2012, it was announced that all three countries will soon sign a trilateral maritime security cooperation agreement on data sharing for surveillance and countering illegal activities.

The MNDF and Indian Army also conduct a joint counterterrorism exercise named EKUVERIN. In October 2009, the MNDF sent 43 soldiers and officers – an entire squad – to Karnataka to participate in the second iteration of this exercise. This was the first time Maldives had sent a unit of this size abroad for training. The most recent iteration of this exercise took place in Maldives in December 2011. The Indian Navy and Coast Guard training ships *Tir, Shardul, Varuna*

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[178] "Maldives-India Surveillance Operation Yet to Detect Suspect Activity," *BBC Monitoring South Asia,* Jan. 9, 2011.

[179] Government of India, Ministry of Defense, "Annual Report 2010-2011."

[180] "India Deploys Aircraft to the Maldives to Assist Anti-piracy Controls," *Jane's Intelligence Weekly*, Oct. 20, 2011.

and *Tarangini* visited Maldives in October 2010 and conducted training activities with coast guard personnel. In February 2012, the MNDF sent officers to participate in the table-top portion of the Indian-led regional naval exercise MILAN that took place in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands with the goal of improving regional interoperability in HA/DR operations.[181]

Analysis of duplication and deficiencies

When it comes to security cooperation with the Maldives, the United States and India have – without any explicit coordination – reached a de facto division of responsibilities. In the area of training, India has mostly focused on providing general military and naval training while the United States has largely – though not exclusively – focused on training in counterterrorism operations. Although the United States also provides some general training and India has invited MNDF personnel to participate in counterterrorism exercises, most training assistance divides along the lines indicated.

In terms of providing equipment, both countries have focused primarily on improving Maldives' capabilities in MDA and counterpiracy operations. This focus makes sense given the country's geographic position and potential vulnerability to Somali pirates. Again, however, there is a partial division of responsibilities. India has focused on enhancing the MNDF's maritime patrol capabilities, including conducting its own ship and air patrols in the area. The United States has focused more on providing equipment for remote sensing of unauthorized vessels in Maldivian territorial waters. Although India has also agreed to provide radar equipment for Maldives, this project has fallen behind schedule. This is the one area where there is significant overlap between Indian and U.S. efforts; the two countries should coordinate their efforts to provide radars and related equipment in order to avoid duplication of effort.

The most glaring deficiencies in security assistance are in the area of HA/DR. Given the Maldives' vulnerability to flooding from tsunamis and typhoons, the lack of adequate indigenous disaster response capability could lead to numerous deaths on the low-lying atolls. The

[181] "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – South Asia," Jane's, Mar. 23, 2012.

United States and India could work together to provide the Maldives with landing craft, helicopters, and coastal patrol craft, together with HA/DR training that would make the country less dependent on foreign assistance when the next inevitable natural disaster occurs. The U.S. Navy must exercise caution, however, when providing this because there is a perception, at least among Indians interviewed, that Maldives does not have the capacity to embrace such largesse.

Insights from the region: India

The CNA study team traveled to India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives in order to obtain the perspectives of government officials and military officers (currently serving and retired) on the potential for the United States to coordinate with India in the IO.[182] This chapter will analyze the views of the Indians who were interviewed. In short, their reactions to the idea of coordination were largely negative, for a variety of reasons.

Some specifically rejected a U.S. role in the IO because the United States is a fundamentally a "non-resident" or extraregional actor, and the South Asian littoral states of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives constitute the "backyard" of India. Others reflexively noted that Indian policy precludes multilateral Indian coordination outside of a UN mandate. Finally, many interview respondents expressed fears that coordinated U.S.-India activity would appear too anti-China. This is not to say that the Indians we interviewed do not see China as a growing threat to their country. However, it was apparent that they see the possibility of increased coordination with the United States through a domestic political prism and, at this point, remain averse to engaging in battles with leftists or bureaucrats.

The findings in this chapter categorize negative responses to U.S.-India coordination in the IO into sets of structural and attitudinal challenges. Some of the attitudinal challenges are specific to the United States, while others are characteristic of Indian foreign policy norms and traditions. Interestingly, even some of the Indian respondents who were most critical of relations with the United States expressed a belief that short-term differences will sort themselves out

[182] CNA conducted interviews in India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives during Mar.-Apr. 2012. Footnote details (e.g., location of interview, date of interview) are kept to a minimum in this chapter to protect the anonymity of interview respondents. *Please note that their opinions referenced in this report do not represent the official views of their organizations or government agencies.*

in the long run. They gave specific suggestions for coordination in the IO which will be covered in the Conclusions and Recommendations chapter.

Structural challenges to U.S.-India coordination

The Indian bureaucracy is often criticized for being inefficient, in addition to the fact that its civil servants are not required to have expertise on the affairs of the ministry in which they serve. Most striking is the low capacity of the Indian government's staff to handle foreign affairs and defense matters. For example, only a handful of people work on the Americas desk in the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA). The Indian MEA's objectively low capacity to handle requests involving the United States, in addition to requests from other countries, helps to explain on a tactical level why India has difficulty coordinating with the United States.

Moreover, there are other shortcomings within the MEA, where nearly all in the Indian Foreign Service rise to senior ranks and underperformers are not weeded out.[183] Because traditionally most people who were accepted into the MEA were practically guaranteed an ambassadorship, there has been pressure to limit the number of entrants. This serves to undermine the long-term efficacy of the ministry. Interview respondents concede that Indian bureaucracy proceeds slowly and can be an impediment to current efforts to enhance U.S.-India coordination.

India's relentless political cycle not only affects Prime Minister Singh, but also limits the Indian Chief of Naval Staff (CNS) and his freedom to maneuver. India is in a period of its political life when the central government in New Delhi is quite weak in the face of rising regional politics such as those in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu. The politics in these states — seen most often in their flamboyant chief ministers — impact India's foreign policies toward Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. For example, Chief Minister J. Jayalalithaa of Tamil Nadu was effective in threatening to abandon Singh's ruling coalition if New Delhi did not support the U.S.-sponsored resolution in the UN Human Rights

[183] Daniel Markey, "Developing India's Foreign Policy Software," *Asia Policy 8*, The National Bureau of Asian Research, Jul. 2009, 73-96: 77.

Council that criticized the Sri Lankan government over its war probe. Subsequently, India, for the first time, voted with the United States on a UN resolution that was critical of Sri Lanka. Similarly, politicians have pressured Indian Chiefs of Naval Staff due to their efforts to increase India's naval engagement with the United States. For example, former CNS Sureesh Mehta faced vocal criticism from leftists over the 2007 MALABAR exercise which also upset China due to the participation of Japan, the United States, Australia, and Singapore and its first-time location in the Bay of Bengal. Among Indian respondents, India's political pressures and its bureaucracy were cited most often as the greatest obstacles to increased U.S.-India coordination in the IO.

Another factor that hinders U.S.-India coordination is that India's MOD is typically sidelined by the MEA. While both ministries are of equal rank, an Indian government official summarized the difference: "MEA drives policy, while MOD merely implements policy... It is not a policy-making body." It follows that the Indian Navy finds it difficult to act without having the MEA on board. Furthermore, within the Indian military, the Indian Navy is the least influential service. Considering that India has fought land wars against Pakistan and China, the Indian Army dominates. By contrast, the Indian Navy receives the lowest share of budget allocation and has the fewest people. Former CNS Sureesh Mehta has even frankly stated the implications of the Indian Navy's relatively weak position: "What is, of course, lacking in terms of maritime awareness is the strategic thinking… For example, there is no Indian Ocean policy and we need to have one and people need to work on this."[184] The fact that the Indian Navy is less influential than the other services will make coordination with the U.S. Navy even more difficult when added to the variety of reasons why Indians interviewed oppose the idea.

The legacy of India's relationship with the Soviet Union invariably represents an obstacle to increased U.S.-India coordination in the IO. India may see three to four more decades of materiel dependence on Russia. This is not surprising, given the long history of defense

[184] Firstpost.com, "India needs strategic planning in maritime affairs: Mehta," Feb. 24, 2012.

relations dating back to the Cold War and India's difficult relations with the United States. American military equipment sales to India have soared in recent years totaling roughly $8 billion and should continue to grow, even as India attempts to diversify its suppliers. Nevertheless, the refurbished INS *Vikramaditya* (formerly *Gorshkov*) aircraft carrier and INS *Chakra* (formerly *Nerpa*) nuclear submarine suggest that India will continue to rely on Russia for decades to come.

Attitudinal challenges to U.S.-India coordination

U.S.-specific challenges

In addition to structural challenges, Indian attitudes would present challenges to a U.S. pursuit of coordination with India. Many are specific to the U.S. role in this endeavor. The first of these reactions involved resistance to the idea of U.S. coordination with India in an area that India considers its backyard. Strong Indian consensus exists that questions would range from bewilderment ("Why is the U.S. there?") to suspicion ("What is the U.S. up to?"). Even those who are relatively pro-U.S. engagement do not understand why the United States would want a role here. In our interviews, we heard genuine curiosity: "why does the U.S. want to get the smaller IO countries involved?"

As well as being puzzled over why the United States would want to work with India in its backyard, Indian respondents express deep skepticism over the benefit that a U.S. coordinating role would have in the IO. Strikingly, three retired Indian officials in separate discussions suggested that the United States would "overwhelm" smaller IO countries. Others stated that a U.S. role in coordination would mean that too many countries were involved and cite how even the Indian Navy overwhelms Maldives when trying to provide ships, implying that the inclusion of the United States would be too much.

A former Indian Navy respondent suggests that because U.S.-Indian interoperability is high, India can pass on these benefits to smaller IO countries. Yet, the U.S. "would be in the way." This sentiment is consistent with other Indians' comments, which reflect satisfaction that U.S.-India naval ties are growing and is a development about which the Indian Navy is proud. However, India seeks to keep this

bilateral relationship separate from its relationships with IO countries.

Another barrier to U.S.-India coordination in the IO is a strong Indian consensus that the rate of cooperation with the United States is proceeding at the right pace. Certainly, the U.S. side wishes more progress, thus indicating different senses of time by both countries. Most Indians interviewed cited the annual MALABAR exercise — held most recently in the Bay of Bengal in April 2012 — as an example of positive bilateral security cooperation. Defense coordination between United States and India is achieved through various forums, such as the 12th round of the Defense Policy Group (DPG) meeting held in February 2012 in New Delhi. The Executive Steering Group Navy staff talks are also cited as a valuable engagement. Some Indian interview respondents believe that India and the United States should look at their relationship in roughly a 15-20 year timeframe, and not sooner. However, this view is difficult to adopt among American policymakers, who typically think in much shorter timeframes.

Interestingly, while Indian respondents point to solid progress in bilateral defense relations, they are critical of U.S. technical regulations. Indians interviewed blame the United States for poor defense cooperation due to the insistence that India sign the so-called "foundational agreements," including the Logistics Support Agreement (LSA), Communication Interoperability and Security Memorandum of Agreement (CISMOA), and Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA). While they would facilitate operational interactions, New Delhi is reluctant to sign agreements that would give the appearance of entering into an alliance with the United States. An Indian respondent summarizes the problem by stating that on the Indian side, "obstacles to navy-to-navy coordination are political," whereas on the U.S. side, the obstacles are technical regulations.

Ultimately, the impasse at which the United States and India find themselves reflects differences in expectations about how relations will go forward. To India, U.S. language about India's special role in the IO does not square with being forced to sign the same foundational agreements required of lower-priority nations – which implies instead an ongoing mistrust that has not truly been overcome

since the Cold War. Hopefully, the designation of Deputy Secretary of Defense Ashton Carter – formerly Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics – as the point person for facilitating defense trade with India will ameliorate potential misunderstandings over regulations between the two countries.[185]

Finally, our research suggests that many Indian policymakers contend that U.S.-India coordination in the Indian Ocean would imply an anti-China stance. Significant political opposition ensued when the 2007 MALABAR exercise was expanded to a quadrilateral with the United States, Japan, Australia, and Singapore, arguably giving the appearance of a bloc of Asian democracies exercising together in the Bay of Bengal, in the context of a rising China. Memories of India's defeat in the 1962 border war with China are not distant despite having occurred 50 years ago. Both countries continue to dispute ownership of Arunachal Pradesh and Aksai Chin, and the border remains tense today: a live-fire Chinese exercise took place on the Tibetan Plateau in March 2012. B. Raman, Indian strategic analyst and former head of the counterterrorism division of India's external intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing, confirms the Indian leadership's thinking and reluctance to engage too closely with the United States, despite their strategic partnership:

> The U.S. is interested in India playing an activist role in this new exercise for a network of allies and partners, but does India reciprocate this interest? The answer to this is not clear… [India's] relations with the U.S. have improved in the fields of counterterrorism and maritime security. But India is still inclined to view these relationships as without any linkages or networking which could trigger off alarm in Beijing.[186]

Consequently, the United States must be mindful of the conflicting needs of Indian leadership to assert India's growing naval might in

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[185] Lisa Curtis, "Going the Extra Mile for a Strategic U.S.–India Relationship," The Heritage Foundation, Aug. 20, 2012, http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2012/08/going-the-extra-mile-for-a-strategic-us-india-relationship.

[186] B. Raman, "Main Elements of U.S. Foreign Policy Towards Asia," South Asia Analysis Group, no. 4848, Jan. 9, 2012.

the IO, and to avoid antagonizing China due to their still troubled border.

General challenges

The legacy of India's Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) foreign policy continues to haunt the country's efforts to forge stronger ties with the United States and to take a stronger leadership role in the IO. The "Non-Alignment 2.0" report was released in February 2012 and re-states India's need for "strategic autonomy." The report is widely considered to be a grand strategy; even the Indian Ambassador to the United States, Nirupama Rao, cited from it in a March 2012 speech at the Hudson Institute.[187] The report has been roundly criticized by many analysts, one of whom writes:

> Indeed, what is striking about the analysis is its deafening silence about India's burgeoning relationship with the United States... Despite the transformation of this vital relationship, the authors of 'Nonalignment 2.0' choose to refer to Washington only in passing.[188]

Clearly, the persistence of India's NAM thinking on its foreign policy even in the 21st century illustrates the barriers the United States will face as it tries to coordinate with India on capacity-building efforts in the IO. As mentioned earlier, India's refusal to sign the U.S. foundational agreements has been seen as impeding progress in bilateral security cooperation. Unless India gets an exception, similar to the civil nuclear deal offered by the United States in 2005, New Delhi does not appear willing to cede its "strategic autonomy" through such arrangements.

A second hurdle to U.S.-India coordination in the IO is India's adamance about its privileged relationships with smaller IO countries. After the November 2011 SAARC summit in Maldives, and likely due to China's "charm offensive" during the summit, Indian

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[187] Indian Ambassador Nirupama Rao, "Indian Foreign Policy in the 21st Century: Challenges and Opportunities," address to the Hudson Institute, Washington, D.C., Mar. 22, 2012.

[188] Sumit Ganguly, "Delhi's Strategy Deficit," *The National Interest*, Mar. 12, 2012.

Prime Minister Singh articulated a strong declaration on India's position in the Indian Ocean:

> This is our extended neighborhood. We wish to work with the Maldives and other like-minded countries to ensure peace and prosperity in the Indian Ocean region.[189]

Discussion about whether China is constructing a "string of pearls" in the IO highlights India's aversion to non-IO countries increasing their presence in its "backyard." From India's perspective, New Delhi has been conducting capacity-building in the IO for years. Respondents pointed to the way in which India set up and runs Mauritius' Coast Guard, with an Indian Navy officer deputed to the archipelago nation. In Maldives, India intervened with Operation Cactus in 1988 after an attempted coup. In Sri Lanka, India intervened with its peacekeeping force to combat insurgency in the 1980s. India's insistence of its preeminence in capacity-building activities in the IO, and therefore lack of a need for a U.S. role, is instructive. India's possessiveness about its position and relationships in the IO is important for the United States to understand if it pursues burden-sharing.

A final barrier to U.S.-India coordination in IO countries is a decided Indian preference for bilateral interactions. Interview respondents in India often express the belief that India can work multilaterally only if a UN mandate exists, even when presented with examples such as MALABAR, IBSAMAR, and the new India-Maldives-Sri Lanka trilateral DOSTI exercise. Interestingly, Indian initiatives such as MILAN and IONS are not considered to be exceptions, seemingly because India is at the helm of these engagements. Some Indian respondents try to draw a distinction between multilateral "operations" and "exercises," although there does not appear to be a consistent, clear policy prohibition in place regarding multilateral engagements. Consequently, it appears as if resistance to working multilaterally emerges largely when the United States is involved and in the desire to avoid India joining a grouping which resembles an alliance. For example, India is uncomfortable with the idea of working multilaterally in certain settings, such as with the United

[189] C. Bryson Hull, "Cold War in the Tropics: China, India Vie for Maldives," *Reuters India*, Nov. 16, 2011.

States (and consequently, Pakistan) in Combined Task Force 151 (CTF-151) on counterpiracy efforts in the Gulf of Aden. Still, an interview respondent told us that India would be eager to participate in CTF-151 efforts if only there were a UN mandate.

Regarding working with the United States, India is certainly proud of its naval engagements with the United States, but prefers to keep this interaction bilateral and separate from what the Indian Navy does with low-end IO navies through MILAN and DOSTI. When asked whether the United States should participate in the MILAN exercise, Indian respondents do not see why the U.S. Navy would want to participate in MILAN, given the low-end nature of the engagement in contrast to the high-end MALABAR series. Regarding IONS, many Indians interviewed voiced the firm belief that the United States is an extraregional power and does not deserve full membership in a forum dedicated to IO navies and their chiefs.[190]

Glimmers of hope

Certainly, many criticisms are voiced by Indian respondents who express disapproval of current U.S.-India defense relations. Negative feelings range from resentment over being asked to sign foundational agreements, to doubts about whether the United States has a consistent India policy under the current administration. Nevertheless, most critics of the idea of multilateral coordination with the United States in the IO express a belief that U.S. and Indian short-term differences will work themselves out over the long run and were even able to provide suggestions for coordination. This pattern of initial resistance followed by proposed ideas for cooperation indicates a few possibilities. First, U.S.-India coordination in the IO is a new idea. Therefore, its potential is not easily grasped, and it could understandably instill fears of apparent U.S. encroachment into India's "backyard," such as those reminiscent from the 1980s when Sri Lanka was seen as inviting a U.S. presence in the region. Yet, India has since grown increasingly comfortable with the U.S. military

[190] Although the United States does not send its Chief of Naval Operations, it should be noted that the United States participates in IONS meetings by sending naval officers and has applied for observer status in the forum.

presence in Diego Garcia, which is no longer a point of tension. If the United States wishes to pursue burden-sharing, and Indians recognize that the U.S. Navy does not see Maldives, for example, as a worthy candidate for inclusion in MALABAR, and prizes its growing interoperability with the Indian Navy, perhaps India would become more comfortable with the idea as it has more broadly with the U.S. presence in the IO. If the goal of IO coordination is sought, the United States would be wise to remember that different senses of time, geography, and goals imbue U.S.-India relations.

In the meantime, some novel ideas were suggested by Indian respondents who at first were averse to the notion of U.S.-India coordination in the IO. One thought was that the United States could provide defense equipment to smaller IO countries, while India could refit and repair this equipment and provide training to IO navies and coast guards. Second, a fierce critic of Washington's India policy under the current administration suggested that Washington and New Delhi could set up maritime research institutes in the smaller IO countries as a way of coordinating. The Recommendations section will detail other possibilities.

Insights from the region: Smaller Indian Ocean countries

To get a comprehensive understanding of the potential for U.S.-Indian coordination in the Indian Ocean, the CNA study team visited Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives to interview stakeholders in government, military, and think tanks.[191]

These countries are smaller in size compared to India and its predominant status in the region, but they are important in any potential U.S.-India burden-sharing endeavor. One expert from the region advised us to frame this discussion in a positive manner – for example, in terms of how these smaller countries could "get a seat at the U.S.-India table." In fact, these countries are setting this "table" in many ways if coordination on capacity-building is to occur between the United States and India.

This chapter details interviews and conversations with officials and experts from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives about the littoral threats their countries face and their views about U.S.-Indian coordination on provision of security assistance in the IO. The analysis for each country includes views from U.S. and Indian officials and experts on coordinated capacity-building in these smaller IO countries. Specific recommendations conclude each country's discussion.

[191] CNA conducted interviews in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives, and India during Mar.-Apr. 2012. Footnote details (e.g., location of interview, date of interview) are kept to a minimum in this chapter to protect the anonymity of interview respondents. *Please note that their opinions referenced in this report do not represent the official views of their organizations or government agencies.*

Bangladesh

Bangladesh's security cooperation with the United States is soaring with the April 2012 launch of a new political-military dialogue, which covers areas of maritime security cooperation. On the other hand, Bangladesh does not have as close defense ties with India. Under the current Awami League government in Dhaka, which is seen as relatively pro-India, some progress is being made. After the elections in late 2013 or early 2014, however, bilateral relations could take a more negative turn if the Bangladesh National Party (BNP) assumes leadership, although this is not certain.

Threats expressed by Bangladeshi officials and officers

Bangladesh's frequent experiences with deadly cyclones and earthquakes illustrate the potential for U.S.-Indian coordination on disaster response. Of the four functional areas we were asked to examine, HA/DR tops the list in having the most importance to Bangladesh Navy and Coast Guard officers. Specifically, assistance on SAR operations represents an ideal area for U.S.-Indian coordination in Bangladesh.

Regarding the potential for counterpiracy coordination, conversations with Bangladeshi maritime security professionals and think-tank experts reveal a distaste for the term "piracy," even though there is interest in coordinating on crimes at sea. There is a strong feeling that criminal incidents at sea in Bangladesh do not convey the same meaning as the internationally understood definitions of "piracy" in, say, the Strait of Malacca or Gulf of Aden. They cite as evidence that the International Maritime Bureau now acknowledges Bangladesh's position that incidents in its waters amount merely to "petty thefts" or "robbery" rather than "piracy."[192] Furthermore, a report by the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) found that the number of incidents at Chittagong port – Bangladesh's busiest – decreased by 50

[192] "Bangladesh out of Piracy-prone Nations' List," BDnews24.com, Jan. 1, 2012.

percent in 2011 to produce the lowest number in three years.[193] Consequently, there is little interest among Bangladesh maritime security professionals for working on "counterpiracy" with the United States or India in the Bay of Bengal. So far, there has been minimal interest for such cooperation among the country's civilian leadership.[194] Incidents of piracy do in fact take place, yet Bangladeshi officials appear to resist this label because they fear it will hurt their country's economic image and prospects. Regardless of terminology, many Bangladeshi respondents express a desire to coordinate on "sea robbery," "localized robbery," and "coastal management."

CT and MDA do not represent the most salient areas of potential coordination with the U.S. and Indian navies. On the other hand, Bangladeshi officers volunteered myriad threats that we had not asked about, including trafficking in humans, arms, and narcotics. Marine pollution and sea-level rise also were cited frequently in interviews. While global warming and its potential to create an estimated 20 million Bangladeshi environmental refugees was often referenced, a more immediate threat is Bangladesh's shipbreaking industry and its pollution of the waters in the Bay of Bengal. The need to protect fisheries was also mentioned often.

More urgently, the Bangladesh Navy and Coast Guard needs increased capacity-building efforts from the United States and India now that they have greater responsibilities following the March 2012 International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) decision, which acknowledges Bangladesh's EEZ extending 200 nm into the Bay of Bengal.[195] Bangladesh is due to receive an Oliver Hazard Perry-class frigate from the United States after decommissioning, but Bangladeshi officers made clear that they wish to have it in their possession as soon as possible. In addition, Bangladesh is seeking

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[193] ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre, *Responses and Outcome: Annual Report, January – December 2011*, Singapore, 6.

[194] A Bangladeshi military official states that there had been some discussion about operations on counterpiracy, but there was no political will. CNA interview, 2012.

[195] James Hardy and Poornima Subramaniam, "Analysis: Support Grows for Bangladesh Navy Recapitalisation Plan," *Jane's Defence Weekly*, Asia Pacific, April 2, 2012.

maritime patrol aircraft and helicopters. Some Bangladeshi respondents outside the military point to the need for greater capacity in the Coast Guard. Writing in *Bangladesh Defence Journal*, Nirvik Samudraputra confirms the BCG's "limited" capabilities.[196]

Attitudes toward U.S.-India coordination in Bangladesh

At present, Bangladesh prefers multilateral cooperation involving more than only the United States, India, and Bangladesh. The idea of working trilaterally with the United States and India is not appealing according to Bangladeshi respondents. Bangladesh generally prefers to operate under UN mandate and is eager to receive funds from this engagement. In fact, it is the largest contributor of troops to UNPKOs among UN member countries. This expressed preference for multilateral cooperation under UN mandate may explain Bangladeshi opinion on potential coordination involving the United States and India.

Outside of multilateral cooperation, bilateral rather than trilateral engagement is preferred by Dhaka. Bilateral interactions with India and the United States are believed to "pay more dividends" than working trilaterally.[197] Bangladesh's Special Warfare and Diving Salvage Centre (SWADS) in Chittagong is evidence of the fruit of working closely with one country – the United States – to set up this center. Among Bangladeshi respondents, there is a strong belief that their country must work bilaterally with India and the United States before almost graduating to a presumably more sophisticated interaction that would occur in a trilateral engagement. This sentiment may reflect Bangladesh's limited defense ties with India, a fear of destabilizing still developing military-to-military relations, and perhaps a lack of confidence on Bangladesh's part when working with India. But this feeling may not necessarily be an impediment to future U.S.-India coordination, as Bangladesh-India naval ties have been on the rise in recent years.

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[196] Nirvik Samudraputra, "Maritime Security for Energy Security," *Bangladesh Defence Journal*, 35.

[197] CNA interview of a Bangladeshi military official, 2012.

Recommendations for pursuing U.S.-India coordination in Bangladesh

To pursue U.S.-India coordination in Bangladesh, the United States could try to find a maritime UNPKO opportunity to involve all three countries. A Bangladeshi diplomat and retired Indian government officials independently suggest the UN umbrella as a potential facilitating vehicle for coordination. Bangladesh wants funds from this interaction, and India has a distinct preference for this multilateral engagement.

The Bangladesh Navy and Coast Guard seek more hardware, such as maritime patrol aircraft, helicopters, and submarines. There is a feeling among Bangladeshi respondents that Dhaka does not expect to receive hardware from India too easily. Consequently, the United States could potentially contribute EDA to Bangladesh, while India could refit it, as suggested by an Indian scholar. Bangladeshi officers acknowledge India's help with training, so if the United States and India were to coordinate on capacity-building in Bangladesh, the Indian Navy could assist with refitting ships as well as training Bangladesh Navy and Coast Guard officers.

HA/DR is an obvious functional area worthy of U.S.-India coordination in Bangladesh. A second area of such coordination on Bangladesh could lie in responses to smuggling and IUU fishing. A former Indian Navy respondent does not believe Bangladesh's waters to be particularly unsafe; this is in stark contrast to Bangladeshi officers' views. This reveals an area of low-hanging fruit, where India may feel it has nothing to lose by coordinating with the United States on these benign maritime security efforts. If India is indeed reluctant to donate assets to Bangladesh, the Indian Navy could be willing to assist in training on responses to trafficking and IUU fishing.

Another vehicle through which the United States and India could coordinate in Bangladesh is the Coastal Crisis Management Center (CCMC). CCMCs are funded by the United States, but operated by Bangladesh. They will give the Bangladesh Ministry of Home, Navy, and Coast Guard forward awareness, command and control, as well as provide cyclone shelters in coastal and riverine areas from the Indian to Burmese borders. Bangladesh could invite India to have a role in the CCMCs and expand this capability because they are quite basic in

setup. Furthermore, conducting joint SAR with the U.S. and Indian navies and coast guards in maritime border areas would be highly desired by Bangladeshi officers who were interviewed. One engagement opportunity could be for officers of the Bangladeshi, Indian, and U.S. navies and coast guards to discuss a post-cyclone scenario that could be exercised during table-top games. Engagements in which participants see how each navy and coast guard plans for and responds to disasters using coordinated SAR operations in affected areas could be valuable in building long-term coordination.

Bangladesh has a limited number of naval interactions with India – especially compared to India's interactions with Maldives, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, and Seychelles; however, the U.S.-Bangladesh relationship is largely considered to be the United States' strongest defense relationship in South Asia. The new U.S.-Bangladesh security dialogue was launched in April 2012 by Assistant Secretary of State Andrew Shapiro. Issues discussed included HA/DR, CT, maritime security, and UN peacekeeping operations. Secretary Clinton followed up this engagement with a visit to Dhaka in May 2012 to sign a joint declaration on Bangladesh-U.S. Partnership Dialogue with Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dipu Moni. Given India's difficulty in securing the Teesta water sharing agreement with Bangladesh and receiving transit rights from Bangladesh in return, India may feel some pressure to work with its neighbor on other areas, especially in light of swiftly advancing U.S.-Bangladeshi defense relations.

Certainly, one overarching factor to consider is the late 2013 or early 2014 elections in Bangladesh that may bring back the leadership of the Bangladesh National Party (BNP), which is seen as being anti-India. Consequently, coordination may be difficult if the Awami League leadership loses office – the possibility of which is unclear. In the meantime, New Delhi is cultivating ties with BNP chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia by inviting her to visit India in November 2012 in what was regarded as a successful trip for both sides.

Sri Lanka

As with the case of Bangladesh, but somewhat conversely, U.S. and Indian relations with Sri Lanka travel in opposing directions. U.S. defense policy toward Sri Lanka continues to be highly restricted

following the 2007 cutoff of FMF aid due to allegations of human rights abuses by the military during its war against the LTTE. The prospects for increased U.S.-Sri Lankan military engagement appear mixed, especially following the March 2012 UNHRC resolution sponsored by the United States and other Western countries. However, the United States could make the case to India that this legislative impediment necessitates coordination on Sri Lanka.

In fact, while Sri Lanka's defense relations with the United States have been in decline, the island nation's ties to its northern neighbor have been on the rise since the end of the war. A review of Indian MOD reports since 2007 reveals a significant increase in the number of naval interactions between India and Sri Lanka since the war's end in 2009. Interestingly, some media reports discussed the 2011 resumption of the SLINEX exercise series that began in 2005. The reports assumed that the exercise had been suspended due to pressure from India's Tamil Nadu state during the culmination of the war. However, in interviews, naval officers from India and Sri Lanka concur that tactical realities – rather than political pressures – dictated the pause of the annual exercise. Due to the demands of the fight against LTTE insurgents, the Sri Lanka Navy could not spare the ships that would have been required to take part in the SLINEX exercise.

Threats expressed by Sri Lankan officials and officers

Secretary of Defence Gotabaya Rajapaksa's Keynote Address at the 2011 Galle Dialogue is considered the authoritative statement on Sri Lanka's maritime threats.[198] Piracy is cited, as is the need to improve MDA due to potential terrorist threats. In addition, as seen in Bangladeshi interviews, trafficking – of arms, humans, and drugs – is detailed as a major threat affecting Sri Lanka and the IO, as are IUU fishing and marine pollution. In fact, a Sri Lankan Coast Guard officer interviewed showed us the 2009 Act of the Department of the Coast Guard, in which the first responsibility listed is "to prevent

[198] Secretary of Defence Gotabaya Rajapaksa, "Keynote Address," to the Galle Dialogue, Galle, Sri Lanka, Nov. 14, 2011.

illegal fishing in the coastal areas of Sri Lanka."[199] Smuggling is prioritized second, followed by piracy. Unlike in Bangladesh, HA/DR is not discussed as a threat in Rajapaksa's speech. Interviews of Sri Lankan government officials and military officers also reflect the salience of issues such as piracy, smuggling, and IUU fishing.

Attitudes toward U.S.-India coordination in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka seeks coordination with the United States in the IO, not only to get beyond troubled bilateral relations, but also due to a conflicted relationship with India. Even though their bilateral security relations deepened through the start of a defense dialogue (which resulted in the SLINEX II exercise in 2011), Sri Lankan respondents hold a baseline level of distrust toward India. Many Sri Lankan government and military officials interviewed cite early Indian support of the LTTE, point to India's fishing interests in Sri Lanka's waters, and foresee the limits of cooperation due to India's Tamil Nadu state politics. On the other hand, it is important to note that interview respondents were willing to acknowledge that Colombo had received important, non-lethal support from India during the final stage of the war, that it defers to New Delhi on sensitive matters such as China, and that it understands India's UNHRC vote against Sri Lanka as being due to pressure from Tamil Nadu. Former U.S. ambassador to Sri Lanka and Maldives Teresita Schaffer contextualizes this sentiment by writing that the smaller states in South Asia, including Sri Lanka, "have all had ups and downs coexisting with India, and share the ambivalence that smaller neighbors frequently have toward much larger ones."[200] A retired Sri Lanka Navy officer summarizes this tension: "We can't keep India at bay, but can't let it get too close."

Still, it is important for Washington to understand that the United States is not welcome in all multilateral IO engagements. An example

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[199] Parliament of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, "Department of the Coast Guard, Act, No. 41 of 2009," Aug. 6, 2009, 2.

[200] Teresita C. Schaffer, "India Next Door, China Over the Horizon: The View from South Asia," in *Strategic Asia 2011–12: Asia Responds to Its Rising Powers—China and India*, Ashley J. Tellis, Travis Tanner, and Jessica Keough, eds. (Seattle and Washington, D.C.: The National Bureau of Asian Research, 2011), 299.

is the new trilateral dialogue on maritime security that emerged after the November 2011 SAARC summit between Sri Lanka, India, and Maldives. It would not be a good idea for the United States to try to insert itself into this trilateral, especially because all parties see this dialogue – which resulted in Sri Lanka's first-time participation in the two decades-old India-Maldives DOSTI coast guard exercise in April 2012 – as originating from the SAARC forum. A Sri Lankan official states that "the U.S. would complicate this grouping." Such language is similar to that of the Indians who claim that the United States would "overwhelm" coordination in the IO. In forums such as this, the United States should consider being content to let India pursue coordination on its own, as it reflects the burden-sharing that the United States ultimately seeks in the IO.

Recommendations for pursuing U.S.-India coordination in Sri Lanka

The pause in U.S.-Sri Lankan defense relations may only be momentary. In the mid to long term, Washington may determine that the government of President Mahinda Rajapaksa is actively pursuing the post-war reconciliation process and may lift FMF aid restrictions, or may do so after Rajapaksa leaves office, especially if the opposition party wins. In fact, on the same day as the UNHRC vote on the U.S.-sponsored resolution, a State Department amendment to the International Traffic in Arms Regulations became effective, allowing assistance to Sri Lanka for maritime and aerial surveillance.[201] This latter move signals that bilateral relations could improve quickly from the U.S. side, as they did with Burma, if the Sri Lankan government gives the appearance of making real progress toward reconciliation.

Sri Lanka might welcome U.S.-India cooperation with Colombo in maritime safety and security. The Sri Lanka Navy believes it has much CT experience to impart to other interested navies, especially as it relates to counterpiracy possibilities.[202] Smuggling in the IO is an area of particular concern to Sri Lankan leadership. Sri Lankan

[201] Jon Grevatt, "U.S. eases military embargo on Sri Lanka," *Jane's Defence Industry*, Mar. 26, 2012.

[202] Please see Appendix C for an in-depth discussion on this point.

government respondents mention smuggling as an area where all three countries can work together. Some note the facilitating role that Sri Lanka's Galle Dialogue can play, given India's support of this forum and the U.S. attendance of DASD for South and Southeast Asia Robert Scher in 2011.

As in Maldives, the pursuit of improved radar systems in Sri Lanka could be a potential area of MDA coordination between the United States and India, if desired by Colombo. However, one caveat is that New Delhi may be sensitive regarding radars in the northern part of Sri Lanka, given its proximity to India. In the 1980s, New Delhi feared the potential for increased U.S. naval presence in northern Sri Lanka, especially in Trincomalee. In the present day, the United States could focus on MDA capacity-building in the southern part of the country – incidentally, where Chinese enterprises are developing port infrastructure in Hambantota – while India coordinates in the north.

Another vehicle of coordination involves UNPKOs with Sri Lanka, India, and the United States. The UNPKO Training Center in southern Sri Lanka could be used for this endeavor. Although the training center focuses on the Sri Lanka Army, Sri Lanka Navy personnel are deployed under the UN flag.[203] A maritime collaboration opportunity could be explored, especially if Bangladesh and India – which are both active UNPKO participants – are invited to attend.[204] This suggestion is similar to those of some Indian and Bangladeshi respondents regarding the use of UNPKOs as a coordination vehicle (e.g., two Bangladesh Navy ships deployed to the UN Interim Force in Lebanon).

Until Colombo convinces critics that it is addressing post-war accountability concerns, Washington will not be willing to deepen cooperation. This current situation allows the United States to request coordination assistance from India through the latter's comparative advantage in defense cooperation with Sri Lanka. In

[203] Sri Lanka Air Force, "SLAF Troops for Haiti," Dec. 19, 2011 http://www.airforce.lk/news.php?news=945.

[204] CNA interview of retired senior Sri Lankan government official, 2012.

return, the United States could even offer to coordinate in Bangladesh due to its stronger relations than India has.

Maldives

Maldivian President Mohamed Nasheed's tumultuous departure from office in February 2012 called into question the internal stability of the country, but the situation appears to have normalized. The ascension of President Mohamed Waheed to the presidency has not derailed Nasheed's quest for early elections, but India has accepted Waheed's legitimacy.

Regardless of these leadership issues, there is little doubt that the MNDF will continue to rely on capacity-building efforts from both the United States and India. Maldives is free of the political baggage from West Bengal and Tamil Nadu that hampers New Delhi's policies toward Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Also, because the U.S. and Indian navies are making similar efforts in Maldives, this island nation may represent the greatest potential for coordination.

Threats expressed by Maldivian officials and officers

Piracy is the most immediate threat facing the MNDF. In March 2012, Somali pirates hijacked a vessel in Maldivian territorial waters. Pirates currently reside on an MNDF-run island and are considered humanitarian refugees, after having given up their arms. The Maldivian government finds it burdensome to pay the ongoing costs associated with housing and feeding the pirates, due to the country's limited resources and balance-of-payment problems.

In terms of long-term threats, terrorism is a greater threat to Maldives than piracy, despite recent media attention to piracy in Maldivian waters. Piracy incidents are seen as decreasing due to ship escorts. Furthermore, pirates' interests are described as being in the deep sea, with pirates not interested in coming ashore onto Maldivian soil. On the other hand, our interviewees in Maldives emphasize the country's dependence on tourism and its resultant vulnerability to terrorism. There is a strong feeling that the detonation of improvised explosive devices could have a significant impact on tourism. Estimates on the U.S. Department of State's website are that tourism and related

services constitute 30 percent of Maldives' GDP,[205] although Maldivian officials interviewed state that the amount is actually much higher.

Attitudes toward U.S.-India coordination in Maldives

Maldives appears favorable to the idea of U.S.-India coordination. Stating his country's limited resources, an MNDF respondent acknowledges a need for U.S. and Indian security assistance, saying: "We take whatever we get; that's the way we work." However, discussions with Maldivian maritime security professionals suggest a need for deconfliction in assistance given by both countries, because they do not have the capacity to survey all the differences between various technologies. The United States and India could do this before providing Maldives with capabilities. Meanwhile, it seems India alone does not currently have the ability to address the multitude of challenges in the Indian Ocean. For example, Maldivian respondents point to difficulties in working with the Indian government when seeking security assistance, such as bureaucratic delays.

Of the four areas of potential U.S.-India coordination we investigated in Maldives, MDA holds the most potential. MNDF respondents stated that their primary interest is in achieving MDA because "everything follows after this" such as counterpiracy and CT. Officers explain that their waters are difficult to patrol, with the MNDF having only six vessels with which to cover the nearly 1 million square kilometers of Maldives' EEZ.

Before we went to South Asia, U.S. defense experts suggested that there might be overlaps of Indian and U.S. security assistance to Maldives. Even before we asked Maldivian respondents whether they thought that U.S. and Indian security assistance efforts were duplicative, they volunteered that they believe the United States and India could deconflict their efforts before providing equipment to maximize the benefit to their country. Emphasizing the importance of U.S.-India coordination, they point to the installation of coastal radar systems by both countries. While an MNDF official who was

[205] U.S. Department of State, Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, "Background Note: Maldives," Mar. 29, 2012.

interviewed does not believe that the radar system "technically" amounts to a duplication, this example illustrates an opportunity for coordination.

Despite the devastation inflicted on Maldives by the 2004 tsunami, HA/DR is curiously not seen as a top area of interest for U.S.-India coordination.[206] This is in stark contrast to Bangladesh, for example, which did not bear the brunt of the tsunami but receives much more frequent weather-related damage from cyclones. Although HA/DR is not cited by Maldivians as an area that begs for U.S.-India coordination, Maldives suffers from a looming crisis due to rising sea levels that could make its entire population environmental refugees.

Recommendations for pursuing U.S.-India coordination in Maldives

Of the three South Asian countries analyzed in this study, the greatest potential for coordination lies in the Maldives: the United States and India are making similar efforts there, and India has no neighboring state politics. However, Washington may wish to remember that there is some Indian reluctance to coordinate with the United States even in Maldives. Of all the smaller IO countries, India sees Maldives as among its closest maritime relationships. Furthermore, the United States has historically supported Indian efforts to handle trouble in Maldives, such as during the attempted coup in 1988 of former President Maumoon Abdul Gayoom.[207] In early 2012, the United States was also content to let India manage the situation during political turmoil following President Nasheed's resignation.

In spite of India's aversion to a U.S. role in its "extended neighborhood,"[208] an opportunity for U.S.-India coordination still exists, particularly in the area of MDA. Both the United States and India have radars that they are installing for Maldives. This situation presents an opportunity for tangible coordination, given that the U.S. program is already resourced and that all the radar information can

[206] CNA interview of Maldivian officials, 2012.

[207] CNA interview of Maldivian government official, 2012.

[208] C. Bryson Hull, "Cold War in the Tropics: China, India Vie for Maldives," *Reuters India*, Nov. 16, 2011.

be shared. The United States would just need to discuss with the Indians whether they could put their systems in locations different from where the U.S. equipment is and widen the scope of MDA.

In order to convince India of the benefits of coordination, the United States may wish to emphasize that India alone cannot adequately satisfy the MNDF's needs regarding maritime threats. India is beginning to assume a larger role, such as in the new trilateral dialogue on maritime security with Maldives and Sri Lanka. One could argue that through this engagement – which in April 2012 resulted in Sri Lanka's first-time participation in the two decades-old India-Maldives DOSTI exercise – India is pursuing the type of burden-sharing that the United States seeks in the IO. However, Maldivian respondents, while clearly grateful for these capacity-building efforts, acknowledge that India alone does not presently have enough capacity to address all of their IO security needs.

Like Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, Maldives does not want to be put in the middle of any tensions between the United States, India, or China. MNDF officers emphasize the importance of the United States fostering "trust" with India if the former pursues coordination with the latter. This recurring theme echoes the frequent mention of the term "transparency" during our interviews of Indians on this issue. Maldivian respondents point to "mistrust" they have witnessed in the past regarding U.S.-India relations. Instead, measures to promote trust can be pursued, thereby reducing Indian fears about its backyard and improving the chances for coordination in Maldives.

Conclusions and recommendations

We assess that U.S. coordination with India on the provision of security assistance and capacity-building in the IO would be difficult in the short term, if sought by the United States. However, it is possible to work around the obstacles and gradually pursue burden-sharing with India in the IO over the long term.

The conclusions and recommendations that follow discuss how the United States could proceed toward this goal of coordination. We came to these determinations by analyzing interview data with U.S., Indian, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, and Maldivian respondents; trends in security assistance and cooperation; and historical and contemporary security relations between all countries.[209] Concluding this chapter are some wildcard variables that could affect the current equation and force the United States to recalibrate a potential approach to coordinating with India in the IO.

Conclusions

Timing matters

U.S. coordination with India in the IO will happen over time. By simply continuing exercises, defense trade, and other activities with the Indians, the United States will eventually advance bilateral naval relations. A consensus exists among Indians interviewed that this will occur, and multilateral coordination is a logical next step. Many Indians note how intensified relations with the United States only began less than ten years ago, after multiple decades of strained relations. Even those who are critical of U.S. defense ties or skeptical of coordination in the IO are optimistic about the direction of the relationship and offer suggestions. They insist that coordination will come with time, and that the United States must be patient.

[209] For recommendations on U.S.-India coordination specific to each South Asian littoral country analyzed (Bangladesh, Maldives, and Sri Lanka), please see the end of each country analysis in the previous chapter.

Some Americans who see the full potential of U.S.-Indian defense ties seek to advance engagement with India at a faster rate. Many were discouraged by the unfavorable outcome for the United States in India's Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft (MMRCA) competition. However, such disappointments are inevitable in any bilateral relationship, and U.S. officials working on India will find frustration especially if they seek coordination with India at a rate that is faster than India's slower bureaucratic pace and lower capacity can absorb. In fact, India faces not only requests for engagement from the United States, but from other countries as well. Maintaining current efforts will entrench relations with India and benefit American interests with minimal additional effort and cost, thus serving U.S. needs in an era of constrained budget resources.

Assumptions matter

When interviewed about the idea of burden-sharing, Indian respondents bring with them a certain set of assumptions when envisioning IO security coordination with the United States. For example, the Indian Navy's interactions with the U.S. Navy are valued for their high-end nature. In contrast, India sees its work with low-end navies in the IO much differently. Through exercises such as MILAN, the Indian Navy engages with mostly smaller navies and coast guards.

Likely due to this difference in perceptions, Indian respondents have certain assumptions about what burden-sharing with the United States would entail in the IO. One is that the United States would overwhelm the smaller IO countries because the U.S. Navy has large ships and other South Asian countries do not. This indicates an assumption on the part of Indians that navy-to-navy security cooperation necessarily involves capital ships—as is the case in the MALABAR exercise. For its part, the U.S. Navy has a vast array of security cooperation tools, ranging from mobile training teams (MTTs), to information exchanges that need not include ships at all. Thus, if burden-sharing is to be pursued, U.S. interlocutors should be very clear to Indian counterparts about what they propose.

Geography matters

The area discussed is in India's backyard, and India would understandably be wary at first of the hint of an increased U.S. role. In addition to India's geographical position in the IO, the reasons for

this unease date back to difficult bilateral relations during the Cold War and U.S. relations with Pakistan. Even after the Cold War, India incurred sanctions from the United States following the 1998 nuclear test and fears the potential for this to occur again. The logic of coordination with a rising democratic power in the Indian Ocean appears natural to U.S. policymakers, but the benefit of coordinating with the United States is not so evident to their Indian counterparts with long memories. Given this history and sensitivities, some Indian respondents explain that the idea of security burden-sharing in the IO with the United States should strike U.S. officials how a Chinese proposal for joint U.S.-China patrols in the Caribbean may strike the United States. In essence, the United States should be transparent if it wishes to coordinate with India in the IO to avoid the potential for misunderstandings.

Furthermore, concerning Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, Indian foreign policy is often influenced by the testy regional politics in the Indian states bordering those countries. Politics in West Bengal state adjacent to Bangladesh and in Tamil Nadu state north of Sri Lanka often affect New Delhi's foreign policy efforts regarding these IO countries. But the outer IO is a critical part of India's conception of the region and is relatively non-controversial to Indian policymakers. Coordination in Seychelles, for example, may represent the best location for U.S.-Indian burden-sharing in the IO. (For more on the subject of Seychelles and Mauritius, see appendix B.)

Benefits to recipient countries matter

Security cooperation should ultimately benefit the recipients. It should not only be a prop for the purpose of improving U.S.-India coordination. The smaller South Asian littoral countries — Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Maldives — would certainly be important in a U.S.-India burden-sharing endeavor. As developing countries, they can sometimes feel relegated to secondary status; thus, they could perceive the idea of the United States and India coordinating on helping them as condescending. However, they have a key role to play in facilitating U.S.-India coordination and in many ways could ultimately determine what is possible regarding U.S.-India security burden-sharing in the IO. (For detailed, country-specific recommendations for Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives, see the previous chapter.)

Recommendations in the short term

Use Track II dialogues

These forums are vital for expanding candid discussion on complex issues, such as coordination in the IO. Organizations such as APCSS, CNA, and NPS organize workshops to promote U.S.-India dialogue on common maritime interests. These forums can force deeper understanding about contentious issues, especially amid controversy over both countries' regulations and acquisition processes.

Furthermore, the word "transparency" was suggested several times by Indian interviewees when discussing U.S. engagement with their country. National Maritime Fellow Joshy Paul has also written about the importance of "transparency" among military forces in developing a security architecture in the Indian Ocean region.[210] Track II forums could provide an opportunity to explore India's interest in the idea of coordinated U.S. -India security cooperation in India's near abroad.

Donate excess hardware, while India refurbishes and provides training to IO countries

The United States has an asset for coordination in its EDA program. EDA is typically given to countries on an "as is" basis, and recipients must pay to refurbish and repair the item. The U.S. Navy could provide its excess defense hardware to a smaller IO country. In return, the Indian Navy could take the lead in refurbishing and repairing this equipment. We found strong support for this idea in interviews with Indians, who liked the coordinated nature of this approach albeit not collaborative interaction. India could also provide training on this equipment due to its feeling that smaller IO countries are more comfortable training with it. For example, Bangladesh is eager to receive a U.S. Coast Guard cutter, illustrating the potential for India to refurbish and repair this ship when the time comes.

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[210] Joshy M. Paul, "Emerging Security Architecture in the Indian Ocean Region: Policy Options for India," *Maritime Affairs 7,* no. 1 (Summer 2011), National Maritime Foundation, 44.

The U.S. Navy International Programs Office will need to make these determinations, but the potential for high-technology transfer should not be a major concern because most EDA items are low to medium technologies which do not carry proliferation threats.[211] The bottom line is that this provides a way for both countries to coordinate on capacity-building in the IO.

Coordinate on Burma

Interestingly, Burma is part of the Indian conception of possible U.S. coordination in the Indian Ocean. In the U.S. government's bureaucratic organization, Burma is not part of the grouping of South Asian countries.[212] U.S.-India coordination on Burma was suggested with India taking the lead because "it's our backyard." Many Indian respondents interviewed suggested that the United States provide EDA to the Burmese Navy, the *Tatmadaw Yay*. The Burmese Navy has often requested hardware from the Indian Navy and has received equipment including aircraft, simulators, and submarine training. Based on our interviews, we believe it is likely that India would take the lead in Burma regarding proposed coordination by the United States. The potential for U.S.-Indian convergence should be monitored as the United States' new Burma policy unfolds and the Indian government continues its long-standing policy of developing relations with its eastern neighbor.

Help combat trafficking, IUU fishing, and marine pollution

The United States should consider coordinating with India on capacity-building in the areas of counterpiracy, HA/DR, MDA, and CT. These were all identified as areas of cooperation by the U.S. Defense Policy Group in 2011. Appendix C goes into detail about working together in these four areas. However, interviews in the

[211] U.S. Navy International Programs Office, "Excess Defense Articles: Enhancing Interoperability and Building Relationships," http://www.nipo.navy.mil/ABOUT/security-assistance/Foreign-Military-Sales/excess-defense-articles.

[212] That Burma is considered when Indian respondents are asked about coordinating on Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives is of note because there is a BSM bureau in the MEA, which handles policy toward Myanmar, which is known as Burma in the U.S. government.

smaller IO countries reveal that they need assistance on more mundane but still pressing problems, such as smuggling (of humans, weapons, and drugs), IUU fishing, and marine pollution, which are typically seen as coast guard missions. In coordination with the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Navy may be able to achieve some short-term success by working with the Indian Navy and Coast Guard to address some of these lower-profile issues, which New Delhi may find more palatable politically. U.S. efforts with India and Maldives on MDA contribute in this area; however, additional engagement on these issues could be an opportunity to pursue burden-sharing with India. Examples of such engagement could include subject matter expert exchanges and table-top exercises.

Recommendations in the long term

Recognize the upside to India's need to lead in its backyard

India's independence and position in the IO may carry benefits, not only obstacles, for the United States. For example, when unrest strikes the region, India can step in and help address the situation. This occurred most recently during the February 2012 political unrest in Maldives: Indian Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai was dispatched as the situation degraded and persuaded feuding politicians to agree to a national unity government. The United States would not have possessed this kind of influence. Beijing even issued a statement that it welcomes India's political intervention in the Maldives, whereas it would protest a potential one by the United States. India has since continued brokering efforts among Maldivian political parties about details on upcoming elections. In a sense, India is already pursuing the burden-sharing that the United States wishes to achieve in this region.

Understand that U.S. and Indian goals in the IO are not necessarily congruent

This is not to say that U.S. and Indian goals are in opposition, but the United States would be wise to remember that they are not necessarily congruent, especially regarding the smaller IO countries. One could argue that the distinction is that U.S. interests in military-to-military relations in the IO are about increasing capacity-building, while India's interests in military-to-military relations have the goal of

strengthening broader bilateral relations. Given its size relative to its neighbors, India guards a big brother relationship with the smaller countries in the Indian Ocean and can resent the United States inserting itself into those bilateral relationships. In some respects, the United States has been considered to sometimes "outsource"[213] its policy on smaller South Asian countries to India. For instance, U.S. and Indian consultation was followed by Indian military intervention in political turbulence in Sri Lanka and Maldives in 1987 and 1988, respectively. So when the United States hopes to gain membership in Indian-led forums, such as IONS, India is understandably not eager for extraregional powers, such as the United States and China, to join vehicles that highlight India's preeminent resident status in the region.

Adopt a holistic approach to the Indian Ocean

The United States should consider burden-sharing options in the wider IO, and not only South Asia. African littoral countries in the IO came up often in our discussions with Indians and their conceptions of the Indian Ocean. This stands in contrast to the U.S. government's approaches to the Indian Ocean, which is divided across multiple regional bureaus and combatant commands. Former U.S. ambassador Teresita Schaffer suggests that the Indian Ocean should be treated "as a single policy space," citing that "the problem of piracy in the Arabian Sea, the most pressing short-term security threat in South Asia, cannot be divided into chunks that correspond to the different U.S. bureaucratic jurisdictions."[214] In a speech at the 2011 Galle Dialogue, then-DASD for South and Southeast Asia Robert Scher observed:

> Even bureaucratically, we are poorly organized to look at this [Indian Ocean] region as a whole—for example there are no fewer than four State Department Assistant Secretaries who cover the littoral states of this one ocean, and three Combatant Commanders. We must look at our policies, organizations, and our posture in the region to see if it still

[213] Schaffer, op.cit. 300.

[214] Schaffer, op. cit. 309-310.

> serves our interests in the changing environment we see, and we are engaged in these discussions right now.[215]

Interagency relations on South Asia are generally considered to be better in recent years than previously, but the recent NSC review of U.S. interests in the Indian Ocean demonstrates the desire to analyze the Indian Ocean as a holistic entity.[216] Investigating the possibilities for coordinating with India on capacity-building such as in Seychelles is an avenue that the United States could explore for burden-sharing.

Wildcards to track

There are some wildcard variables that could facilitate or inhibit the potential for U.S.-India burden-sharing in the IO. In any case, entrenching the bilateral relationship over time can be a mitigating factor for wildcard events – even if burden-sharing projects need to be put on the back burner for short-term considerations.

2014 Indian central elections – A new Prime Minister in India could inject a very different tone into U.S.-India relations. Prime Minister Singh, who arguably put his leadership on the line in securing the U.S.-India civil nuclear agreement, will likely not seek another term in the central government elections due to be held in 2014. For example, a victory by the Hindu-nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) could theoretically reverse some of the progress made since bilateral relations began to improve nearly a decade ago and impose limitations on the ability of the United States and India to coordinate in the maritime domain. In other words, in 2014 the United States may not realize how far it had come in its security cooperation with India, despite disappointments such as the much-publicized U.S. loss in the Medium Multi-Role Combat Aircraft (MMRCA) competition. Likely U.S.-India relations will continue unaffected despite any potential changes in leadership, but this outcome is not certain and

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[215] Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for South and Southeast Asia Robert M. Scher, "Remarks as Prepared to the Galle Dialogue," Galle, Sri Lanka, Nov. 14, 2011.

[216] Michael J. Green and Andrew Shearer, "Defining U.S. Indian Ocean Strategy," *The Washington Quarterly* 35, no. 2 (2012), Center for Strategic and International Studies, 175-189: 175-176.

should be considered by U.S. policymakers in evaluating the trajectory of bilateral defense relations.

The new Indian CNS – Vice Admiral D.K. Joshi, formerly head of the Western Naval Command, began his term as the new CNS in September 2012. He could be more disposed to high-profile engagement with other navies like some Chiefs of Naval Staff such as Sureesh Mehta who withstood resistance from leftists when expanding MALABAR to a quadrilateral naval exercise. Admiral Joshi may seek to advance U.S.-India coordination for various reasons, such as a desire to modernize the Indian Navy fleet, but it is still early in his tenure to detect his views on this subject.

Political developments in smaller IO countries – Again, elections and political developments may alter the direction of security cooperation in South Asia. Bangladesh's elections, due in late 2013 or early 2014, will either maintain the pro-India leadership of Sheikh Hasina's Awami League or bring back the anti-India Bangladesh National Party (BNP) led by Khaleda Zia. This situation illustrates the potential extremes that may occur in Bangladeshi politics in the next two years. Since Nasheed's February 2012 resignation from the presidency, Maldives' ongoing political instability adds an element of uncertainty to what could be the best option for coordinated U.S.-India capacity-building in the IO. Nasheed, who was seen as pro-India, is not giving up on seeking a return to power, and elections are scheduled to take place later in 2013. Meanwhile, the new Maldivian government's recent cancellation of an Indian company's contract to develop its airport has soured bilateral relations for the moment.

Threat perceptions of China could accelerate potential U.S.-India coordination – The value of coordination with the United States may become more evident to Indian government officials and members of parliament depending on China's actions in the Indian Ocean. The day when the People's Liberation Army (PLA) Navy enters the Indian Ocean in its own aircraft carrier could galvanize the Indian defense establishment beyond the current norm of Chinese capital ships in the IO conducting counterpiracy patrols.

At present, many Indian policymakers remain fearful of the consequences of challenging China, given memories of their 1962 war. However, sentiments could change if China's actions are viewed

as increasingly belligerent. If Beijing displays in the Indian Ocean aggressiveness similar to what has been seen in the South China Sea, or if tensions escalate in the contested Himalayan border regions, Indian politicians who have been reluctant to partner too closely with the United States may become more willing to do so. By working with the United States in the IO, India would demonstrate to China growing navy-to-navy cooperation. Consequently, Washington may see greater receptivity from New Delhi to efforts to engage in burden-sharing in the smaller IO countries.

Appendix A: Interview respondents' organizations

Note: Respondents' opinions do not represent the views of their organizations

United States

- Department of Defense
- Department of State
- Think tanks in Washington, D.C. (Brookings Institution, Carnegie, etc.)

India

- Indian Integrated Defence Staff
- Indian Navy
- Indian Embassy in Washington, D.C.
- Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA)
- National Maritime Foundation (NMF)
- Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies (IPCS)
- Observer Research Foundation (ORF)

Bangladesh

- Bangladesh Navy
- Bangladesh Coast Guard
- Bangladesh High Commission to India
- Bangladesh Embassy in Washington, D.C.
- Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS)
- Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI)

Sri Lanka

- Sri Lanka Navy
- Sri Lanka Coast Guard
- Sri Lanka Ministry of Defence
- Sri Lanka Ministry of External Affairs
- Sri Lanka High Commission to India
- Sri Lanka Embassy in Washington, D.C.

- Regional Centre for Strategic Studies (RCSS)

Maldives

- Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF)
- Maldives Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Maldives High Commission to India
- Maldives Embassy in New York City

Appendix B: Analysis of Mauritius and Seychelles

While this study's core focus was in South Asian littoral countries, we will briefly analyze possibilities for U.S.-Indian coordination regarding Mauritius and Seychelles.

Mauritius

Seychelles and Mauritius are a critical part of India's conception of the Indian Ocean. India might find it easier to tolerate coordinating with the United States on these countries than on the South Asian countries of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives. Essentially, geography matters. An Indian scholar we interviewed states that the outer IO is non-controversial – in contrast to the testy regional politics that India has in states neighboring Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. He believes support for burden-sharing will be greater in Seychelles and Mauritius because this concept is free from regional tensions and politics in the "neighborhood." Another Indian scholar concurs with this assessment, stating that the MEA carries out foreign policy "outside the neighborhood" whereas inside it, state politics ultimately dictate foreign policy outcomes.

Table 12. Indian Navy's interactions with Mauritius, 2007-2011

Mauritius' visits to India
None

India's visits to Mauritius
OPV order, 2011-14
Anti-Piracy Ops, 2011-12
Survey, 2-3/11
Anti-Piracy Ops, 2010-11
Training, 10/10
Survey, 3-5/10
Anti-Piracy Ops, 2009-10
Helo order, 2009-10
Survey, 3/09
Training, 3/09
Training, 9/08
Port call, 5/08
Survey, 1/08
ICG deploy, 8/07
Survey, 3/07

Source: India MOD annual reports

Mauritius does not have a standing army. Because India helped stand up the Mauritius Coast Guard and an Indian Navy officer is deputed to run it, Indian dominion in this country should be acknowledged if the United States were to seek coordination with India there. In fact,

a sizable Indian population with shared cultural and religious ties is resident in Mauritius, but with little of the political baggage associated with potential U.S.-Indian coordination in South Asian countries. In recent years, the Indian Navy's duties in Mauritius have been steady and have consisted mostly of anti-piracy operations, hydrographic survey work, and training (see table 12). In May 2011, Mauritius ordered a new offshore patrol vessel (OPV) to be built in India and delivered by 2014.

Seychelles

There may be even more room for U.S.-India coordination on Seychelles. On one hand, a review of China's Defense White Paper and the U.S. annual report to Congress on China shows that China has not had any military exchanges or naval interactions with Mauritius in recent years, likely due to Mauritius' clear affinity for India. By contrast, Seychelles surprised many observers by its December 2011 invitation to China for a "military presence" in Mahe.[217] The tiny country is eager for counterpiracy assistance and is willing to seek it from any country, including China. Consequently, U.S. coordination here may be attractive to India.

An Indian scholar interviewed observes that China's hydrocarbon shipping is increasing south of the equator, particularly around the Cape of Good Hope and in the Mozambique Channel. One potential option for India could be to interdict Chinese shipping if conflict breaks out in the Himalayas. Regardless of whether the Indian Navy can prevail in such a scenario, interviews in India reveal consensus that China is putting pressure on India in these contested border areas, with Chinese live-fire exercises held as recently as March 2012. Therefore, India may be interested in coordinating on capacity-building in Seychelles, given its few outposts in the southern Indian Ocean. The idea of using the Indian Ocean as an alternative theater to land conflict is how the Indian Navy has traditionally emphasized its value to Indian policymakers. Another Indian scholar who is skeptical about the idea of U.S.-Indian coordination in the South Asian littoral even states the benefit regarding the potential for an

[217] "Seychelles Invites China to Set Up Anti-piracy Presence," AFP, Dec 2, 2011.

emergent Chinese presence in Seychelles. He suggests that the United States could give two ships and that India could train the Seychelles Coast Guard due to their history of this interaction.

On the U.S. side, there seem to be a few ongoing areas where the United States and India could coordinate on Seychelles. For example, the U.S. bases its intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) MQ-9 Reaper drone in Seychelles for counterpiracy support. U.S. Naval Forces Africa (NAVAF) holds the multinational counterpiracy exercise, CUTLASS EXPRESS 2012, to train and exercise maritime interdiction operations teams from Seychelles and Mauritius. For its part, India engages in a multitude of naval cooperation with Seychelles based on a review of MOD annual reports. The Indian Navy conducts anti-piracy operations, hydrographic survey work, and training in Seychelles (see table 13). The Indian Defense Minister visited Seychelles in July 2010, shortly after the Seychellois Chief of Defence Forces, Brigadier Leopald Payet, visited India in April 2010. The Indian government gifted a coast guard ship to Seychelles in 2005, and its High Commissioner formally received the refitted SCGS *Topaz* in April 2009 at the Indian Navy's Eastern Naval Command headquarters in Visakhapatnam. Through some of these separate activities with Seychelles, the United States and India could coordinate in the outer IO.

Table 13. Indian Navy's interactions with Seychelles, 2007-2011

Seychelles visit to India
Ship refit, 4/09

India in Seychelles
Anti-Piracy Ops, 2011-12
Survey, 11/11
Anti-Piracy Ops, 2010-11
Training, 10/10
Anti-Piracy Ops, 2009-10
Port call, 5/08
Survey, 1/08
ICG deploy, 8/07

Source: India MOD annual reports

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Appendix C: Coordinating in discrete functional areas

Humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR)

Of the various functional areas we examined, HA/DR appears to hold the most potential for U.S.-India burden-sharing in the IO over both the short and long terms due to the relatively low political sensitivities involved. The high likelihood of a natural disaster here, as evidenced by the cyclones that have affected Bangladesh and the 2004 tsunami that devastated Sri Lanka, Maldives, and India, necessitates collective action among navies in the region. In Bangladesh, we heard about the potential damage from earthquakes there as well. In Operation Sea Angel and Operation Sea Angel II, the United States provided relief to Bangladeshis who were affected by Cyclone Marian in 1991 and Cyclone Sidr in 2007, respectively. In 2004, the United States responded to the Indian Ocean tsunami's devastation through Operation Unified Assistance. Even leftist Indian politicians who are normally concerned about U.S. imperialism in their neighborhood tend to find this type of engagement palatable.

The need for response to Bangladesh's frequent cyclones appears to offer the best chance for the U.S. and Indian maritime forces to coordinate on a somewhat regular basis. Due to the preponderance of climatic events in the Bay of Bengal, there is a strong interest in U.S.-India coordination on SAR operations with the Bangladesh Navy and Coast Guard.[218] The latter is particularly concerned about its inability to respond in a disaster and get to the high seas due to its lack of ships.

Naval officers and maritime security professionals from Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives all express their desire for HA/DR to mitigate disasters through efforts such as sharing of early warning

[218] CNA interview, 2012.

systems, satellite data, and vulnerability assessments. Retired Naval Intelligence Captain Tim Doorey of the Center for Civil Military Relations at NPS suggests that the U.S. Navy could share its meteorological expertise and weather prediction capabilities with countries in the Bay of Bengal region, an area known for dramatic and dangerous shifts in weather conditions. He points to the supercomputers and weather prediction methodologies that reside at the Fleet Numerical Meteorology and Oceanography Center in Monterey, California. Highly accurate, up-to-date information is transmitted to U.S. Navy ships around the world from Monterey. Most of this data is unclassified and could be shared with countries in the Bay of Bengal region that are plagued by violent shifts in weather patterns. Doorey further states that the U.S. Navy could alert IO navies and coast guards about these shifts, such as through cyclone landfall estimates.[219] This type of information is vital in mitigating the destruction of a natural disaster and in assisting the response to such a disaster. The U.S. Navy could invite the Indian Navy, in addition to other navies, to benefit from this capability.

Contributions by the U.S. and Indian air forces are another possibility for coordination in the IO, due to the inherently maritime nature of their work in this region. Last year, U.S. Pacific Air Forces held an exercise called "Pacific Airlift Rally 2011" in Sri Lanka for the first time in 20 years. It focused on airlift interoperability and multilateral cooperation between Indo-Pacific nations during HA/DR missions. Additional table-top exercises included India, Bangladesh, and Maldives. Coordination could extend to these countries' air components.

As a proud and growing navy, the Indian Navy does not only wish to be relegated to assisting with humanitarian operations led by the U.S. Navy as its capabilities grow. This United States would be wise to bear this sentiment in mind as it approaches India for ways in which to coordinate. Regardless, the Indian Navy is proud in having coordinated with the United States on HA/DR after the 2004 tsunami. While it can be argued that this interaction did not constitute "coordination" (due to its low degree of interoperability,

[219] CNA interview of Tim Doorey of the Center for Civil Military Relations at NPS, Jan. 2012.

according to some interviewed in the recipient, smaller IO countries), Indian respondents proudly describe their role as first-responders and then their high-level of coordination with the U.S. Navy once its assets reached the region.

Recalling this successful 2004 tsunami coordination, India continues to see the United States as a natural partner in conducting HA/DR. When we asked about areas that are ripe for U.S.-India cooperation in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives, Indians interviewed agree that HA/DR would be the easiest on which to coordinate. In anticipation of the next several disasters, which are inevitable in the Bay of Bengal, the United States could encourage higher degrees of coordinated operations with India in HA/DR compared with 2004 given the increasing engagement and exercises between the two navies in the past decade.

Counterpiracy

India has participated in counterpiracy operations in the Gulf of Aden since 2008. In one sense, India is already engaging in burden-sharing in the IO, as the United States wants it to do. Held to a more demanding standard, however, India and the United States are not coordinating on these activities. For example, the United States participates in CTF-151, which India refuses to join (partially due to Pakistan's membership and periodic leadership). For their part, Indians claim their country does not participate because CTF-151 is not under a UN mandate. The role of Pakistan in U.S. defense policy will invariably continue to complicate U.S. efforts to partner with India; however, what about the potential for the United States and India to coordinate on counterpiracy efforts for smaller IO states? The picture is mixed.

The United States sees counterpiracy as low-hanging fruit for cooperation with India. Furthermore, the smaller countries in the IO would welcome such engagements. Regarding smaller IO countries, India has recently launched a trilateral maritime security dialogue with Sri Lanka and Maldives in the aftermath of the November 2011 SAARC summit. Maldives suggested the entity, which meets at the national security advisor (NSA) level to discuss maritime security issues including piracy, information sharing, and disaster management. The grouping met multiple times between November

2011 and April 2012. The meetings culminated in a trilateral coast guard exercise—the DOSTI exercise, which for the previous 20 years had been a bilateral exercise between India and Maldives and now, for the first time, included the Sri Lanka Navy as well. The United States is supportive of this indigenous effort in the region; but if it hopes that eventually the United States could participate, India is not likely to welcome it in IO initiatives such as DOSTI, IONS, and MILAN. In fact, an Indian government official was quoted in the media, emphasizing the exclusive nature of the trilateral dialogue among the three countries: "India, Maldives, and Sri Lanka have such dialogue bilaterally. Now, we are bringing together the synergies to make it a trilateral format [for the] safety, security and economic well-being of the three countries."[220] This grouping is seen by these countries as a uniquely SAARC-forum due to its origins after the recent summit.[221] Consequently, the United States may have to wait for coordination on counterpiracy at least regarding this specific forum.

Nevertheless, the potential for the United States to partner on counterpiracy with India persists. Even an Indian scholar who is not favorable to the idea of U.S.-India coordination because he thinks the United States "tends to overwhelm the situation" could still point to the potential that counterpiracy holds for coordination. The ongoing threat of piracy offers a way for the Indian and U.S. navies to work together in the long term. Many interviews with Indians find concurrence with this view.

In terms of short- to medium-term options for counterpiracy coordination, Maldives, Sri Lanka, and even Bangladesh would be eager to participate in a potential U.S.-India effort. Coordination with Sri Lanka and Maldives could entail doing periodic, limited joint counterpiracy patrolling in the western Indian Ocean. Bangladesh would likely be eager to participate in such coordination, although there may be sensitivity in using the word "piracy" to characterize sea robbery on its shores as explained earlier. A former U.S. defense official in the region believes in these types of counterpiracy

[220] Jayanth Jacob, "India Begins Trilateral Talks to Check China," *Hindustan Times*, Dec. 20, 2011.

[221] CNA interviews of Indian, Sri Lankan, and Maldivian officials, 2012.

engagements with smaller IO countries and suggesting they may represent an opportunity for coordination.[222] For instance, the United States could nimbly assist with logistics support and command and control and not necessarily large ships, thereby limiting the potential to be seen as overwhelming smaller IO countries.

More broadly, the U.S. Navy could be nimble in a coordinated capacity-building approach and contribute beyond ships. It could suggest coordinated capacity-building in these countries through tools such as MTTs and EDA, and draw on years of cooperation gained with the Indian Navy through MALABAR. Andrew Winner of the Naval War College suggests that the U.S. Navy hold a workshop on counterpiracy experiences and invite India in addition to other countries. By hearing other navies' experiences, Indian naval officers and civilian policymakers can gain a better understanding of how flexible the coalition framework is. He believes their aversion to multilateral groupings such as CTF-151 is rooted not only in a non-alignment tradition but also in a lack of practical understanding about how easy it would be for India to pull out of such a coalition, or otherwise quickly modify its engagement and participation in coalition activities, should it wish to do so.[223]

The Sri Lanka Navy would be eager to participate with the U.S. Navy in counterpiracy, on which it already did with both India and Maldives in the DOSTI exercise for the first time. Sri Lankan officers offered a somewhat intriguing way of linking expertise gained from hard-fought counterterrorism with U.S. needs on counterpiracy. They discussed how Sri Lanka Navy expertise in fast-boats and small boats needs to be applied to the U.S. and other countries' efforts to fight piracy in the Gulf of Aden. So far, these countries have used large ships to combat pirates. However, the use of small boat tactics can better outsmart the more nimble techniques used by pirates, these officers comment. This all represents a nexus of potential U.S.-India coordination not just with Sri Lanka, but also on CT and counterpiracy.

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[222] CNA interview, 2012.

[223] CNA interview with Andrew Winner of the Naval War College, May 2012, Washington, D.C.

Interestingly, a gradual loss of institutional knowledge about these tactics is taking place within the Sri Lanka Navy, as personnel move from their roles and the institution does not appear to have sufficiently documented such techniques for posterity. Despite fighting the war for nearly three decades, the Sri Lanka Navy – and consequently the U.S. Navy – may lose the benefit of CT knowledge gained after years of a hard-fought war. This knowledge may actually be applied to counterpiracy efforts, as well as in the Strait of Hormuz. The United States could partner with India on organizing a workshop in which the Sri Lanka Navy shares these experiences with their counterparts and examines the implications for both counterpiracy and CT operations.

Combating trafficking / IUU fishing / marine pollution

Trafficking of arms, humans, and narcotics, IUU fishing, and marine pollution are areas of coordination that we were not asked to study, but they represent important vehicles for coordination between the United States and India. Throughout interviews in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives, we heard about the desire for help on these challenges. A senior Sri Lankan government official concurred when we asked on which areas could the United States, India, and Sri Lanka work together in a maritime context. Foremost on his list is trafficking – weapons, drugs, and humans. Similarly, Bangladeshi officers suggested working together on these areas in addition to marine pollution. Both Bangladeshi and Sri Lankan officials and experts suggested coordination on IUU fishing. In the short- to medium-term, trafficking, IUU fishing, and marine pollution could be much-desired areas of coordination for the smaller IO countries, and appear to be benign areas on which the United States could engage India.

Maritime domain awareness (MDA)

On the surface, achieving coordination with India on MDA may be seem more difficult than on some other areas due to challenges from both sides. The U.S. insistence that India sign the foundational agreements is an obstacle to MDA coordination. Increasingly, observers are seeing how limited the strategic partnership will be if the United States and India cannot share sensitive information, such as on MDA.

India's MDA appears to be largely limited to its coastal region, although it is expanding its ability in Maldives with radar data planned from each atoll to be fed back to India. Coincidentally, the United States is also installing radars in Maldives in which data is shareable. These parallel developments present an ideal opportunity on which to pursue coordination. Perhaps India and the United States could deconflict these efforts and place their systems in complementary locations.

Counterterrorism (CT)

CT is an area where generally most Indians interviewed are skeptical about the possibilities for U.S.-India coordination. Like MDA, CT is inherently a difficult area on which to coordinate because it entails the need to share information, some of which may be classified. Of the smaller IO countries, Maldives appears the most eager to work on this area due to its fear of terrorism's consequences for its tourism-based economy. On the other hand, Sri Lanka feels it has much CT experience to impart to other countries, including the United States and India.

In India, CT is overseen by India's Home Ministry. India and the United States began CT coordination in May 2011, when DHS Secretary Janet Napolitano and her Indian counterpart, Minister of Home Affairs (MHA) P. Chidambaram, launched the U.S.-India Homeland Security dialogue to increase coordination and information-sharing on counterterrorism efforts. They also met in 2012.

Yet, an incident involving March 2012 testimony by Admiral Willard illustrates the difficulties that Indian leadership has in securing political support for its cooperation with the United States. Admiral Willard's testimony discussed U.S.-Indian CT cooperation through the presence of special forces U.S. Pacific Assist Teams (PATs) stationed in India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Maldives. A political furor erupted, and a public rebuttal was issued by the Indian MEA and MOD that Admiral Willard's statement was "factually incorrect" with regard to the claim in India.[224] Furthermore, the Indian

[224] "No U.S. Special Forces in India," *The Hindu*, Mar. 3, 2012.

Communist Party extended its outrage over the idea that PATs are stationed in the other South Asian countries as well. These criticisms are rooted in fears of loss of national sovereignty against the specter of an imperialist United States in India's backyard.

The United States should still try to maintain its Homeland Security dialogue with India, given the considerable terrorist threats the latter faces. A 2011 Pew Global Attitudes survey shows that, after Pakistan (45 percent), roughly a third of the Indian public believes Lashkar-e-Taiba (19 percent) and the Naxalites (16 percent) pose the greatest threats to India.[225] Due to the nature of these concerns, CT may become a politically acceptable issue on which the United States could pursue coordination in the IO, given the maritime dimension of the 2008 Mumbai attacks. However, the incessant feuding between the central government in New Delhi and the Indian states has prevented a clear, coherent response to terrorism four years after the Mumbai attacks.[226] Consequently, the United States should consider being mindful that internal political dynamics and bureaucratic inefficiencies in India will complicate any U.S. effort to coordinate on CT in the Indian Ocean.

[225] Pew Global Attitudes Project, "U.S. Image in Pakistan Falls No Further Following bin Laden Killing," June 21, 2011.

[226] Gurmeet Kanwal, "India's Counter Terrorism Policies Are Mired in Systemic Weaknesses," Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, May 14, 2012.

Glossary

AIS	Automated Information Systems
BCG	Bangladesh Coast Guard
BCIM	Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Forum for Regional Cooperation
BIMSTEC	Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BN	Bangladesh Navy
BNP	Bangladesh National Party
CCMC	Coastal Crisis Management Center
CHOGM	Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting
CNS	Chief of Naval Staff
CT	counterterrorism
CTFP	Combating Terrorism Fellowship Program
CTF-151	Combined Task Force 151
DASD	Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense
DASS	Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
DOD	Department of Defense
DPG	U.S.-India Defense Policy Group
EDA	Excess Defense Articles
EEZ	exclusive economic zone
E-IMET	Expanded IMET
FMF	Foreign Military Funding
FMS	Foreign Military Sales
GDP	gross domestic product
GPOI	Global Peace Operations Initiative
HA/DR	humanitarian assistance/disaster relief
ICG	Indian Coast Guard
IMET	International Military Education and Training
IO	Indian Ocean
IONS	Indian Ocean Naval Symposium
IPKF	Indian Peace Keeping Force

ITLOS	International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea
IUU	Illegal, unreported, and unregulated
JCC	Joint Consultative Committee
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MDA	maritime domain awareness
MEA	Ministry of External Affairs
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MGC	Mekong–Ganga Cooperation
MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MNDF	Maldives National Defence Force
MOD	Ministry of Defense
MTT	mobile training team
NAM	Non-Aligned Movement
NDU	National Defense University
NESA	Near East and South Asia
NPS	Naval Postgraduate School
NSA	National Security Advisor
PACAF	U.S. Pacific Air Forces
PACOM	U.S. Pacific Command
PAT	U.S. Pacific Assist Team
PME	Professional Military Education
ReCAAP	Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia
RHIB	rigid-hulled inflatable boat
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SAR	search-and-rescue
SCA	Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
SLN	Sri Lanka Navy
SWADS	Special Warfare Diving and Salvage
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNHRC	United Nations Human Rights Council
UNPKO	United Nations Peacekeeping Operations
USARPAC	U.S. Army Pacific

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