

POLICY BRIEF

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Institutionalizing Defense Cooperation Agreements: A Contextual Study of India & Japan’s First 2+2 Foreign & Defense Ministerial Meet

Dr. Monika Chansoria

Defense Cooperation: A Theoretical Understanding

Bilateral defense cooperation agreements (DCAs) have become the most common form of institutionalized defense cooperation. These formal agreements establish broad defense-oriented legal frameworks between signatories, facilitating cooperation in fundamental areas such as defense policy coordination, research and development, joint military exercises, education and training, arms procurement, and exchange of classified information.¹ Nearly a thousand DCAs are currently in force, with potentially wide-ranging impacts on national and international security outcomes. A theory that integrates cooperation theory with insights from social network analysis explains the significance and need for DCAs.² Shifts in the global security environment since the 1980s fueled the demand for DCAs. Ever since, States are known to have used DCAs to modernize their militaries, respond to shared security threats, and establish security umbrellas with like-minded states. However, the DCA proliferation cannot be attributed to the demand factor alone. Nations are required also to overcome dilemmas of mistrust and distributional conflicts.³ Network influences can increase the supply of DCAs by providing governments with information about the trustworthiness of partners and the risk of asymmetric distributions of gains. Two specific network influences that can be identified here are—*preferential attachment and triadic closure*. They show that these influences are largely responsible for the post-Cold War

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1 Brandon J Kinne, “Defense Cooperation Agreements and the Emergence of a Global Security Network,” *International Organization*, vol. 72, no. 4, Fall 2018, pp. 799-837.

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

diffusion of DCAs.⁴ Novel empirical strategies further indicate that these influences derive from the proposed informational mechanism. States use the DCA ties of others to glean information about prospective defense partners, thus endogenously fueling further growth of the global DCA network.⁵

In order to develop a comprehensive theory of DCA formation, the cooperation theory with network-analytic insights need to be synthesized.⁶ States cooperate in order to obtain joint gains.⁷ Exogenous macro-level shifts in the global security environment increased the joint gains of defense cooperation and thus increased the demand for DCAs. These systemwide trends translate into specific dyadic influences. Faced with an increasingly complex security environment, states use DCAs⁸ to:

- Modernize their militaries and improve their defense capacities
- Improve coordinated responses to common security threats, and
- Align themselves with communities of like-minded collaborators

At the dyadic level, demand for DCAs depends on whether potential partners can help one another at meeting these goals. When governments create DCAs, they reveal information about their trustworthiness and their preferred institutional designs. DCAs

involve network influence—i.e., relations between one pair of states affect relations between others. Two specific types of network influence: *preferential attachment*, where highly active states or “hubs” in the network endogenously attract new partners, and *triadic closure*, where states that share DCA ties with the same third parties or “friends of friends” are more likely to cooperate directly.⁹ These network influences are empirically observable reflections of the underlying informational value of the ties of others.¹⁰

While network influences have been documented previously in international relations,¹¹ Brendon Kinne extends those insights by focusing more directly on causal mechanisms and argues that the influence of triadic closure and preferential attachment varies according to the quality of governments’ informational environment, which strongly suggests that network influences indeed depend on an informational mechanism. Mostly, the empirical analysis indicates that, post-Cold War, network influences quickly became the driving force behind DCA proliferation. Out-of-sample predictions show that although exogenous dyadic factors and corresponding shifts in the global security environment were important determinants of defense cooperation, network influences dramatically improve our ability to predict who signs DCAs, and when. Exogenous influences may stimulate demand, but network

4 Ibid.

5 Ibid.

6 For more details see on the subject see, James D. Fearon, “Bargaining, Enforcement, and International Cooperation,” *International Organization*, vol. 52, no. 2, 1998, pp. 269–305; also see, Mark E.J. Newman, “The Structure and Function of Complex Networks,” *SIAM Review*, vol. 45, no. 2, 2003, pp. 167–256; and see, Arthur A. Stein, “Coordination and Collaboration: Regimes in an Anarchic World,” *International Organization*, vol. 36, no. 2, 1982, pp. 299–324, as cited in Kinne, n. 1

7 For additional reading see, Charles Lipson, “International Cooperation in Economic and Security Affairs,” *World Politics*, vol. 37, no. 1, 1984, pp. 1–23.

8 Kinne, n. 1.

9 Ibid., p. 802.

10 For further details see, Danielle F. Jung, and David A. Lake, “Markets, Hierarchies, and Networks: An Agent-Based Organizational Ecology,” *American Journal of Political Science*, vol. 55, no. 4, 2011, pp. 972–90.

influences ensure supply.¹² DCAs emphasize day-to-day interactions in core defense areas, which typically include:

- a) mutual consultation and defense policy coordination
- b) joint exercises, training, and education
- c) coordination in peacekeeping operations
- d) defense-related research and development
- e) defense industrial cooperation
- f) weapons procurement; and
- g) security of classified information

The primary goal of DCAs, then, is to encourage substantive cooperation in the above core areas.¹³

The First India & Japan 2+2 Foreign & Defense Ministerial Set up

Japanese Foreign Affairs Minister Toshimitsu Motegi and Minister of Defense Taro Kono visited India to attend the inaugural meeting of India-Japan Foreign and Defense Ministerial Dialogue (2+2) on November 30, 2019. Upon their calling on the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the latter expressed his satisfaction at the two sides being able to accomplish this goal set by him and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe during the 13th India-Japan Annual Summit held in Japan in October 2018. The India-Japan Foreign and Defense

Ministerial Dialogue (2+2) is expected to further deepen bilateral strategic, security and defense cooperation between India and Japan. The importance of all-round development in India-Japan relations requires for regular high-level exchanges between the two countries. Prime Minister Modi also mentioned that Prime Minister Abe and he attach great importance to strengthen the bilateral partnership between the two countries. India’s relationship with Japan is a key component of New Delhi’s vision for peace, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region, as well as a cornerstone of India’s *Act East Policy*.¹⁴

At the commencement of the first India-Japan 2+2 Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting, the Defense Minister of India, Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister, S. Jaishankar, along with their Japanese counterparts Toshimitsu Motegi and Taro Kono affirmed that this dialogue will further enhance the strategic depth of bilateral security and defense cooperation. Held on November 30, 2019 in New Delhi for the first time, the meeting acknowledged the emerging security challenges, and their commitment to advancing bilateral security cooperation based on the *2008 Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation, and, 2009 Action Plan to advance Security Cooperation*. India and Japan hold a shared vision of a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific region in which

11 For example, Skyler J. Cranmer, Bruce A. Desmarais, and Justin H. Kirkland, “Toward a Network Theory of Alliance Formation,” *International Interactions*, vol. 38, no. 3, 2012, pp. 295–324; also see, Brandon J. Kinne, “Network Dynamics and the Evolution of International Cooperation,” *American Political Science Review*, vol. 107, no. 4, 2013, pp. 766–85; and see, Mark S. Manger, Mark A. Pickup, and Tom A.B. Snijders, “A Hierarchy of Preferences: A Longitudinal Network Analysis Approach to PTA Formation,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 56, no. 5, 2012, pp. 853–78; also see, Zeev Maoz, “Preferential Attachment, Homophily, and the Structure of International Networks, 1816–2003,” *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, vol. 29, no. 3, 2012, pp. 341–69; and see, Michael D. Ward, John S. Ahlquist, and Arturas Rozenas, “Gravity’s Rainbow: A Dynamic Latent Space Model for the World Trade Network,” *Network Science*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2013, pp. 95–118; and see, Camber Warren, “The Geometry of Security: Modeling Interstate Alliances as Evolving Networks,” *Journal of Peace Research*, vol. 47, no. 6, 2010, pp. 697–709.

12 Kinne, n. 1, p. 802.

13 Ibid.

14 For more details see, *Joint Statement: First India-Japan 2+2 Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting*, Indian Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, November 30, 2019.

the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity are ensured, and all countries enjoy freedom of navigation and overflight. Further, strengthening of bilateral cooperation is in mutual interest of both countries that shall concurrently help in furthering the cause of peace, security and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region.¹⁵ The second India-Japan 2+2 Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting is slated to be held in Tokyo.

Indo-Japan Bilateral Defense Cooperation

India and Japan have made considerable progress in deepening bilateral defense cooperation since 2018 by initiating bilateral exercises between all three components of their defense forces. These bilateral exercises between the defense forces shall be held regularly and further expanded, especially the more recent *Dharma Guardian-2019* and the second *Shinyuu Maitri-2019*. Tokyo and New Delhi shall also proceed with coordination for the first India-Japan joint fighter aircraft exercise in Japan. Additionally, there is significant progress made in the negotiations of Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) since the announcement to commence negotiations was made in October 2018. It is desirable for both nations for an early conclusion of the negotiations since the agreement will further contribute to enhancing bilateral defense cooperation.¹⁶

It would not be inappropriate to state that DCAs have evolved as a novel form of defense cooperation. At their core, these agreements establish long-term institutional frameworks for routine bilateral defense relations, including coordination of defense policies, joint military exercises, working groups and committees,

training and educational exchanges, defense-related research and development, and procurement. As frameworks, DCAs reserve specific details of implementation for protocols and implementing legislation.¹⁷ The flexibility implies that DCAs can both improve traditional defense capabilities and address protean non-traditional threats as terrorism, trafficking, piracy, and cyber security. Importantly, DCAs are not alliances. And unlike the forms of defense cooperation that dominated great-power politics during the Cold War, DCAs are typically highly symmetric, mutually committing signatories to a common set of guidelines.¹⁸ In this reference specifically, maritime safety and security and safety is an area of major focus. Ensuring maritime safety in achieving a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific is a long-term goal for both Japan and India. Promoting cooperation in the field of capacity-building in maritime security and Maritime Domain Awareness including through cooperation with other countries figures on the charter for future defense cooperation.

Arguing contextually in the above regard, setting up of an Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) at the Information Management and Analysis Centre (IMAC) facility in Gurugram, by India, in December 2018 is a welcome initiative. The IMAC facility is the single point center linking all the coastal radar chains to generate a seamless real-time picture of the nearly 7,500-km coastline. The IFC-IOR serves as the nodal center for promoting collaborative maritime safety and security towards a peaceful, stable and prosperous Indian Ocean Region.¹⁹ The objective is to enhance maritime domain awareness and coordinate activities through information sharing, cooperation, and expertise

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid.

17 Kinne, n. 1, p. 800.

18 Ibid.

19 As cited in Dinakar Peri, "India Starts Sharing Maritime Data," *The Hindu*, October 6, 2019.

development along with partner nations and agencies. By means of this framework, partner nations and multi-national maritime constructs will engage to develop comprehensive maritime domain awareness and share information on vessels of interest. The intention of this collaborative endeavor shall be to secure the global commons.²⁰

While the information exchange at the IFC-IOR would be undertaken initially by virtual means, using telephone calls, faxes, e-mails and video conferencing over internet, subsequently, to enable better interaction, and quicker analysis of information to provide timely inputs, the IFC-IOR would host Liaison Officers from partner countries. For the same, India is also looking forward to the dispatch of a liaison officer from Japan at the IFC-IOR in the near future. Additionally, towards enhancing capability building, the IFC-IOR would undertake conduct of exercises and training capsules in maritime information collation and sharing.²¹ The IFC tracks and monitors 75,000 – 1.5 lakh shipping vessels in real time round-the-clock. Besides, the IFC is also actively interacting with the maritime community and has already built linkages with 18 countries and 15 multinational and maritime security centers.²²

Moreover, the exchange of information based on the Implementing Arrangement for Deeper Cooperation between the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Indian Navy signed in 2018 has already commenced.²³ India and

Japan find agreement upon the need to further strengthen defense equipment and technology cooperation and need to work productively on discussions during the fifth Joint Working Group on Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation (JWG-DETC). In this context, the progress on cooperative research in the area of Unmanned Ground Vehicle (UGV)/Robotics is welcome.

Joint gains, however, are just one aspect of the story when it comes to understanding defense cooperation agreements generically. Even when the demand for cooperation is high, information asymmetries may limit the supply of cooperative institutions. States often lack credible information about one another's willingness to cooperate.²⁴ Because DCAs involve sensitive national security issues, including access to classified information, coordination of defense policies, and proliferation of sophisticated weapons technologies, they inherently involve issues pertaining trust. States further may lack information about one another's institutional design preferences, such as the preferred scope and precision of formal agreements, which leads to distributional conflicts.²⁵

The Constructivist Concept, Identity, Norms, and Interaction in Foreign Policy

In the case of states that are unsure of the others' trustworthiness or unsure about the types of agreements others are willing to sign, the supply of DCAs will remain low.²⁶ The case

20 "Raksha Mantri Inaugurates Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR)," *Press Release*, Press Information Bureau, Government of India, Ministry of Defense, December 22, 2018.

21 *Ibid.*

22 *The Hindu*, n. 19.

23 *India-Japan Joint Statement*, n. 14.

24 Andrew H. Kydd, *Trust and Mistrust in International Relations*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005; also see, Duncan Snidal, "Coordination Versus Prisoners' Dilemma: Implications for International Cooperation and Regimes," *The American Political Science Review*, vol. 79, no. 4, 1985, pp. 923–42.

25 James D. Morrow, "Modeling the Forms of International Cooperation: Distribution versus Information," *International Organization*, vol. 48, no. 3, 1994, pp. 387–87, as cited in Kinne, n. 1.

26 Kinee, n. 1, p. 802.

of India and Japan stands divergent to this submission. Foreign policy decision-making is an outcome of how individual political leaders bestowed with power perceive and analyze events and how their motivations hold a bearing upon the conclusions they ultimately arrive upon. It is often found that culture, geography, history, ideology, and self-conceptions shape the thought process of a decision maker, forming, what often is referred to as the psycho-socio milieu of decision-making.²⁷

Based on the constructivist concept, wherein identity, norms, and interaction of personalities remain vital components, the equation between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe speaks volumes. The commonality of aiming towards economic development and growth that gets coupled with greater national strength and nationalism can be gauged from Abe's idea and policy of "Japan is back" and Modi's idea of "*Shreshtha Bharat*" (Superior India).²⁸ The systemic conditions have presented a favorable platform for this duo to bring to light, "...dawn of a new era in India-Japan relations". Moreover, as PM Modi stated on an occasion "...[The] India-Japan partnership has been fundamentally transformed and has been strengthened as a 'special strategic and global partnership'... There are no negatives but only opportunities in this relationship which are waiting to be seized."²⁹

Providing further credence to this thought, Modi underlined the significance of India and Japan being liberal democracies, which

provides them with a solid foundation to converge at various levels on the Asian stage. With a shared perspective on the future geopolitical and economic order of Asia, Modi and Abe are often viewed as leaders of a new prospective dawn of an alternative regional Asian dynamic. Personality impact in foreign policy decision-making may not necessarily be exclusive. It hinges on cognitive processes including perceptive reasoning that defines the behavior of nation-states based upon existential constraints of the international system as well as compulsions of domestic political structures. Modi's assurances to Japanese investors that a "red carpet" and not "red tape" would welcome them in India exhibited his intent and resolve to rewrite the rules of doing business in India. In fact, it is the flexibility in the political environs that tends to create variable boundaries in decision-making, more so, in the realm of foreign policy. These systemic conditions have presented a favorable platform for Modi and Abe to envision and operationalize what has been termed as "...the dawn of a new era in India-Japan relations."³⁰

Foundations of Multilateralism

While multilateral organizations and practices have been examined empirically, their sources have not been the subject of much concern in realist and neorealist theory. An important debate in international relations is taking place between proponents of rationalist theory, which is exemplified by neorealism, and proponents of reflectivism, which is closer to

27 For more details see, Harold Hance Sprout, et al., *The Ecological Perspective on Human Affairs, With Special Reference to International Politics*, Princeton Center of International Studies, January 1965.

28 For further reading on the subject see, Monika Chansoria, "India-Japan Relations under Modi and Abe: Prospects and Challenges for a Novel Bilateral Asian Dynamic," *India Foundation Journal*, vol. 7, no. 3, May-June 2019.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid.

institutionalism.³¹ Both groups are interested in explaining the sociality of states – that is, the manner in which states acknowledge membership in and contribute to international society. Neorealists theoretically demonstrate that cooperative behavior among many players can emerge as a result of self-interested strategic interactions and can do so within a class of games that is itself non-cooperative in its paucity of communications, trust, and third-party enforcement.³² This is not a project that is doomed to failure.³³ Examining theories of public goods can help see if the scope of externalities might provide insight into the question of the generality of cooperation.³⁴

There are limitations to neorealist approaches, however. Neorealism underestimates the extent to which cooperation depends on a prior set of unacknowledged claims about the embeddedness of cooperative habits, shared values, and taken-for-granted rules. Further, its assumption that preferences are exogenously given reduces multilateralism to a question of strategic interaction, making it difficult to comprehend multilateralism propelled by collective beliefs, presumptive habits, and shared values.³⁵ Finally, the absence of a historical (narrative) approach discourages the exploration of counterfactuals and lends support to the view that arrangements, including institutional arrangements, are what they

are either because they represent functional responses to environmental challenges or because they reflect the prevailing power distribution.³⁶

Reflectivists reject the state of nature as the appropriate starting point even for heuristic purposes. If states are characterized only by interests and strategies, cooperative outcomes will not occur. Shared understandings regarding the rules of the game, the nature of permissible plays, the linkages between choices and outcomes, and the nature of agents involved in the game are important preconditions. To say this is to acknowledge that shared understandings and communicative rationality are as important as instrumental rationality.³⁷ Instead of deriving sociality from the state of nature, the task of reflectionists is to show how socially defined states, operating within given institutional sites, engage in behavior that is both competitive and cooperative.

While an institutional approach to multilateralism should not banish individuals, intentional behavior, and strategic interaction, it highlights different things. It might try to understand the emergence of multilateralism as a product of the power, resources, and beliefs of important actors and the reproduction of multilateral institutions in terms of organizational inertia, socialization to system

31 For further reading see, Robert O. Keohane, “International Institutions: Two Approaches,” *International Studies Quarterly*, vol. 32, December 1988, pp. 379-96; and specifically see, James A. Caporaso, “International Relations Theory and Multilateralism: The Search for Foundations,” *International Organization*, vol. 46, no. 3, Summer, 1992, p. 630

32 Caporaso, n. 31.

33 See Michael Taylor, *The Possibility of Cooperation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) and see, Rudolph Schuessler, “Exit Threats and Cooperation Under Anonymity,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, vol. 33, December 1989, pp. 728-49.

34 Further see, Todd Sandler and John T. Tschirhart, “The Economic Theory of Clubs: An Evaluative Survey,” *Journal of Economic Literature*, vol. 18, December 1980, pp. 1481-1521.

35 Caporaso, n. 31, pp. 630-631.

36 Ibid.

37 For details see, Hayward R. Alker, Jr., “Rescuing ‘Reason’ from the ‘Rationalists’: Reading Vico, Marx, and Weber as Reflective Institutionalists,” *Mimeograph*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, 1990, p. 10.

norms, and adaptation to the “needs of the institution.”³⁸

Indo-Japan Multilateral Cooperative Initiatives

In the realm of multilateral cooperation, the Japan-India-US Summit Meetings in November 2018 and June 2019 have become a major benchmark of the strong and continuing foundational trilateral cooperation. More recently, the trilateral has been represented by:

- *MALABAR 2019* held from September-October 2019 off the coast of Japan
- Mine-countermeasures exercise (MINEX) held in Japan in July 2019
- *Cope India 2018* in which Japan participated as an observer in December 2018

In the field of regional and international affairs, India and Japan find agreement in their views on supporting ASEAN centrality and unity for promoting peace and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific as part of which, came the adoption of the *ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific* (AOIP) during the 34th ASEAN Summit held in Thailand in June 2019. Tokyo and New Delhi are committed to working together with ASEAN for achieving their shared objectives, and also reiterating their support for various ASEAN-led frameworks such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and ASEAN Defense Ministers’ Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus).

At the 14th EAS, India announced an “Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative” to create a safe, secure, stable, prosperous and sustainable maritime domain – a declaration that was welcomed by Japan as both confirmed to discuss concrete cooperation based on the initiative. On similar lines, India has welcomed Japan’s “Vientiane Vision 2.0” in November 2019. This

vision finds overlapping and harmoniously congruent themes of ASEAN principles such as openness, transparency, inclusivity and a rules-based framework, which have been outlined in the *ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific*, with those featuring in Japan’s own vision for a *Free and Open Indo-Pacific*. The 2.0 framework is an updated version of the initiative for defense cooperation between Japan and ASEAN that revisits Japan’s past three years’ endeavors on defense cooperation with ASEAN as per the Vientiane Vision announced in 2016.

The 2.0 version redefines the vision in line with the concept of the Indo-Pacific and presents three principles for Japanese defense cooperation with ASEAN, including enhancement of resilience as one of the ends. As part of a concerted whole of government effort, Japan’s Ministry of Defense will conduct practical cooperation by combining the following measures.³⁹

- *Promoting Shared Understanding of International Norms* – sharing knowledge on international norms and practices
- *Defense Cooperation Program* – assisting ASEAN’s proactive efforts for enhancing its collective capabilities by sending JSDF personnel to Southeast Asia and inviting ASEAN practitioners to Japan
- *Defense Equipment and Technology Cooperation* – transferring equipment and technology, developing human resources, etc.
- *Joint Training and Exercises* – conducting bilateral and multilateral joint exercises, expanding forms of participation and inviting ASEAN observers to JSDF training
- *Human Resource Development and Academic Exchanges* – reinforcing human networks among students and trainees, etc.

In wake of the recent developments in

38 Caporaso, n. 31, p. 633.

39 For details see, “Vientiane Vision: Japan’s Defense Cooperation Initiative with ASEAN,” Japan’s Ministry of Defense, November 2019, available at https://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/exc/admm/06/vv2_en.pdf

the South China Sea and keeping in view the Chairman's Statement during the 14th EAS, India and Japan have placed prime focus on the importance of freedom of navigation and overflight, unimpeded lawful commerce and peaceful resolution of disputes with full respect for legal and diplomatic processes in accordance with the universally recognized principles of international law, including those reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The negotiations of a Code of Conduct (COC) should be taken note of and should be effective, substantive, and consistent with international law, including the UNCLOS, ensure freedom of navigation and must not prejudice the rights and interests of the stakeholders using the South China Sea and freedoms of all states under international law.

During the 8th round of the India-Japan Bilateral Consultations on Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Export Control held in Tokyo on December 23, 2019, both nations reiterated the importance of dialogue as an important mechanism between the two countries. While the Indian delegation was led by Indra Mani Pandey, Additional Secretary (Disarmament and International Security Affairs), Ministry of External Affairs, the Japanese delegation was led by Hisajima Naoto, Director-General, Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Science Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁴⁰ Similarly, during the 5th round of the India-Japan Maritime Affairs Dialogue held in Tokyo on December 24, 2019, the underlying theme of further strengthening maritime cooperation was reiterated.

Conclusion

The constructivist concept vis-à-vis interaction of personalities is a defining factor that will likely shape the current and future trajectory of India-Japan relations. Since Abe

and Modi share similar perspectives on Asia's future geo-political and economic order, they should not let go of the solid foundation and convergences at the strategic level for greater leverage and say in the future security design of Asia. The time has come to make flexible, the variable boundaries in decision-making that political environs tend to create in the realm of foreign policy and achieve strategic deliverables in the coming years, without allowing any external third factor to cast a shadow on the meteoric rise in Indo-Japanese ties. The Modi-Abe leadership combine exhibits showmanship, content, and cognitive consistency by means of converging themes of nationalism, coupled with motivated eagerness to initiate action driven towards ushering in an era of policy-oriented change, domestically, bilaterally, and regionally.

⁴⁰ *Press Release*, 8th Round of India-Japan Bilateral Consultations on Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Export Control, Indian Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi, December 26, 2019.