

Issue no. 28
November 2022

VIF Expert Groups Reports



Edited by Naval Jagota



Vivekananda
International
Foundation

© **Vivekananda International Foundation**

Published in 2022 by

Vivekananda International Foundation

3, San Martin Marg | Chanakyapuri | New Delhi - 110021

Tel: 011-24121764 | Fax: 011-66173415

E-mail: info@vifindia.org

Website: www.vifindia.org

Follow us on

Twitter | [@vifindia](https://twitter.com/vifindia)

Facebook | [/vifindia](https://www.facebook.com/vifindia)

All Rights Reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission of the publisher.

Editor's Note

In the month of November 2022 Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) organized a total of seven expert group meetings, two interactive sessions with Ambassador's from Indonesia and Germany in which they shared their perspective of our bilateral relationship as well as the prevalent geo-political situation. In addition there was a roundtable discussions with the Korean National Diplomatic Academy.

The Vivekananda International Foundation held a meeting of the Strategic Experts Group on 07 November 2022 to discuss the latest US National Security Strategy released in October this year. US Policy documents like National Security Strategy (NSS), National Defense Strategy (NDS), Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), etc. are mandated by US law and are important indicators of its thinking and policy direction. They are largely bureaucratic in essence but also have an imprint of thinking of the incumbent administration. These documents are used for both external and domestic signaling including emphasizing internal priorities for Congress, industry, and lobbies. The discussion raised issues ranging from the prioritization of China and Russia, role of allies and partners to the endorsement

of new technologies and possible implications for India.

The China Expert Group of the Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) organized a hybrid discussion on the “Outcomes of the 20th Party Congress of the Chinese Communist Party”. The discussions focussed on the domination of CPC Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC) with people close to President Xi Jinping, the economic and financial impact as well as the implications on the national policies along with ideological and political outcomes.

India and Indonesia, being exceptionally good friends and direct neighbours, share historical ties for more than two millennia, the Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) organised a talk by Her Excellency Ina Haniningtyas Krishnamurthi, the Indonesian Ambassador to India on “Global and Regional Uncertainty and the prospects for India-Indonesia Relations” on 10 November 2022. The Ambassador spoke and responded to questions on India- Indonesia bilateral relations, ASEAN- India relations, G20, radicalisation and counter-terrorism as well on other important regional and global events.

The West Asia Experts Group meeting of the Vivekananda International Foundation, organized a discussion on “Iran Protest and Future of the Islamic Republic” on 10 November 2022. The discussion was subdivided into two sections and focussed on Iran’s domestic context and geopolitical implications.

The US Midterm elections have a lot of significance in US domestic politics. It projects the public’s opinion about the policy of the current administration. These changes are expected to have global ramifications as well. To understand the impact and implications of the election outcomes, the US Experts Group organised a talk on “US Midterm Elections 2022: Implications for India and the World”

on 21 November 2022. The talk focussed on the key takeaways from the elections and their impact and implications domestically and globally.

The Europe Experts Group organized an interaction with H.E. Dr. Philipp Ackermann, Ambassador of Germany to India on 22 November 2022. After Opening Remarks by Dr Arvind Gupta, Director VIF, Dr. Philipp Ackermann spoke on “Global and Regional Uncertainty and the Prospects for India-German Relations”. After the talk by the Ambassador there was an interactive session with the group.

The Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) organised an interactive session with a visiting delegation from the Korean National Diplomatic Academy (KNDA) on November 24, 2022 on the prospects of Republic of Korea-India relations vis-a-vis the recent developments in the region. The KNDA delegates highlighted the rationale and framework of the recently announced Indo-Pacific Strategy by the South Korean government and laid out how bolstering strategic ties with India is a crucial part of this strategy. Apart from this, a wide range of issues of geopolitical significance were discussed.

The Second Meeting of the Climate Change Expert Group was held at the Vivekananda International Foundation on 24 November 2022 through hybrid mode. The meeting discussed the key outcomes of the 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference, more commonly referred to as COP27 that was held at Sharm El Sheikh in Egypt from 6-20 November 2022. It also discussed major trends in climate change and its potential implications for India.

A meeting of the Pakistan Study Group (PSG) was held in hybrid mode on 28th November 2022. The main items on the agenda

were the appointment of Gen Asim Munir as Army Chief and the implications of it on the domestic and external front, the future of Imran Khan in the political stage in Pakistan, is there a possibility of by-elections because of the internal political discourse in the provinces, Gen Bajwa's last speech, as well as economic situation of the country.

On 28th November 2022, VIF organised its 2nd Africa Expert Group meeting. The current status of India and Africa's maritime connectivity and the need for direct shipping line, direct banking service, potential for further expansion of trade, investment and technological collaboration as well other related topics were discussed.

The coordinators and researchers associated with the expert and dialogue groups, think tanks and interactions have put unfaltering efforts to coordinate the meetings, to provide range and diversity of views as well as capture the discussion for the reports.

Naval Jagota

New Delhi

December 2022

Contents

US National Security Strategy.....	8
<i>- Prepared by Prerna Gandhi</i>	
Outcomes of the 20th Party Congress of the Chinese Communist Party.....	13
<i>- Prepared by Kota Mallikarjuna Gupta</i>	
Global and Regional Uncertainty and the Prospects for India-Indonesia Relations.....	17
<i>- Prepared by Sweta Kumari</i>	
Iran Protest and Future of the Islamic Republic.....	27
<i>- Prepared by HIRAK JYOTI DAS</i>	
US Midterm Elections 2022: Implications for India and the World.....	30
<i>- Prepared by Sweta Kumari</i>	
Interactive sessions with H.E. Dr. Philipp Ackermann, Ambassador of Germany to India.....	36
<i>- Prepared by Prerna Gandhi</i>	
Interactive Session with Korean National Diplomatic Academy (KNDA).....	39
<i>- Prepared by Sweta Kumari</i>	
Outcomes of COP27 Climate Summit.....	43
<i>- Prepared by PK Khuphangzo</i>	
Appointment of Army Chief - Implications-domestic and external.....	49
<i>- Prepared by Aakriti Vinayak</i>	
Economic and Trade Relationship.....	52
<i>- Prepared by Samir Bhattacharya</i>	

US National Security Strategy

Prepared by Prerna Gandhi

US Policy documents like National Security Strategy (NSS), National Defense Strategy (NDS), Nuclear Posture Review (NPR), etc. are mandated by US law and are important indicators of its thinking and policy direction. They are largely bureaucratic in essence but also an imprint of the incumbent administration. These documents are used for both external and domestic signaling including emphasizing internal priorities for Congress, industry, and lobbies. The Vivekananda International Foundation held a meeting on 07 November 2022 to discuss the latest US National Security Strategy released in October this year. The discussion raised a range of issues from the prioritization of China and Russia, role of allies and partners to endorsement of new technologies and possible implications for India. Some of the salient points made were:

Prioritization of China vs. Russia

The NSS conforms to existing policy line of taking on Russia and China with the recognition that they are different threats but are clubbed together in the same geopolitical framework of democracy versus autocracies. But the NSS also admits that some countries would not like to be drawn into direct confrontation of the US with either Russia or China. When triaging the challenges posed by other nations, the NSS explicitly prioritizes China, then Russia, followed by all others. In the section that defines strategy by region, the Indo-Pacific is addressed first, followed immediately by

Europe, then all other regions. The NSS notes that while Russia poses an immediate and ongoing threat to the regional security order in Europe and is a source of disruption and instability globally, it lacks across the spectrum capabilities of China. It emphasizes that China is the only competitor with both the intent to reshape the international order and, increasingly, the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to do it. Yet there is also acknowledgement of China's central role in the global economy and need for its cooperation on transnational challenges. Thus, Russia is seen as an immediate threat, but the pacing threat is China. However, there is no clarification in how the US can meet these twin challenges in the document.

Integrated Deterrence

The concept of integrated deterrence mandates the US military to work in a seamless all domain, theater, and spectrum of conflict framework to deter aggression, not only within the US, but also with its international partners. Thus, both integration and deterrence become the buzzwords for the coming time. Europe is well settled with a single alliance template; but the Indo-Pacific with a multiple alliance template is still evolving. There is no clarity on how integrated deterrence will harmonize Indo-Pacific and the Quad. With the exception of nuclear deterrence, the US is increasingly blurring the concept of allies and partners in all other fields. There is key focus on ability to deter limited nuclear use as crucial to deterring non-nuclear aggression. Significantly, the NSS also underscores that conventional forces will have to upscale resilience against limited nuclear attack and maintain capability under conditions of an ongoing nuclear attack. Russia and China are seen as posing different levels of nuclear threat. There is emphasis on modernization across the board from cancellation of the nuclear armed sea launched cruise missiles and some older nuclear warheads to upgradation of the entire nuclear weapons establishment including keep open facilities for fissile material and tritium and explosive testing facilities. On support for arms control, there are more specific aspirations on Russia such as willingness to extend New Start after 2026 but the NSS remains vague on China.

Tweaking Globalization

The NSS recognizes that globalization has delivered immense benefits for the United States and the world, but an adjustment is now required to cope with the dramatic global changes. It reiterates widening inequality within and among countries, China's emergence as both the most consequential competitor and one of the largest trading partners in recent time, along with emerging technologies that fall outside the bounds of existing rules and regulations. However, the NSS asserts that China retains common interests with other countries, including the United States, because of various interdependence on climate, economics, and public health.

Decisive Decade

The new document notes that “the next ten years will be the decisive decade”. The document points to the current moment as an inflection point, where the choices that are made and the priorities that are pursued today will set the US on a course that will determine its competitive position in the long-term future. The Chinese in their response and assessment of the NSS also spotlight the timeframe as important for gauging the US' short to medium term policy trend vis-à-vis China.

Technology Competition

New operational concepts and new forms of strategic readiness that leverage new technologies are seen as playing out in the coming years. Importance is given to long range standoff weapons, advanced sensors, directed energy, hypersonic, quantum, advanced materials, AI, integrated networks, microelectronics, etc. Space and cyber domination and integration is seen as a priority. There is concern that the technology of missiles and UAVs has outpaced missile defense systems. Technology is also seen as a key arena for strategic competition with China. Technology finds key mention in the three prime directives of dealing with challenges to the international order posed by strategic competitors, addressing shared global challenges, and shaping the rules of the road for technology, cybersecurity, and trade and economics.

Industrial Policy

The NSS notably highlights industrial policy as a key national security instrument and emphasizes investments in both defense industrial base and several strategically significant civilian industries. It underscores that competition to develop and deploy foundational technologies that will transform security and economy is intensifying. The lacuna in free market is clearly hinted as the NSS directs the government to identify and invest in key areas where private industry, on its own, has not mobilized to protect core economic and national security interests including bolstering US national resilience. The NSS places industrial policy among other more traditional national security tools (e.g., military, intelligence, diplomatic, economic and development policies), which is a departure from past editions of the National Security Strategy.

Interlinkages with National Defense Strategy on Taiwan

The new NSS and NDS lay out the China challenge more decisively than any US policy document in the past. Put simply, the two documents reinforce the determination of the United States to defend its primacy against China in both security and economic domains. The NSS clarifies the US position on Taiwan in more explicit terms than prior editions of the NSS. In effect, the NSS states that the United States 1) opposes any unilateral change to the status quo, 2) does not support Taiwan independence, 3) opposes any use of force or coercion by China, 4) will support Taiwan's self-defense, and 5) will maintain the US capacity to resist any use of force or coercion by China against Taiwan (i.e., maintain the military posture required to successfully defeat a Chinese military operation if called upon by the US President to do so). This is more explicit language that we have seen in previous editions of the National Security Strategy. It also helps resolve the confusion that some observers have expressed when trying to interpret statements by the president and various press secretaries. The NDS emphasizes China's increasingly provocative rhetoric and coercive activity towards Taiwan as destabilizing and risking miscalculation. There is also a continuum noticed in the broader pattern of destabilizing and

coercive Chinese behavior stretching across the East China Sea, the South China Sea, and along the Line of Actual Control.

Chinese Response

The Chinese government in their official response criticized the NSS as not being constructive and holding on to the zero-sum mentality of playing up geopolitical conflicts and major power competition. The Chinese think tank, Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS), noted that there were some new formulations and policy nuances in the report. They evaluate that the core of the US' economic policy towards China is becoming clear. It exhibits two obvious objectives: first to curb the development of key industries in China and second to restrict China's ability to improve its standing within its regional economy. There is also policy acceleration in the reshaping of supply chains based on ally shoring. Prominent Chinese experts also view the United States interlinking Europe and the Indo-Pacific region in a bid to construct a large Eurasian security block. They appraise that the United States is set to strengthen the NATO, thereby seriously affecting Europe's strategic autonomy. The Chinese also take into consideration that the future development of the US military will be structured around the characteristics and evolution of China's own military capabilities. However, they also acknowledge that the strategic bottom line (on both sides) of not seeking direct military conflict remains in place and the fundamental strategic mutual trust has not disappeared.

Implications for India

There is prominence given to role of allies and partners in integrated deterrence, but whether it will lead to tighter embrace or more local autonomy remains to be seen. There is need for detailed study of how American power will evolve and how we can harness it to our interests.

Outcomes of the 20th Party Congress of the Chinese Communist Party

Prepared by Kota Mallikarjuna Gupta

The Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) organized a hybrid discussion “Outcomes of the 20th Party Congress of the Chinese Communist Party” on 09 November 2022. The discussion was moderated by Shri Ashok Kantha. The attendees were Dr. Arvind Gupta Director VIF, Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney (Retd), Prof. Srikanth Kondapalli, Shri Manoj Kwealramai, Dr Sanjeev Kumar, Brig Vinod Anand (Retd) and Gp. Capt. Naval Jagota (Retd).

Introduction

Communist Party of China (CPC) held its 1st plenum of 20th Party Congress in October 2022, which is the most important event in five years. During this Party Congress, Chinese President Xi Jinping secured his third term with favorable composition of Politburo and Standing Committee of CPC. He reinforced his position as Chief interpreter and ideologue on Marxism in China.

Overview of outcomes of the 20th Party Congress

One of the major outcome of the 20th Party Congress was the complete domination of CPC Politburo Standing Committee (PBSC) with people close to President Xi Jinping. All the six members of PBSC are close allies of President Xi and three of them have worked as in charge of Xi's office in

various provinces. There is no word on the successor to President Xi Jinping and there was no women representation during this 20th Party Congress. However, the efforts to designate President Xi as People's Leader as predicted by some experts were not part of the agenda. Similarly, Socialism with Chinese Characteristics in New Era was not part of amended statute.

There are no major departure in policies, which were laid down during the President Xi Jinping's tenure of ten years from October 2012. The work report released during the 20th Party Congress highlights overarching goal of China leading the world as the center stage in 2040. The report highlighted the drastic changes in international landscape with external efforts to blackmail, contain, blockade and exert more pressure on China on various global issues. In this context, Chinese aggressive policy towards Taiwan, South China Sea and India-China Boundary issue are likely to be continued. China is still in waiting mode on the Taiwan issue and does not anticipate United States to intervene in military mode on this issue.

Additionally, on the domestic issues, there will be a greater emphasis on ideology with the powerful role of the state sector and restrains on the private sector. Overall, there will be inward looking approach and China will be more inclined to accept lower economic growth. There will also be more focus on ideology and nationalism. China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) is downsized and recalibrated and investment decreased from 2019. Under the new approach, China is focused on standard setting and digital BRI.

Ideological and political outcomes of the 20th Party Congress

The work report issued during the 20th Party Congress of CPC listed out the achievements of last five years and plans for the next five years. There is huge emphasis on internal political aspects of CPC. The report highlights the founding mission of the CPC. The visit of PBSC members to Yanan was on the lines of Mao Tse-tung's 1940's rectification campaign in order to control Communist Party apparatus. There is no revival of Maoist or Marxist thoughts, however there is lot of western critique in the work report.

Socialism with Chinese characters in New Era with its eight fundamental issues and 14 principles, is a modification of Mao Tse-tung and Deng Xiaoping's focus on promoting Socialism in China. These eight fundamental issues includes socialist modernization for the year 2035, rejuvenation, principal contradictions , abolishing extreme poverty, five sphere integrated plan to raise the confidence level, People's Liberation Army (PLA) building and Major Country Diplomacy. However, unbalanced and unequal development in various sectors and regions of China and erroneous claims of abolishing extreme poverty while ignoring urban poor are real.

Another major aspect of Chinese President, Xi Jinping thought is two guarantees and two safe guards, which focuses on establishing Xi Jinping as the core of the leadership, instead of collective leadership concept in CPC and guiding role of Xi Jinping's thought for rank and file of CPC. In the factional politics front, President Xi Jinping's faction secured total control over CPC with completeobliteration of Communist Youth League. The age limits for top posts for CPC were thrown to winds. There is a special mention of National Security in the 20th Party Congress work report. National security is the basis for Chinese Rejuvenation. However, the words like reform, modernization and innovation received low priority in the work report. There is special emphasis on common prosperity.

Economic and financial impact and implications internal and external of the 20th Party Congress

The concentration of power under Xi Jinping's faction will impact economic agenda of China. Chinese economists have listed out the potential risk factors in their articles for Chinese Newspapers. Some of the risk factors includes ageing population, impacting land and labor issues leading to resource and environmental constraints to generate economic growth. The scientific and technological abilities and innovation are not strong enough in China for future economic growth.

In addition Zero Covid Policy has not been highlighted in the work report as an achievement. The impact of Zero Covid Policy on Chinese Economy

is significant, as the policy impacted the predictability of the Chinese economy. There is no clarity in China on the direction to emerge out of the Zero Covid Policy. There is an increasing possibility of gradual redefinition of Zero Covid policy with changes to rules of quarantine and international travel.

In other economic aspects, the Chinese Government will intervene in the market to create opportunities for people and not undercut the economic growth. There will be a focus and race to capture natural resources outside China to fuel economic growth. The opening up process in Chinese economy is to try and remain connected to the key supply chains for technologies as well as capital markets.

Global and Regional Uncertainty and the Prospects for India-Indonesia Relations

Prepared by Sweta Kumari

India and Indonesia, being exceptionally good friends and direct neighbours, share historical ties for more than two millennia. The two democracies have been working together bilaterally and at various multilateral and international fora for more than 73 years. In the backdrop of post-COVID global transitions that have been further complicated by the Russia- Ukraine war and the G20 summit in Bali, the Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) organised a talk by Her Excellency Ina Haniningtyas Krishnamurthi, the Indonesian Ambassador to India on “Global and Regional Uncertainty and the Prospects for India-Indonesia Relations” on 10 November 2022.

Dr Arvind Gupta, Director, VIF, chaired the session and made a few welcome remarks. India and Indonesia are two neighbours that have had historical ties for more than two millennia. After regaining freedom from respective colonial rules, the two countries have worked together to strengthen bilateral relations and promote peace, stability and development in the region and the world. India will be attending the G20 summit in Bali and will also be taking over the Presidency of the grouping for 2023. India has been in touch with the Indonesian counterparts to gain benefit from their experiences of presiding over G20 in very trying times which is going to be even more challenging in future.

The Ambassador began her talk by quoting Mahatma Gandhi, “Only he can be a leader who never loses hope”. She emphasised that hope was very much needed in leadership in today’s challenging times and the actions of the leaders of India and Indonesia in 2022 show that they have hope. She spoke about India- Indonesia relations based on three broad frameworks: Bilateral ties, ASEAN-India relations, and the G20. Apart from that, issues such as radicalisation and counter-terrorism, QUAD and AUKUS, World Trade Organisation, and the South China Sea were also part of the discussion.

India- Indonesia Bilateral Relations

Diplomatic Relations

The relations between the two countries are extremely close and are based on historical and civilizational interactions for more than two millennia. This year the two countries celebrated 73 years of bilateral relations which continue to grow despite the challenges. The bilateral relations are more than good friends and good neighbours. Some people in Indonesia do not know that the two are neighbours but they are wrong. India and Indonesia are direct neighbours and because of that, good relations between the two must be the anchors of stability, security, and prosperity in the region. India and Indonesia are witnessing the power rivalries that have come to play in their respective “backyard” and “front yard”. The containment and the “zero-sum” mindset are getting more apparent. Both countries have survived them. Against the backdrop of this mindset, India and Indonesia can together turn the tide by deepening and expanding cooperation in various sectors.

Leadership

In the past five years, especially under the leadership of current President Joko Widodo and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Indonesia and India have experienced extensive engagements at the highest level. In January 2018, President Widodo visited India followed by PM Modi’s visit to Jakarta in May. Both leaders share very special, person-

al and close ties. Politically, both of them come from the grassroots and have support from social media, small landholders, and farmers.

Post-COVID Cooperation

In 2018, India and Indonesia became Comprehensive Strategic Partners. During COVID, the two followed the principle of “*friends in need, friends indeed*” by extending assistance to each other. Even in the post-COVID period, the post-pandemic economic recovery has been accelerated between the two. For instance, the Indian investment stood at around \$US 1.5 billion. In 2022, the bilateral trade reached \$US 19.7 billion which is an 80% increase since last year. With the ongoing trend, it is hoped that both would reach the trade target of \$US 50 billion by 2025 as envisioned by the two leaders.

The pandemic is not yet over and there are food and energy crises going on. Water security is another major concern. The two countries must be working together as positive forces in the region as the Indo-Pacific needs both India and Indonesia.

Defence Cooperation

In terms of defence cooperation, after the finalisation of the 2018 Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, things got stuck because of the pandemic. For the first time in the history of the bilateral relations between India and Indonesia, this year the Indonesian Defence Attaché is from the Navy. This has led to enhanced maritime cooperation and the increased visits of the Indonesian Naval ships to Kochi is also being witnessed.

High-level dialogues are taking place at the Tri-Services level. Ministries of Defence dialogues, joint training and table top exercises have also increased this year. However, the research and transfer of technology in defence will not be easy because of the disruption of the industry. Indonesia needs to learn weapons development from India. The implementation of the transfer of technology agreement from India to Indonesia needs to be pushed. However, this will be given

more emphasis in 2023 as India would be very busy in 2022 because of the G20.

ASEAN- India Relations

The year 2022-2023 is significant for India, Indonesia, and ASEAN. The Presidency of the G20 will be transferred from Indonesia to India. Also, Indonesia will become the chair of ASEAN for the fourth time in 2023. It also marks 30 years of ASEAN-India friendship. It is envisioned that India will soon be ASEAN's Comprehensive Strategic Partner. This partnership comes into the picture as there is steady progress in the Plan of Action. ASEAN supports India's Make in India initiative. ASEAN- India relations need to continuously explore, strengthen and enhance efforts to further deepen cooperation in various areas such as the blue economy, digitisation, public health, traditional medicines, climate change, and science and technology research. The priority of all these efforts must be on post-pandemic socio-economic recovery. This is not easy for ASEAN as it still has three LDCs (Least Developed Countries) -- Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar (CLM). ASEAN needs to give support to CLM to elevate them to the emerging economy status.

Post-Pandemic Engagements

ASEAN appreciated the contribution of \$US 1 million made by India to the COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund. It encourages India's support in areas that are very challenging such as mutual recognition of vaccine certificates, production of COVID-19 vaccines as many countries in ASEAN cannot produce them, and generic medicine and technology in the treatment of COVID-19. For generic medicine and medical technologies, ASEAN depends mostly on imports. Pandemic preparedness is very important because at least there are 30 variants and sub-variants of COVID-19 which may mutate and bring about a new kind of virus in the future. The most important issue is the unprecedented disruption of the global supply chains during the COVID-19 pandemic which still continues. The elevation of ASE-

AN-India relations in economic terms will be helpful in post pandemic recovery. There is going to be a review of the ASEAN-India FTA. This will be furthered by Indonesia's chairing of ASEAN and India's Presidency of G20 in 2023. Indonesia will have a dual role to play in coordinating with India as it will be a member of G20 and ASEAN chair at the same time.

Dynamics within ASEAN

Indonesia and ASEAN are interdependent on each other. ASEAN is not perfect. It has its own internal challenges and flaws. However, it stands for the principle of non-intervention and because of that, at least, there is no war between any of the ASEAN nations and Myanmar is still part of the ASEAN Free Trade Agreement. ASEAN countries do have concerns about issues like Myanmar, the South China Sea, and management of issues between China and Taiwan. However, unlike the European Union which has one voice but is divided at the same time, ASEAN strives for diversity as much as possible, so that there can be peace in the region and prosperity can be achieved in a country's terms nationally. ASEAN does not push any country and special consideration is given to CLM in engagements like RCEP so that they can aspire to elevate themselves to other ASEAN countries.

ASEAN's View on Indo- Pacific

The ASEAN- India collaboration which is part of the Indo-Pacific region must promote the right paradigm: "*the paradigm of collaboration*". The Indo-Pacific is full of untapped potential and to unlock this potential, the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and Indo- Pacific Oceans' Initiative (IPOI) are important. The AOIP believes in two principles:

- a. The regional architecture in the Indo-Pacific should be inclusive and hence, ASEAN supports the IPOI.
- b. Any cooperation framework in the region should not be a tool to alienate any country.

ASEAN does not have an appetite to take part in a new Cold war in the region. Instead, it opens its doors for collaboration and India is a strong example of that. There is a need to shift focus from rivalry to concrete cooperation. Any exercise should not hinder the full participation of emerging economies. Only then, there can be higher dependence and the peace dividend can be reaped.

The issue of maritime cooperation is very relevant in terms of the ASEAN-India partnership and has been identified in the AOIP. The maritime sphere should promote higher cooperation between the two and not hostility. Maritime cooperation should be the future that unites not divides.

G20

Global Situation

The last two and half years have been very difficult. The world economy is still fragile. Global supply chains have been disrupted and new challenges are coming from Ukraine and other parts of the world. The geopolitical dynamics have split the world and its ripple effects are felt everywhere. There are extreme challenges regarding food and energy security leading to inflation. There are deep concerns over global financial security and the dynamics have affected the emerging economies and particularly, the Global South. As the President of the G20, Indonesia has been caught in the center of uncertainty. Global geopolitical issues have changed the discourse of Indonesia's G20 Presidency.

2022: Indonesia's G20 Presidency

Indonesia for the first time held the Presidency which is a milestone in Indonesian history. Given the post-pandemic challenges, it came out with the theme "Recover Together and Recover Stronger" which focused on three priority areas—strengthening the global health architecture, digital transformation and energy transition. It believes that crisis recovery through joint and inclusive efforts can find solutions.

In the light of the Ukraine war, suggestions were made to change the priorities of G20 but Indonesia maintained the priorities.

Indonesia believed in making the G20, a catalyst for finding solutions, especially for emerging economies. Indonesia put emphasis on strengthening the concrete tangibles and impactful deliverables. It has come out with Basket 1 and Basket 2 deliverables.

Basket 1: G20 deliverables

Basket 2: Endorsing of deliverables in various bilateral and multilateral formats.

Up until 13 September, there are 243 project proposals from various countries and 43 proposals from international organisations. Indian projects are in the process of finalisation. All of these concrete deliverables will be listed in G20's action for a strong recovery and will become Annexes of the leaders' declaration. Emerging economies like India have very noisy democracies nationally and there is a need for accountability for the good of their people. Some deliverables include the establishment of a financial fund for pandemic prevention, preparedness and responses. This was a decision by Italy holding the previous Presidency of G20 to establish cross-cutting meetings. Indonesia has held meetings between the financial track and the sherpa track. Sherpa track has focused on development and health.

India- Indonesia G20 Collaboration

Indonesia is thankful to India as it carried over this establishment through the digital innovation network that connects international startups and venture capitals. India's G20 website shows the continuity of policy through its Startup-20 and special working group on digitalisation. Such continuity of policy is very much needed between the G20 presidencies which were not seen earlier.

India has taken the burden to promote the Clean Energy transition which is a very important issue under the framework of the Interna-

tional Energy Agency. There is unity and support by countries to promote Clean Energy transition and advance the interest of emerging economies. Indonesia believes that unity is not shown by photo ops but by concrete deliverables.

Indonesia and India are undeniably recovering together and recovering stronger. An example of recovering together is that in 2020, India provided active pharmaceutical ingredients to Indonesia. When India faced the Delta outbreak in May 2021, Indonesia gave oxygen concentrators and cylinders to India while India reciprocated with Remidivisir. Similarly, both countries are recovering stronger as after the pandemic they are among few emerging nations with robust economic growth. India will become the world's third largest economy and Indonesia will become the fifth largest economy by 2030 as per the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The 21st century is the Asian century. India will hold one of the most important presidencies of the G20 because, for the first time in history, the G20 Troika will be composed of all emerging economies (Indonesia, India and Brazil). The G20 of 2023 will be the time to “make it or break it” for emerging economies.

Indonesia and India can work together to shape the future of the Asian Century. Indonesia believes that India will work excellently in navigating the world in this turbulent time and help to recover together and recover stronger in 2023. Indonesia chaired the G20 competently by working in the direction of changing narratives in the favour of the Global South and emerging economies. Its theme was “Recovering together and stronger”. The Indian theme for G20 “One Earth, One Family, One Future” will build on what Indonesia has done.

At G20, some countries are too focused on the challenge between the countries and not on the basic needs of the people. Many meetings result in no outcome. As a fallback, Indonesia has produced a chair summary with the statements made by other countries. This is a painstaking challenge for the G20.

Other Important Issues

Radicalisation and Counter terrorism

Domestically, Indonesia maintains the policy of de-radicalisation. The focus has been on addressing the root cause which comes from the smallest form of community which is the family of the doers. The families are also the victims. The counterterrorism policy of Indonesia involves giving very strong punishment to those who involve in the act of terrorism.

Repatriation of foreign fighters is really difficult. The family-based acts make it more difficult. How the community or family perceives them is also a huge challenge. Indonesia has been both successful and failed in its de-radicalisation policy. De-radicalisation needs time, effort, and people.

Indonesia has strong concerns about Afghanistan. It believes that on the international cooperation side, dialogue needs to be maintained between various parties so that more development takes place in the country which is more beneficial to society. Indonesia mirrors its national policy of focusing on women, youth and children in Afghanistan. Only political views will not lead anywhere. Afghanistan is a failed state and no development has taken place whatsoever. The ones who come to the country take interest in mineral and natural resources and do not focus on the development of the society as a whole.

World Trade Organisation

Sometimes, the historical similarities between India and Indonesia become a hindrance as sometimes it is taken for granted. The two countries need to focus on the connectivity of the past, present and future. India and Indonesia are very close. They have been working very closely behind the scenes for G20. There are no issues bilaterally and the multilateral relations are even closer. In multilateral fora such as the World Trade Organisation (WTO), India and Indonesia work together and are leaders in G33. India's effort to push for the

agricultural subsidy at the WTO was first supported by Indonesia as both have the same interests. Similarly, in other issues promoted by Indonesia, India is the first to join the wagon.

Global dynamics need to focus on peace, prosperity and development. There is a need to shift the focus from tension and war to what is really needed. As Minister Jaishankar said “this is not an era of war”, there is a need to look at the whole world and not just the war.

QUAD and AUKUS

Indonesia welcomes all engagements that contribute to peace and stability in the region. The principle of inclusiveness should be there. Many of the countries that promote the Indo-Pacific are not in the region. So, any engagement should prioritise the countries that actually are located in the Indo-Pacific region and not alienate anyone. It needs to be focused on things that have a positive impact on the countries in the region. To the question if Indonesia would be a member of the QUAD anytime in the future the response of Ambassador Krishnamurthi was – “*The door never closes*”

South China Sea

Indonesia believes in the “One-China Policy”. Indonesia is not responsible for the Code of Conduct (COC) not happening in the South China Sea. It wants to finish the discussion on COC and all parties to respect the treaties of cooperation. Having a discussion on the management of the South China Sea is very important for Indonesia. The Indonesian President is very clear about the country’s territorial integrity. For Natuna, Indonesia is going to fight till the end. It sends its Navy ships there regularly and also creates fisheries and other economic opportunities on the island.

Overall, the talk emphasised that India-Indonesia relations are on an upward trajectory and both have important roles to play in promoting peace, prosperity and stability in the region as well as the world.

Iran Protest and Future of the Islamic Republic

Prepared by Hirak Jyoti Das

The Vivekananda International Foundation organized a discussion on “Iran Protest and Future of the Islamic Republic” on 10 November 2022. The key speaker in the discussion were Prof. Kingsbuk Chatterjee, Department of History, University of Calcutta, and Dr. Deepika Saraswat, Associate Fellow, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies & Analyses. The members attending and contributing were Amb. Anil Trigunayat; Amb. D P Srivastava; Amb. Sanjay Singh; Amb. Prabhat Shukla; Dr. Meena Singh Roy; Lt. Gen. R K Sawhney (Retd) and Dr. Arvind Gupta, Director, VIF.

The discussion subdivided into two sections focussed on Iran’s domestic context and geopolitical implications. The death of 22 year old Kurdish women, Mahsa Amini by Iran’s morality police on 16 September 2022 has ignited nation-wide protest. The current protest, as compared to the protests in 2009 and 2017-2018, has been much larger, long drawn and encompassed Iranians from all sections and classes of society. The protestors are no longer demanding specific rights and economic up-liftment but complete overhaul of the political system under the slogan, “Dignity, Freedom and Life”. The Iranian government has responded with harsh measures to suppress the demonstrations. The death of protestors and subsequent processions after 40 days mourning period has sparked even

more protests. The political and religious elites in Iran are highly worried about the changing public sentiments that have become more vocal. The scale of popular mobilization has surprised both the government and the opposition. It is likely that the level of repression will further increase in case the protests continue. The government has resorted to press censorship; media blackouts; closing down internet etc. The government called the protest as foreign conspiracy blaming the US and Israel.

During the Pahlavi period, the urban society was largely secularized and usage of head scarves was low. In rural areas however, the wave of secularization was slow and society remained largely conservative. Since the formation of the Islamic Republic in 1979, the imposition of the “Chador” is dependent on the ideological nature of the elected government and varies from region to region. The morality police is fairly a new invention that arose during the presidency of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad in 2006 to provide employment. The morality police was disbanded by President Hassan Rouhani which was resurrected and strengthened under current President Ebrahim Raisi. A large number of Iranians are antagonistic about the actions of the morality police including harassing people in public gatherings and private spaces. Therefore, the killing of Amini was seen as the tipping point.

The government in a gesture of accountability has suspended the police chief of Zahedan for his role in quelling protest that led to number of deaths. The protest at the same time has widened the crack within the ruling regime and the Basij. In terms of Islamic Republic’s political future, the protest has served as the litmus test to evaluate the credibility of the Supreme Leader. In fact, the faith of Iranians in the Supreme Leader is crucial for regime stability. It must be noted that Iranian elites in the political, religious and commercial spheres greatly benefit from the current political system. Therefore, elites will go to any extent to preserve the status quo and prevent regime change. In case the domestic crisis continues, it is likely that Iran could trigger conflict that could lead to uptick in nationalist discourse, distracting and diverting attention from the current political

grievances.

The current protest in Iran began in the Kurdish dominated areas and spread to other peripheral restive regions such as Sistan-Balochistan; East and West Azerbaijan provinces. The Sunni based extremist group, Jaish Al-Adl based in Sistan-Balochistan province has utilized unstable law and order situation to attack and kill members of Iranian security forces. The attack on Shiraz Shrine on 26 October 2022 that killed 15 people has been linked to the current spate of protest to discredit the popular mobilization. The Iranian government therefore views the protest as national security problem that could enable entry and operations by foreign agents and terrorist groups.

US Midterm Elections 2022: Implications for India and the World

Prepared by Sweta Kumari

The US Midterm elections have a lot of significance in domestic politics. It projects the public's opinion about the policy of the current administration. These changes are expected to have global ramifications as well. In recent elections, the Republicans have gained a majority in the Lower House, the House of Representatives by a narrow margin. However, the Democrats have secured the upper house, the Senate. To understand the impact and implications of the election outcomes, the Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) organised a talk on "US Midterm Elections 2022: Implications for India and the World" on 21 November 2022. Dr Arvind Gupta, Director, VIF, chaired the session and made welcome remarks. Prof. K. P. Vijayalakshmi delivered the talk and Mr. Ashok Malik was the discussant. Amb. Anil Wadhwa and Lt. Gen. R.K. Sawhney were also part of the discussion. The talk focused on the key takeaways from the elections and their impact and implications domestically and globally. It was highlighted that Elections matter in a democracy. The midterm elections impact both the legislative and the presidential systems in the United States.

US Midterm Elections 2022: Key Takeaways

Domestic Aspects

Electoral Base and Issues

The electorate was strong this time. The election outcomes point to

a partisan and bitter fight in 2024. As per the data, it is one of the most diverse electorates in the history of American elections as one in four voters was a non-white. There is an increase in the population of Hispanics and Asian Americans in the electorate. Hispanics have taken over Blacks in number. In the US elections factors such as ethnicity, gender, differences between white-collar and blue-collar employees, education, and religion are very crucial. The number of white evangelicals has come down over the years.

Voter turn-up in midterm elections recently was 47%. A large number of young voters also participated in these elections.

There is a great polarisation in American politics that is also monitoring the limits of de-centring. Suburban voters for a change supported Democrats this time. Abortion became a major divisive issue as the US Supreme Court overturned the *Roe v. Wade* verdict in June. The Democrats focused largely on this issue. Since 52% of the electorate in the US are women, it did not work in the favour of the Republicans who support the judgement.

Inflation was another important issue and Republicans focused a lot on it. However, it had mixed results as although there were no new jobs there was no increased unemployment under the Biden administration despite the impacts of COVID-19 and the Russia-Ukraine War.

Crime, police reforms, gun control, structural racism and student debt relief were other major issues in the elections.

Lame-Duck Congress

The tally was 50-49 between Democrats and Republicans in the Senate. This will be helpful for President Biden in the appointment of judges and ambassadors as they are done with the Senate's approval.

The Republicans have managed to get the 218 mark in The House of Representatives. So, it will be a lame-duck Congress for the next

two years. Kevin McCarthy, the next speaker will have to look for legislative compromises as hardline laws would be shut down in the Senate.

The Republicans would fight for issues such as spending cuts and investigations over President Joe Biden's son Hunter Biden over the laptop issue.

The retirement of speaker Nancy Pelosi, who kept the Democrats united for the last 20 years, will affect the party. Legislation would be tough with Pelosi's exit for the Democrats. This will be an era of divided government. One of the major interests would be bridging the gaps for bipartisanship for the next two years.

2024 Presidential Election

In the 2024 Presidential election, it is expected that the Governors will enter primaries more than the Senators.

Donald Trump has announced his presidential bid for 2024, however, he is more vulnerable this time, especially after the outcomes of the midterm elections. He suffered a setback in re-election bid as many of the candidates whom he supported, lost. There is doubt in his own party if he is a liability or a strength. Governor Ron DeSantis of Florida is getting a lot of support within the party and from the people.

Although the red wave did not turn up as expected by many, it is also notable that many Trump supporters have also won the elections. Out of 172 candidates 48 lost but rest won so it will be interesting to see if Trumpism would be a factor or not in the upcoming Presidential elections. The age of the candidates would also matter as Trump will be 78 years of age in 2024 while DeSantis will be 46 years.

Impact on Foreign Policy

Divisive Issues

There are a number of divisive issues in the foreign policy. For instance, countries such as Saudi Arabia, Russia and Israel are more supportive of Republicans. The most divisive issue is the policy on Ukraine and Europe.

a. Ukraine and Europe

Aid to Ukraine is going to be a big fight in the House. The Republicans would not be able to freeze the aid below what has already been committed but at the same time they will not allow the Democrats to increase the amount further. Even if the Democrats try, there will be a delay to get it done through appropriations and authorizations committees and time is the essence in the case of Ukraine.

It is yet to be determined if the Republicans would pressurise Europeans for funding the war in Ukraine. Europe is not downplaying the Trump factor. There is speculation about the impact on the continent if he wins the 2024 election.

b. Climate Change and Immigration

The proposed Inflation Reduction Bill by the Biden administration will be helpful in fighting climate change. Republicans are not supportive of the issue of impact of climate change and so the bill. There also will be partisan tussles on the same. The documentation and citizenship of 11 million illegal immigrants remains a divided issue.

Bipartisan Issues

In the case of China and India, there is a rare bipartisan between the Democrats and the Republicans. As per one of the experts in the meeting, the Biden administration has picked up foreign policy issues

that are largely bipartisan or non-conflicting such as Afghanistan, Ukraine, Russia and China. Also, the non - Trump Republicans are on Biden's side. There is a continuation of policy on the nuclear issue.

a. China

President Biden's approach towards China has been hawkish and firm. However, in recent events such as the G20 summit, APEC summit and the 2022 National Committee on U.S.-China Relations' Gala Dinner in New York President Xi has hinted that the relations "should" get back to normal track. Chinese companies such as TikTok will have a lot of issues.

In the Taiwan issue, it is yet to see whether the Republicans would push the issue or not. McCarthy has shown interest in visiting Taiwan like former speaker Pelosi. There is uncertainty if President Biden would run in 2024 or not. This would impact the Taiwan policy as well.

b. India

India and the US have developed a robust partnership. Both the countries have come together on platforms such as Indo-Pacific Economic Framework, I2U2, and Quad which shows deeper economic, commercial, and strategic cooperation.

India has become a critical partner in terms of technology to the United States. However, the Free Trade Agreement is still an issue between the two countries. A sustained negotiation will be required to reach this goal. The US is the largest trading partner of India now. Implications and consequences of the same need to be studied. Some experts in the talk believed that there is no appetite for the FTA in both India and the US. In addition, there is no political will or popular support for the same in the US. However, others held an optimistic view about the scope of a limited trade deal between the two countries. The commerce with India can be more on technology and supply chains. It was also brought up that

India's immediate gain from technology trade seems uncertain as it is a time and resources consuming affair. Also, the US would prioritise its interest over India.

It was underlined that India is in a more comfortable position for the 2024 election outcomes which reflects the success of India's American management.

The talk not only highlighted the key takeaways of the midterm elections but also provided a glimpse of the expected outcomes in a lame-duck Congress for the next two years. The analyses would be helpful in understanding the 2024 Presidential election and its impact on India and the world.

Interactive sessions with H.E. Dr. Philipp Ackermann, Ambassador of Germany to India

Prepared by Prerna Gandhi

The Vivekananda International Foundation organized an interaction with H.E. Dr. Philipp Ackermann, Ambassador of Germany to India on 22 November 2022. After Opening Remarks by Dr Arvind Gupta, Director VIF, Dr. Philipp Ackermann spoke on “Global and Regional Uncertainty and the Prospects for India-German Relations”. The meeting was attended by Ambassador KanwalSibal, Ambassador PS Raghavan, Ambassador Anil Wadhwa, Ambassador DP Srivastava, Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney (Retd), Lt Gen Anil Ahuja (Retd), Ambassador Venkatesh Varma, Brig Vinod Anand (Retd) and other VIF scholars. The meeting discussed a range of issues from bilateral to regional and global affairs. Some of the salient points made were:

Strong India-Germany Ties

India- Germany Relations are at an all-time high today. The new German government has very early on shifted its attention towards India. Germany’s Foreign Minister is expected to visit India for a meeting in December, with German Chancellor also visiting India early next year. During the visit in Berlin in May this year, Prime Minister Modi held detailed bilateral discussions with Chancellor Olaf Scholz. The two leaders co-chaired the 6th India-Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC), a unique biennial format which India conducts only with Germany.

Several Indian ministers were also a part of the delegation to Germany, to hold consultations with their German counterparts. A joint statement was adopted after the IGC. India and Germany discussed ways to boost cooperation in areas like sustainable development, mobility, economic growth, and inked a number of agreements covering a range of sectors. Prime Minister Modi once again visited Germany in June 2022 for the G7 Summit under the German Presidency. India-German trade is around \$ 20 billion, making Germany India's largest trading partner in Europe. India is the largest recipient of German funds in transition to renewables. In reference to German participation in many Smart City projects in India, there are a number of landmark projects such as the water taxi project in Kochi, mobile water testing laboratory in Bihar etc.

Foreign Policy Reassessment in Germany

There has been an ongoing foreign policy reassessment in Germany since the beginning of Russia-Ukraine war in February 2022. With security discourse at the time focused heavily on dealing with cyber challenges, terrorism, unmanned drones, new technologies etc., conventional war in Europe in Europe was a big shock for Germany. This led to serious rethink on rearming the military as the German security establishment earlier had been largely preoccupied with external area specific missions. Relations with Russia came closely under the scanner particularly with regard to energy trade. Germany had close to 50 per cent dependency on Russian imports of fossil fuels which has now been reduced to 4 per cent dependency. There is also a desire to use the current crisis to transition more expeditiously to renewables. Security challenges from the large dependency on Russia has led to parallels being drawn to the even larger dependency on China. China in recent years has emerged as a critical destination for both large and small and medium German enterprises. A key case in point has been China being the biggest cash cow for the German automobile sector. This has prompted strong calls from the German government for a diversification strategy, including encouraging businesses to seek new markets. While trade with India is only one-tenth of China-German trade, there has been a renewed interest in India. However, bureaucratic

regulations remain obstacles. There is also need for energetic Indian outreach to German companies.

Regional and Global Scenario

The need for a ceasefire and acceptable settlement of the Russia-Ukraine war has assumed greater urgency as the world faces multiple challenges from food and energy security to climate change and probable global recession. Involvement of Russia in European security architecture remains an inextricable conundrum. The energy transition taking place in the background of climate change demands greater collaboration. Europe's position on Indo-Pacific and China remain key in the emerging contours of the changing world order. While Germany thinks deeply in alliances, India's strategic autonomy confers it a larger geopolitical profile today. India's G20 Presidency is being seen with great interest and may prove to be landmark event in G20 history.

Interactive Session with Korean National Diplomatic Academy (KNDA)

Prepared by Sweta Kumari

India and South Korea are two key democracies and emerging economies in the Indo-Pacific Region. Both the countries have been witnessing a number of geopolitical developments in their neighbourhood that pose a threat to their territorial sovereignty and national security. The Vivekananda International Foundation (VIF) organised an interactive session with a visiting delegation from the Korean National Diplomatic Academy (KNDA) on November 24, 2022 on the prospects of Republic of Korea-India relations vis-a-vis the recent developments in the region. Lt. Gen. R. K. Sawhney (Retd) chaired the session and made welcome remarks. The KNDA delegates highlighted the rationale and framework of the recently announced Indo-Pacific Strategy by the South Korean government and laid out how bolstering strategic ties with India is a crucial part of this strategy. Apart from this, a wide range of issues of geopolitical significance were discussed.

Introduction

India and South Korea share the same values such as freedom and democracy and want to live in peace and harmony. The national interests of the two countries coincide. South Korea is surrounded by the US, China, Russia and North Korea. India has its own neighbourhood issues. In 2015, the two countries established the Special Strategic Partnership. South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol is interested in bolstering ties between the two

countries. 2023 is going to be a very important milestone in strategic cooperation between India and South Korea. India will be presiding over the G20. The year also marks the 50th anniversary of India-South Korea diplomatic relations. So, there will be a number of opportunities to work together.

ROK's New Indo-Pacific Strategy

The government in South Korea under the leadership of President Yoon is shifting the focus of its foreign policy from the balanced diplomacy approach to a new strategic framework that involves the active engagement of South Korea in the geopolitics of the region and the world. President Yoon is eager to embrace the Indo-Pacific. Earlier, there was a reservation in the ROK's foreign policy about Indo-Pacific and a balanced diplomacy approach was pursued that sought equidistant relations with the US, China, and other countries in the region.

Rationale

President Moon Jae-in, the previous head of state, had introduced the New Southern Policy (NSP) in 2017 to enhance the engagements with India and ASEAN among other countries in the region. The geopolitical circumstances today have changed. North Korea is the main problem for the country but there are other concerning issues. The rise of China is alarming. The New Indo-Pacific Strategy is the result of the evolution of Korea's strategic thinking. As an important stakeholder in the region, there is a growing understanding in the country that there is a need to have an active involvement in the regional situations through readjustment of strategic outlook and policies.

Objective

The Indo-Pacific Strategy aims to achieve three objectives in the region.

- **Freedom-** There should be a rule based international order.
- **Peace-** Making peace in the region by promoting concepts such as non-proliferation and maritime security.

- **Prosperity-** By engaging in areas such as climate change, digitisation and digital economy.

Principles

The objectives of the strategy can be pursued through three principles.

- **Inclusiveness** by not excluding any player in the region.
- **Trust** building with other countries.
- Focusing on **mutual interests**.

India

India is very crucial for the Indo-Pacific region. South Korea shares a similar vision with India and wishes to forward the strategic vision for the next 50 years by engaging in three multilayered mechanisms.

- **Bilateral Relations-** Enhancing strategic communication and strategic dialogue between various agencies such as the Defence Ministry, National Security Council, and Information & Technology Ministry.
- **Beyond Bilateral Relations-** Mini-lateral or trilateral relations with like-minded countries.
- **Multilateral Cooperation-** By engaging in platforms such as the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Mekong- Ganga Cooperation and Mekong- Korea Cooperation.

US and China

South Korean policies have been focused on furthering economic relations and diversification in the past. They are now focused on moving away from the image of a non-strategic player and being involved with the regional security architecture. The Yoon administration has the intention to not rely on a binary framework and focus on national interest and promotion of

liberal democracy and free trade in the region.

South Korea has been caught up in the crossfire between the US and China. Its co-interests differ from China. Although South Korea needs China for the de-nuclearisation of North Korea, the issue is not a priority for China. It intends to keep North Korea as a proxy against South Korea. South Korea needs to recalibrate its situation with China.

Quad and Other Issues

South Korea acknowledges that Quad continues to expand and increase its influence in the Indo-Pacific, however, at present, there is no consensual understanding about its inclusion in the group. The members of the VIF during the interaction pointed out that the Quad needs to have its own secretariat and a secretary general. There needs to be more information about what the leaders of the Quad countries have envisioned about formalising the group.

An exchange of views on India-China border, Taiwan, East China Sea, South China Sea, Russia-Ukraine war, defense production and technology transfer, maritime cooperation and other relevant issues also took place during the interaction.

Overall, the session was very engaging and both sides agreed that the strategic relations between India and South Korea are expected to grow in the future and two countries would play an important role in establishing peace, stability, and a rule-based order in the Indo-Pacific region.

Outcomes of COP27 Climate Summit

Prepared by PK Khup Hangzo

The Second Meeting of the Climate Change Expert Group was held at the Vivekananda International Foundation on 24 November 2022 through hybrid mode. The meeting discussed the key outcomes of the 2022 United Nations Climate Change Conference, more commonly referred to as COP27 that was held at Sharm El Sheikh in Egypt from 6–20 November 2022. It also discussed major trends in climate change and its potential implications for India. The meeting was chaired by Dr. Arvind Gupta, Director of VIF and it was attended by Lt. Gen. Ravi Sawhney (Retd.), Senior Fellow, VIF; Dr. J.R. Bhatt, Adviser/Scientist, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; Dr. Uttam Kumar Sinha, Senior Fellow, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDS); Mr. Naval Jagota, Senior Fellow, VIF; Mr. P.K. KhupHangzo, Associate Fellow, VIF; and Ms. Heena Samant, Research Assistant, VIF. Following are the outcomes of discussion during the meeting.

Limiting global average temperature to 1.5°C is unrealistic

Limiting global average temperature rise to 1.5°C by the end of this century has long been the key goal of climate change negotiations. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) argued that achieving this target required a 45 per cent reduction in global emissions

by 2030 compared with 2010 levels. However, projections by the United Nations just before COP27 indicated that current greenhouse gas reduction pledges for action by 2030, even if delivered in full, would lead to a rise in global average temperature to about 2.5°C. And if the long-term pledges by countries to hit net-zero emissions by 2050 were delivered, global average temperature would rise by 1.8°C. It was hoped that countries would commit to more stringent emissions cut during COP27 so that the 1.5°C global temperature target could be achieved. COP27 however failed to secure the necessary emissions reduction pledges that is required to achieve that goal. For example, a resolution to phase down all fossil fuels, proposed by India and backed by at least 80 countries, was removed from the final outcome document. The document also included a reference to “low-emissions energy,” raising concern among some that it opened the door to the growing use of natural gas - a fossil fuel that leads to both carbon dioxide and methane emissions. Thus, the 1.5°C target of limiting global average temperature to 1.5°C by the end of this century fizzled out at COP27 and it may have even died there.

Loss and damage fund could become a “double-edged sword” for India

COP27 summit produced an agreement on a fund for poor countries afflicted by the worst ravages of extreme weather, known as loss and damage. This is a historic breakthrough because developed countries has long resisted the idea for fear that such a fund could open them to legal liability for historic emissions. The loss and damage fund however is far from settled. It is likely that it will be several years before the fund exists, with the agreement setting out only a roadmap for resolving lingering questions including who would oversee the fund, how the money would be dispersed – and to whom. The fund however could be a “double-edged sword” for India. As developed countries softened their stand on loss and damage, the status of China – the world’s biggest emitter and responsible for more cumulative emissions than any country apart from the US – came under the spotlight, along with that of others classed as “developing” under the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). That treaty made a sharp distinction between developed and

developing countries. Among other things, it required developed countries to help developing ones adapt to the impacts of climate change. In other words, developing countries are regarded as recipients of rather than donors to any fund. Today, developing countries like China is the world's second biggest economy, and responsible for more cumulative emissions than any country other than the US. Others like the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, etc. has per capita emissions comparable to those of developed countries. In light of this, future climate summits will increasingly focus on the “developing” status of some countries and the spotlight may also shine on India in the years ahead. India should therefore resist any effort to make the country pay as it also required funding to adapt to the impact of climate change.

Sub-national effort should be reinvigorated

While climate policies are primarily driven by national governments, they alone are not able to manage the varied challenges associated with it. Subnational governments and organisations, defined as the sum of state governments and local/regional governments, have an important role to play in achieving the climate ambitions of national governments. Towards this end, a number of climate actions have now been undertaken at the sub-national levels. Such efforts are key to convincing national governments to do more to address climate change. In developed countries, an increasing number of actors - states, cities, provinces, businesses, and more - are taking significant measures to reduce emissions. In India too, there is a need for greater synchronization between national, state, and local efforts. One suggestion was that climate actions should be undertaken at the municipality and panchayat levels. Given that cities are a key contributor to climate change, they account for over 70 per cent of global CO₂ emissions; city-based civil society organisations such as Resident Welfare Association (RWA) could enable community action and empower citizens to undertake the necessary behavioural changes. Likewise, panchayats can play a crucial and frontline role in coordinating effective responses to climate risks, enabling adaptation and building climate-change resilient communities in rural areas.

Pay greater attention to climate tipping points

Climate change has driven the world to the brink of multiple disastrous tipping points. A tipping point is when a temperature threshold is passed, leading to unstoppable change in a climate system, even if global warming ends. A recent study that was published in the journal *Science* on 9 Sep 2022 found evidence for 16 tipping points that could be triggered at global warming of 1.5°C, 2°C, etc. The study showed that five dangerous tipping points may already have been passed due to the 1.1°C of global warming caused by humanity to date. These include the collapse of Greenland's ice cap, the collapse of a key current in the north Atlantic, and an abrupt melting of carbon-rich permafrost. At 1.5°C of warming, the minimum rise now expected, four of the five tipping points move from being possible to likely. Also at 1.5°C, an additional five tipping points become possible, including changes to vast northern forests and the loss of almost all mountain glaciers. There is an urgent need to better understand the risk of climate tipping points in the context of South Asia. Specifically, there is a need to understand when tipping points will be reached for the Himalayan glaciers and the Indian summer monsoon and the consequences that it will entail.

Protect Indian agriculture at all costs

Agriculture is a significant contributor to climate change and reducing agricultural emissions - largely methane and nitrous oxide - could play a significant role in climate change mitigation. The majority of emissions from the agricultural sector comes from raising livestock with cow burps and manure being the biggest single source. Not surprisingly, methane has become a buzzword and a “climate game changers” for developed countries and the US and the EU launched the Global Methane Pledge during COP26 in Glasgow last year. The Pledge, which now has over 100 country participants, aimed to slash methane emissions by 30 per cent by 2030. Methane emissions once again was a key agenda during COP27. India did not sign on to the Pledge as it is wary of putting its agricultural sector under the purview of global emissions reduction plans.

It also felt that it could be adversely affected by it. The agriculture sector contributes around 13 per cent of India's GDP and it engages 44 per cent of the country's workforce. Also, close to 86 per cent of farmers in India are small and marginal with average land holdings of less than 1.1 hectare. Livestock rearing (enteric fermentation and manure management) and rice cultivation are the primary source of methane emissions in India's agricultural sector. Methane emissions from India's agricultural sector however was deemed to be "survival" emissions and not luxury ones. As such, initiatives such as the Global Methane Pledge could impact farmers' income and also agricultural production, especially that of paddy. India should therefore continue to shield its agricultural sector from the purview of global emissions reduction plans. At the same time, it should continue to make voluntary efforts to improve its agricultural systems so that they can adapt to the impact of climate change more effectively.

Lifestyle change is key to addressing climate change

Climate change is a lifestyle issue and profligate lifestyle in developed countries is the primary driver. Countries like the US have long promoted the idea of an "American Dream." Originally, it was a dream of equality, justice, and democracy. Over time, it came to be associated with upward mobility and enough economic success to lead a comfortable life. That however have also resulted in materialism, consumerism, and profligate lifestyle. As such, the equivalent of 5.1 Earths will be required if everyone lived like Americans. Conversely, if everyone lived like Indians, only the equivalent of 0.8 Earth would be required. In recent years, Chinese leaders have also promoted the idea of a "Chinese Dream." Although details about what it really meant remained fuzzy, it also focuses on prosperity. And as China continues to prosper, there are chances that its citizens will also adopt profligate lifestyles similar to those of western countries. Big lifestyle changes by those living in developed countries is key to addressing climate change. That would entail, among others things, eating less meat and dairy, swapping cars for bikes, taking fewer flights, ditching gas boilers at home, etc. However, policy makers considered lifestyle to be a hot-potato issue. As such, they are reluctant to address it stringently.

Growing focus on lifestyle changes as a solution to climate change offered an opportunity for India to take the lead in steering the global policy discourse on the issue. The country has launched the Lifestyle for the Environment (LiFE) Movement on 5 June 2022. The movement aimed to promote an environmentally conscious lifestyle that focused on “mindful and deliberate utilization” instead of “mindless and wasteful consumption.” Going forward, India should take the lead in re-conceptualising national aspirations in an age of climate change as that have a direct bearing on individual’s lifestyle choices and hence climate change.

Appointment of Army Chief - Implications-domestic and external

Prepared by Aakriti Vinayak

A meeting of the Pakistan Study Group (PSG) was held in hybrid mode on 28th November 2022. The main items on the agenda were Pakistan: Appointment of Gen Asim Munir as Army Chief – Implications-domestic and external, tasks, Imran Khan- options, future?, Possibility of by elections, Gen Bajwa's last speech- analysis; corruption allegations, Economic situation- looming default and Growing footprint of the TTP. The Meeting was attended by the following: Shri Arvind Gupta, Amb Satish Chandra, Ms. Shalini Chawla, Shri Rana Banerjee, Shri Sushant Sareen, Amb DP Srivastava, Amb G Parthasarathy, Lt Gen Ravi Sawhney (Retd), Brig Rahul Bhonsle (Retd), Amb DB Venkatesh Varma, Amb Amar Sinha, Shri Tilak Devasher, Gen NC Vij (Retd) and Gp. Capt. Naval Jagota (Retd).

Pakistan remains enmeshed in political uncertainty and economic stress. The month saw some significant developments as far as the internal politics of the country is concerned. On 24 November 2022, after much speculation Lieutenant General Syed Asim Munir Shah of the Frontier Force Regiment was appointed as Pakistan's new army chief. Munir is the first Army chief to have headed both the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) and the Military Intelligence. It is important to note that he served as an ISI chief for eight months at the time when the Pulwama attack that

killed 40 CRPF personnel in February 2019 took place, causing tensions between India and Pakistan to escalate. However Munir's tenure was shortest as he was removed as ISI chief by General Bajwa at the request of then PM Imran Khan. Asim Munir is also 'Hafiz-e-Quran,' one who has memorised the Quran because of which there have been assumptions that he will have a radical/fundamentalist mindset.

Munir is expected to face plethora of challenges. His first task would be ending dissensions within the Army, as the army remains divided. Another challenge that Munir will face is critical role in keeping his predecessor General Bajwa's emphasis about Pakistani Army's stance of remaining "apolitical". General Bajwa's speech last time as army chief the on occasion of a martyrs' day function highlighted the 'catharsis' in the army under his leadership, as it had decided to become neutral in domestic politics from February, 2021 onwards. Munir will have to work on this aspect as it is very difficult to divorce the army from politics.

On the external front, he faces a difficult situation in Afghanistan with major differences with the Taliban on issues like the Durand Line and the TTP. There will be no significant shift in relationship with China and USA as Munir is likely to follow General Bajwa on balancing the ties between USA and China. As far as India is concerned Pakistan's policy will remain anti-India and there will be no drastic change.

It is pertinent to note that Imran Khan has threatened to withdraw from all the Assemblies where his party Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) is in power. Khan stated that his party would not stay part of this "corrupt political system any longer," where people accused of billions in corruption got away without punishment. Imran Khan wants the military to convince the government to hold elections before October next year to avoid a long phase of political instability and social unrest in the country. The opposition has termed this threat by Khan as just a way to stay politically relevant.

Economy continues to be on a downward slide. There was a report that stated the country's risk of default, measured by the 5-year credit default swap (CDS), touched 52.8 per cent, which is a 13-year high. Further

rising inflation has emerged as a critical concern for Pakistan's economy which remains at all-time high. Foreign exchange reserves also continue to deplete as the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) announced that its foreign exchange reserves have decreased by \$327 million.

There has been recent surge in attacks by the banned outfit, Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Swat District. The deteriorating security situation in Swat ascertains to the fact that TTP continues to rise and the Pakistan army led peace process remains stalled.

Economic and Trade Relationship

Prepared by Samir Bhattacharya

On 28th November 2022, VIF organised its 2nd Africa Expert Group meeting. The meeting was chaired by Amb Rajiv Bhatia. The other members present in the meeting were Dr Arvind Gupta, Amb D.K. Shrivastava, Amb Anil Trigunayat, Amb. Rakshpaul Malhotra, Dr Nivedita Ray, Mr Kaushalendra Sinha, Ms Deepti Pant, Ms Neha Sinha, and Mr Samir Bhattacharya. Professor Renu Modi, Mr Anil Devli, Prof RajenHarshe and Ms Ruchita Beri also joined the meeting virtually. Shri Dammu Ravi, Secretary, Economic Relations, Ministry of External Affairs gave a brief overview of the contours of India-Africa relations and interacted with the experts.

The current status of India and Africa's maritime connectivity and the need for a direct shipping line was discussed. At present, all the shipping between India and Africa takes place either via Gulf countries or using 3rd party carriers, which increases the cost of shipment. Given the profit that can be incurred, Indian shipping companies will be happy to participate. Importance of having a national shipping line was also raised. An Indian Flag shipping company will also enhance India's global status.

Additionally, the use of Chabahar port as a transshipment point can be beneficial towards enhanced trade between India and Africa. Chabahar is located at the centre of the INSTC corridor. With Chabahar as the base,

shipments can be diverted to the Russian side or the African side. India has more than 120 maritime training institutes and Maritime training is one area where India can collaborate with Africa.

In addition to direct shipping lines, a direct banking service is required. Export credit guarantee also needs some reform to make it more competitive. Exim Bank's lending limit is still low and can be looked after. Digital mode is the way to the future and India must explore using technology for service deliveries in health, banking, education etc. There were discussions regarding the potential for further expansion of trade, investment and technological collaboration from the perspectives of the Exim Bank. The discussion highlighted some challenges related to the current LoC model. The biggest challenge appears to be the bureaucratic hassle in getting access to LoC. While LoCs are allocated quite rapidly, they are disbursed very slowly, creating a bottleneck and a big challenge, particularly for small and medium enterprises.

Tripartite is an area that needs more vigorously explored. FICCI is exploring the possibilities of partnering with Saudi to work with Africa. China already collaborates with Saudi to work on Africa. India may also explore Saudi to work in Africa, considering the current bonhomie between the two countries. FICCI is developing a policy paper on the theme of the Africa Growth Fund, where the idea of developing a fund to help SMEs settle in Africa is explored. FICCI was requested to share the draft concept note with the group.

Imports of agro products are another area that is being explored. There are many agro products available in Africa that have a good market demand in India. Instead of importing them from Europe, importing from Africa will cost India much less. Ideas such as whether Serum Institute, Bharat Biotech etc can invest in vaccine research and production in Africa were also explored.

Some discussions took place regarding the experience of trading communities in Africa and how LoC has become a bureaucratic and layered

process, so much so that Africans prefer institutes like the World Bank or the EU. Some of them are not even processing the LoC despite being awarded to them. The Indian government may consider reworking ITEC as per the needs of the time. Initiatives like Barefoot College, which trains about 100 solar mamas in a year, are a great success in Africa. However, they are very small scale and must be scaled up. Finally, the question of racism against African students in certain segments of Indian society and their remedial method is also discussed. The idea of inviting the Dean of the Corps or some representative who can speak on behalf of the students to join the group or address the group was explored.

Secretary Dammu Ravi in his address to the VIF Expert Group appreciated VIF for the creation of this much-needed Africa Expert Group. He also congratulated Amb. Rajiv Bhatia and Amb. Gurjit Singh as both have written an excellent book on India and Africa relations last year. In economic diplomacy, he mentioned that while China occupies about 35 per cent of the overall relationship, India has only five per cent share of the African trade. China has invested about USD 870 billion in Africa while Indian investment is between 45 to 60 billion. While the difference is stark, he emphasised the importance of understanding the whole canvas of the relationship without comparing it with China or any other country. Africa today is much different than what it was. The new Africa is much more aspirational and assertive. The new Africa wants more regional integration and wants partners in their journey, without any colonial or neo-colonial baggage.

Considering the ways to improve our engagements with Africa, we need to respond to the demands of the time. The concept of the Global Value Chain (GVC) has changed the perceptions of how trade is conducted. Accordingly, India may consider establishing manufacturing bases across Africa instead of focusing only on the flow of goods. This will qualify the products as local; create local employment earning India some goodwill. In the meantime, this will also boost India's make-in-India mission. Instead of procuring raw materials from Africa, importing them to India and then

manufacturing some goods, India may consider producing directly in Africa and exporting around the globe. France has been doing this successfully over the years. Countries like Uganda, Ethiopia, and Tanzania have already shown interest in setting up manufacturing hubs in their countries. India may also think of clusters where India can set up its 4-5 bases in North, East, West and South Africa with port facilities and serve the whole region from that base.

The currency swap is another idea that India may consider seriously. Invoicing in rupees would be a game changer for the India-Africa trade. CII and FICCI would play an important role in raising awareness regarding the process. India has already done this with Russia and therefore could be replicated, even in a better way. Countries like Nigeria and Sudan are keen to make this happen. But they need more clarity on the process. As a matter of fact, China does all their credit projects in Yuan.

India has a total commitment of 32 billion LoC out of which 16 billion goes to Africa. There are 600 committed projects, out of which 300 are already completed. However, there are challenges such as Indian LoCs being expensive, quality is not always certain, and the sub-contracting process is not so transparent. And the biggest challenge of LoC is the increasing inability of African countries to repay their debts. Using rupees and attaching certain conditions related to the procurement of raw materials etc. could help to minimise this challenge. In all these, public sectors will need support to grow as global companies. They can take the support of the private sector or even the Indian diaspora.

ITEC scholarship is incrementally increasing for years. But the time has come to reform it. The greater value would be instead of giving some scholarships; India can open some educational institutes there. Indian agriculture education institutions, medical colleges, engineering institutes etc will have a lot of demand in Africa. Many Indian students go to Europe to study in their medical colleges. Some of the students can be diverted to Africa and thus creating a win-win situation. IIT Chennai will soon open an offshore campus in Tanzania which can be a hub for technology

education in Africa. More similar models need to be explored. The north-South partnership can be more useful in this regard.

There are complaints regarding the treatment of African students who come to India to study. MEA is working with other government departments to give one extra year to African students where they can work or do some internship. This would also help India to create a trained workforce across the continent and going forward they can be absorbed in different Indian companies working in those respective countries. Concerning the India Africa Forum Summit, the Indian government is planning to hold it sometime in early 2023. India would also consider if India can facilitate the entry of the African Union (AU) into the G20. This would give a great impetus to India's strong relationship with Africa.

Secretary MEA's address was followed by some active interactions where every member made their observations and asked some specific questions to the Secretary. Secretary noted all the concerns and assured the group of the actions to enhance India's Africa outreach. He facilitated the group and requested them to bring out a policy paper with a focus on both IAFS IV as well as upcoming G20. This would be useful for Indian policymakers to prepare for those meetings.

About the VIVEKANANDA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

The Vivekananda International Foundation is an independent non-partisan institution that conducts research and analysis on domestic and international issues, and offers a platform for dialogue and conflict resolution. Some of India's leading practitioners from the fields of security, military, diplomacy, government, academia and media have come together to generate ideas and stimulate action on national security issues.

The defining feature of VIF lies in its provision of core institutional support which enables the organisation to be flexible in its approach and proactive in changing circumstances, with a long-term focus on India's strategic, developmental and civilisational interests. The VIF aims to channelise fresh insights and decades of experience harnessed from its faculty into fostering actionable ideas for the nation's stakeholders.

Since its inception, VIF has pursued quality research and scholarship and made efforts to highlight issues in governance, and strengthen national security. This is being actualised through numerous activities like seminars, round tables, interactive dialogues, Vimarsh (public discourse), conferences and briefings. The publications of VIF form lasting deliverables of VIF's aspiration to impact on the prevailing discourse on issues concerning India's national interest.



VIVEKANANDA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

3, San Martin Marg, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi – 110021

Phone: +91-11-24121764, 24106698

Email: info@vifindia.org,

Website: <https://www.vifindia.org>

Follow us on [twitter@vifindia](https://twitter.com/vifindia)