

Defense News Conclave

Stories of U.S.-India Defense and Security Partnership

QUARTERLY NEWS WRAP

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India, U.S. hold fifth 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue with focus on Indo-Pacific

In the month of November 2023 New Delhi hosted 2+2 Ministerial Dialogues with two of its comprehensive strategic partners who are also members of the QUAD. India's External Affairs Minister and Defence Minister met with their counterparts from the U.S. on November 09-10 and Australia on November 20. For covering this, CUTS International came up with an Occasional News Wrap (ONW):

- [India Hosts Two 2+2 Ministerial Dialogues](#)

Apart from this, an inter-ministerial delegation from India attended the 28th Session of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP28) held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates from November 30, 2023 to December 13, 2023. The major outcome from COP28 included the decision on Outcome of the First Global Stocktake, ratcheting up global climate ambition before the end of the decade.

These global efforts will be taken up by the countries in a nationally determined manner taking into account the Paris Agreement and their different national circumstances. Another major outcome of COP 28 is the agreement on the operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund and its funding arrangements.

Also, in this quarter United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD's) 8th World Investment Forum, was hosted in Abu Dhabi from October 16-20, 2023. This Biennial Forum assembled over 6,000 investment stakeholders from 160 countries, including high-level participants such as Heads of State, Global Company Executives, and Experts in the international investment landscape. Here, CUTS in partnership with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and UNCTAD also hosted an event titled ["FDI, ESG and Inclusivity"](#).

In this quarter, CUTS organised a workshop third in-series in Mumbai, Maharashtra with distinguished speakers to facilitate meaningful dialogues to understand broader perspectives of the U.S.-India Defense Partnership:

- [Dialogues on 'Deliverables to Deliveries' | Mumbai](#)

Through the project titled, ['Defense News Conclave: Stories of U.S.-India Defense Partnership'](#), CUTS International aims to raise awareness among relevant stakeholders and the wider public about the importance of U.S.-India defense relations. This ninth edition of this Quarterly News Wrap covers prominent developments in U.S.-India defense relations.

HIGHLIGHTS

COP28 Event Highlights urgent need to accelerate development and implementation of National Adaptation Plans <i>United Nations Climate Change</i> December 28, 2023	The urgent need to accelerate the development and implementation of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) – crucial to strengthening resilience to climate change at the national level was in focus at a COP28 event that brought together high-level representatives of governments and intergovernmental organisations.
U.S. and India collaborate on task force for Energy Storage Technologies <i>Silicon India</i> December 13, 2023	The U.S.-India Energy Storage Task Force (ESTF), a collaborative effort between the U.S. Department of Energy and India's Ministry of Power aimed at advancing energy storage technologies in both countries, has officially started its operations.
Africa-India cooperation sets Benchmark for Partnership <i>Africa Center for Strategic Studies, Paul Nantulya</i> December 13, 2023	The African Union (AU) was included as a full member of the G20 at the New Delhi Summit in September 2023. Calling Africa “India’s top priority,” India’s Prime Minister Narendra Modi, said, “When we use the term ‘Global South,’ it is not just a diplomatic term”. In our shared history, we have together opposed colonialism and apartheid. The next triennial India-Africa Forum Summit is planned for 2024.
India, U.S. agree to strengthen cooperation in pharma, semiconductors, critical minerals <i>The Economic Times</i> December 01, 2023	India and the U.S. have agreed to strengthen cooperation in sectors like pharmaceuticals, semiconductors, critical minerals and emerging technologies, an official statement said on December 01, 2023.
Analysing the Fifth Indo-U.S. 2+2 Ministerial <i>The Economic Times, Pradeep S Mehta and Sohini Nayak</i> November 25, 2023	The Fifth 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue, 2023 (Paywall), between India and the U.S. of America has successfully captured the curiosity of the global community, ratchetting the bilateral ‘comprehensive global strategic partnership’ between the two large democracies.
U.S.-India Defence Partnership is now at an all-time high <i>APN News</i> November 22, 2023	U.S.-India Defense Partnership is functioning at an all-time high said Rear Admiral Michael Baker, Senior Defense Official and Defence Attaché at the U.S. Embassy, New Delhi. He was speaking at a day-long workshop titled “Defense News Conclave: Stories of U.S.-India Defense and Security Partnership,” organised by the U.S. Department of State through the U.S. Consulate General Kolkata and CUTS International.
India, Australia discuss defence ties at 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue <i>The Indian Express</i> November 21, 2023	India and Australia held 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue to step up defence cooperation and deepen the strategic relationship in sectors such as critical minerals and trade and investment.
America and India expand their Partnership <i>Foreign Policy, Michael Kugelman</i> November 08, 2023	U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin meet their Indian counterparts in New Delhi during the 2+2 ministerial dialogue—an annual exchange that enables India and the U.S. to take stock of their relationship and discuss future priorities.

OFFICIAL STATEMENTS

<p>Statement by Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield on the adoption of a UN Security Council Resolution on Financing African Union-Led Support Operations</p> <p><i>United States Mission to the United Nations</i></p> <p>December 22, 2023</p>	<p>The U.S. welcomes the unanimous adoption of a United Nations Security Council resolution on the financing of African Union (AU) led peace support operations. This resolution outlines a framework for the use of UN funds to support the deployment of AU-led missions to promote peace and security across the African continent.</p>
<p>Joint Press Release of the QUAD Senior Cyber Group</p> <p><i>Ministry of External Affairs</i></p> <p>December 15, 2023</p>	<p>Deputy Secretary Cyber and Infrastructure Security Hamish Hansford of Australia's Department of Home Affairs, National Cyber Security Coordinator Lt. General MU Nair of India, Deputy National Security Advisor and Assistant Chief Cabinet Secretary Keiichi Ichikawa of Japan, and Deputy Assistant to the President and Deputy National Security Advisor for Cyber and Emerging Technology Anne Neuberger of the U.S. of America – met in Tokyo, Japan for the third in person Quad Senior Cyber Group (QSCG) Principal Meeting, hosted by Deputy National Security Advisor and Assistant Chief Cabinet Secretary Keiichi Ichikawa.</p>
<p>India at COP28: Highlights of 28th Conference of Parties</p> <p><i>Press Information Bureau</i></p> <p>December 12, 2023</p>	<p>The 28th Conference of Parties (COP28) was held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), from November 30 to December 12, 2023 where the representatives from 197 countries showcased their efforts to limit global warming and held discussions to prepare for future climate change. This was the first time when the countries formally assessed their progress under the 2015 Paris climate agreement.</p>
<p>Joint Statement: Fifth Annual India-U.S. 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue</p> <p><i>Ministry of External Affairs</i></p> <p>November 10, 2023</p>	<p>Minister of Defence Shri Rajnath Singh and Minister of External Affairs Dr. S. Jaishankar welcomed Secretary of State H.E. Mr. Antony J. Blinken and Secretary of Defence H.E. Mr. Lloyd J. Austin III for the fifth India-U.S. 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in New Delhi.</p>
<p>U.S.-India Relations</p> <p><i>U.S. Department of States</i></p> <p>November 09, 2023</p>	<p>The relationship between the U.S. and India is one of the most strategic and consequential of the 21st century. The U.S. supports India's emergence as a leading global power and a vital partner in promoting a peaceful, stable, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region. The 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue between the U.S. Secretaries of State and Defence and their Indian counterparts is the premier recurring dialogue mechanism between the U.S. and India.</p>
<p>Joint Statement on Israel</p> <p><i>The White House</i></p> <p>October 09, 2023</p>	<p>President Macron of France, Chancellor Scholz of Germany, Prime Minister Meloni of Italy, Prime Minister Sunak of the United Kingdom, and President Biden of the U.S. express their steadfast and united support to the State of Israel, and unequivocal condemnation of Hamas and its appalling acts of terrorism.</p>

POLICY MATTERS

<p>We have deepened our partnership with India through Quad: U.S. Secretary of State Blinken</p> <p><i>The New Indian Express</i> December 21, 2023</p>	<p>The U.S. has deepened its partnership with India in 2023 and elevated cooperation with it through the Quad along with Japan and Australia, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said. Blinken's remarks came at his end-of-year press availability at the State Department in Washington on December 20, 2023.</p>
<p>Tata Boeing Aerospace Limited achieves Milestone with delivery of 250th AH-64 Apache Fuselage, to be used by U.S., Indian Armies</p> <p><i>Swarajya, Nayan Dwivedi</i> December 20, 2023</p>	<p>Tata Boeing Aerospace Limited (TBAL) has marked a significant achievement by delivering the 250th fuselage for the AH-64 Apache attack helicopter from its cutting-edge facility in Hyderabad. The delivered fuselages, as reported by Deccan Chronicle, cater to global customers, including the U.S. Army and the Indian Army, with six recently ordered by the latter. TBAL, a joint venture between Boeing and Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL), operates with a workforce of over 900 engineers and technicians.</p>
<p>Modeled on U.S. B-2 Spirit, India joins Elite Group of Nations with Indigenous, Hi-Speed, Flying-Wing UAV</p> <p><i>The EurAsian times</i> December 15, 2023</p>	<p>The Ministry of Defence announced that its Defense Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted the flight trial of the AFWT Demonstrator, a locally developed high-speed flying wing unmanned Aerial Vehicle from the Aeronautical Test Range at Chitradurga in Karnataka in southern India. The successful flying demonstration of this autonomous stealth UAV is a testimony to the maturity in the technology readiness levels in the country.</p>
<p>Why India abstained in UN's Gaza resolution</p> <p><i>The Times of India</i> October 28, 2023</p>	<p>In a special session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) on October 27, 2023, India stressed the need for explicit condemnation of the terrorist attacks by Hamas on October 07. The UNGA adopted a resolution on the same day, calling for an "immediate, durable, and sustained humanitarian truce" between Israeli forces and Hamas militants in Gaza. The adopted resolution, initially moved by Jordan, did not contain explicit condemnation of the October 07 terrorist attacks, but an amendment was introduced to include this condemnation before the main resolution's vote.</p>
<p>U.S. regards Chinese military, security strategy as 'pacing challenge'</p> <p><i>Business Standard</i> October 22, 2023</p>	<p>The American financial legislation, the National Defence Authorisation Act for 2000, requires the U.S. Secretary of Defence to submit an annual report "on military and security developments (Paywall) involving the People's Republic of China (PRC)". The report shall address the current and probable future course of military-technological development of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the tenets and probable development of Chinese security strategy and military strategy.</p>

DEFENSE TRADE

<p>India may discuss non-tariff barriers in Trade Policy Forum meet with U.S. <i>Business Standard</i> December 26, 2023</p>	<p>Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International, said that legacy trade frictions pose a major challenge to advancing the bilateral trade relationship. There is a need for a roadmap, which can match Indian and American trade priorities (Paywall) and resolve outstanding issues, he added. For India, restoration of our status as a beneficiary of the U.S. GSP programme and securing good terms for Indian professional service providers should be the priorities.</p>
<p>India, UK to hold next round of talks for Free Trade Agreement in January <i>Moneycontrol</i> December 18, 2023</p>	<p>India and the UK officials in January next year will hold the next round of talks for the proposed Free Trade Agreement (FTA) to resolve remaining issues, the commerce ministry said on December 18, 2023. The 13th round of negotiations for the proposed pact was held between September 18 and December 15.</p>
<p>Looking at high-quality agreement: Australian envoy on India-Australia comprehensive trade deal <i>Moneycontrol</i> December 13, 2023</p>	<p>Australia is looking at achieving a "high-quality" Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) with India to ensure that it genuinely works towards broadening economic partnership, Australian High Commissioner Philip Green said. Both sides are holding negotiations for an ambitious CECA that would build upon the existing Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA).</p>
<p>India and U.S. to co-produce armoured vehicle: U.S. Defence Secretary Austin <i>Deccan Herald</i> November 10, 2023</p>	<p>India and the U.S. will co-produce an infantry combat vehicle as part of defence industrial cooperation, U.S. Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin said on November 10, 2023. He said this while speaking to a small group of journalists after the '2+2' Defence and Foreign Ministerial Dialogue in Delhi.</p>
<p>India, U.S. bolster defence cooperation in response to China: Joint production of combat vehicles, drones in focus <i>The Economic Times</i> November 11, 2023</p>	<p>In a significant stride toward enhanced defense collaboration, U.S. Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin announced a groundbreaking collaboration between India and the U.S. for co-producing infantry combat vehicles. The development comes against the backdrop of both nations strengthening their strategic ties, driven partly by concerns over China's increasing military assertiveness.</p>
<p>Trade transformation: India's journey up the global value chain <i>Times of India</i> October 23, 2023</p>	<p>Trade is the cornerstone of a nation's development, a truism underscored by the economic triumphs of countries such as Japan, South Korea, and China. Historically, India's economic policies leaned towards protectionism, but the winds of change are blowing, and the country is now actively embracing trade and strategic partnerships to unlock the full potential of globalisation.</p>

TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Indian envoy to U.S. discusses technology partnership with IBM CEO <i>ThePrint</i> December 15, 2023	Indian Ambassador to the U.S. Taranjit Singh Sandhu discussed India-U.S. technology partnership during his meeting with International Business Machines Corporation (IBM) CEO Arvind Krishna on December 14, 2023. During the meeting at India House, they also discussed new and emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Quantum.
U.S., India, Taiwan unite to strengthen cybersecurity against China threat <i>Business Standard</i> December 13, 2023	With China looming ever larger as a potent cyber threat, American, Indian and Taiwanese cybersecurity officials have met to find ways of deepening their operational expertise and sharing best practices on cybersecurity issues . The meeting took place on December 11, and December 12 during a joint workshop convened under the Global Cooperation and Training Framework (GCTF). This was the first in-person GCTF programme held in India. Co-hosting the event were U.S. Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti, Taiwan's Representative to India, Baushuan Ger, India's former National Cyber Security Coordinator, Lieutenant General Rajesh Pant, and the Indian government-sponsored think tank, United Service Institution of India (USI).
Advancements in India-U.S. Technological Collaboration <i>Financial Express</i> December 04, 2023	The visit of Jonathan Finer, Principal Deputy National Security Adviser (NSA) of the U.S., to New Delhi unveils a crucial chapter in the evolving solidarity between India and the U.S. This diplomatic engagement follows the footsteps of U.S. NSA Jake Sullivan's visit to India in June 2023 and the reciprocal visit of India's NSA Ajit Doval to the U.S. in January 2023. Central to this interaction was the comprehensive mid-term review of the India-U.S. Initiative on Critical and Emerging Technologies (iCET), a joint endeavour launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Joe Biden in May 2022.
NASA Administrator to travel to India, UAE; Discuss Space Cooperation <i>NASA, Abbey A. Donaldson</i> November 24, 2023	NASA Administrator Bill Nelson will travel to India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) for a series of meetings beginning November 27, with key government officials. He also will meet with space officials in both countries to deepen bilateral cooperation across a broad range of innovation and research-related areas, especially in human exploration and Earth science.
DARPA eyes creation of next-generation semiconductor manufacturing hub <i>C4ISRNET</i> November 22, 2023	The Defence Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) said it plans to award a contract next summer to establish a U.S. hub for advanced microelectronics manufacturing. The program, dubbed next-generation microelectronics manufacturing, will fund the research and equipment to create a domestic center for prototyping cutting-edge fabrication techniques, which DARPA hopes will give the U.S. semiconductor industrial base a leading edge.

INDO-PACIFIC DEVELOPMENTS

<p>Bridging the gaps: The genesis and future of Indian military theatre commands</p> <p><i>The Economic Times, Pradeep S Mehta, Purushendra Singh and Ojasvinee Sharma</i></p> <p>December 24, 2023</p>	<p>In August 2023, the Indian Parliament passed a landmark bill advocating the establishment of theatre commands for the Indian Armed Forces, taking a leap forward after a long journey of contested discussions. Various Indian defence experts assert that the theaterisation of the armed forces is a critical step towards strengthening its defence structure. While the bill's passage signifies a crucial initial step, India will be covering a considerable distance in the near future to fully operationalise theaterisation.</p>
<p>India, U.S. to team up for Pacific Islands</p> <p><i>Livemint, Shashank Mattoo</i></p> <p>December 03, 2023</p>	<p>India and the U.S. are mulling over plans to team up and deliver development projects in the strategically vital Pacific Islands. This comes as the islands attract increased attention from China given their location along key maritime trade routes and suitability for military power projection. These 14 island-nations include the Marshall Islands, Fiji, Tonga, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Nauru.</p>
<p>U.S. is working with Indo-Pacific partners to boost economic resilience, Katherine Tai says</p> <p><i>CNBC</i></p> <p>October 30, 2023</p>	<p>The U.S. is working very closely with its trading partners in the Indo-Pacific region to help build economic resilience, said U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai. The Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) initiative, launched in May last year by U.S. President Joe Biden, is looking to announce a number of initiatives soon, Tai told CNBC's Martin Soong on the sidelines of the G7 Trade Ministers' summit in Osaka, Japan.</p>
<p>"Collective solutions needed to combat security threats in the Indo-Pacific region"</p> <p><i>Smart Governance</i></p> <p>October 18, 2023</p>	<p>In recent years, the term "Indo-Pacific" has become widely used to describe the vast geographical expanse encompassing countries around the Indian and Pacific Oceans. However, despite its popularity, this description falls short of fully capturing the region's diversity and expanse. It ignores regions such as the European Union (EU), landlocked countries, and the western coast of Africa, which is an oversight that we must now correct.</p>
<p>Cooperation in Indo-Pacific is in interests of India and Vietnam</p> <p><i>The Economic Times</i></p> <p>October 16, 2023</p>	<p>External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on October 16, 2023 said that the cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region is in the shared interests of India and Vietnam as he underlined the significance of ASEAN centrality and highlighted the contribution of the Quad grouping. Jaishankar, who arrived in Vietnam on a four-day official visit, made the remarks during his address to the Diplomatic Academy of Vietnam on "India in the Indo-Pacific".</p>

RELEVANT EVENTS AND VISITS

S. No.	Events/Visits	Major Outcomes
1.	<u>Visit of External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar to Russia (December 25- 29, 2023)</u> December 30, 2023	In Moscow, External Affairs Minister called on President H. E. Vladimir Putin and held discussions with Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Industry and Trade, H.E. Denis Manturov, as well as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. Sergey Lavrov.
2.	<u>United States Hosts Quad Counterterrorism Working Group in Honolulu, Hawaii</u> December 22, 2023	The Department of State hosted representatives from Japan, Australia, and India for the Quad Counterterrorism Working Group meeting in Honolulu, Hawaii December 19-21, 2023. Gregory LoGerfo, Acting Principal Deputy Coordinator for Counterterrorism, led the U.S. interagency delegation.
3.	<u>Visit of U.S. Principal Deputy National Security Adviser to India (December 04, 2023)</u> December 04, 2023	Jonathan Finan, Principal Deputy National Security Adviser of the U.S. is visiting New Delhi to hold consultations with Mr. Vikram Misri, Deputy National Security Adviser (NSA) (Strategic Affairs), National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS). This is a follow up to the visit of U.S. NSA Jake Sullivan to India in June 2023 and the visit of NSA Mr. Ajit Doval, KC to U.S. in January 2023.
4.	<u>With 80,000 attendees, COP28 is largest UN climate summit ever</u> December 01, 2023	COP28 is officially the largest ever UN climate summit, with 80,000 participants registered on a list that for the first time shows who they work for. Among the host country's guests are Bill Gates and Antoine Arnault.
5.	<u>Antony Blinken in Delhi for 5th India-U.S. 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue</u> November 10, 2023	U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken arrived in New Delhi to co-chair the 5th Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Official Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said Blinken's visit will give further boost to India-U.S. Comprehensive Global Strategic Partnership.
6.	<u>MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi appointed India's ambassador to UN in Geneva</u> October 16, 2023	External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi was on October 16, 2023 appointed India's permanent representative to the United Nations (UN) and other international organisations in Geneva.
7.	<u>State visit of President of the United Republic of Tanzania to India (October 8-10, 2023)</u> October 06, 2023	At the invitation of the President Smt. Droupadi Murmu, the President of the United Republic of Tanzania, H.E. Samia Suluhu Hassan, visited India from 8-10 October 2023.



About U.S. Consulate, Kolkata: *The Consulate General of the United States in Kolkata represents the interests of the United States government in Kolkata, India, and nearby surrounding areas. The Consulate General serves the Indian states of West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Sikkim, Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh. It is the U.S. Department of State's second oldest Consulate and dates from November 19, 1792.*

About CUTS International: *Established in 1983, CUTS International is a global public policy think and action-tank, working on trade, regulation, and governance. With its headquarters in Jaipur, India, CUTS has its offices in Lusaka (Zambia); Nairobi (Kenya); Accra (Ghana); Hanoi (Vietnam); Geneva (Switzerland); and Washington DC (USA).*



D-217, Bhaskar Marg, Bani Park, Jaipur 302016, India
Ph: +91.141.2282821, Fax: +91.141.2282485,
E-mail: cuts-washington@cuts.org Website: <http://www.cuts-wdc.org/>

Also at Delhi, Kolkata and Chittorgarh (India); Lusaka (Zambia); Nairobi (Kenya); Accra (Ghana); Hanoi (Vietnam); Geneva (Switzerland) and Washington DC (USA).