DEFENCE DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL MILITARY CO-OPERATION

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By

Lieutenant General Vinod Bhatia, PVSM, AVSM, SM (Retd)
Rear Admiral Vijai S Chaudhari, NM (Retd)
Brigadier Ranjit Singh

Centre for Joint Warfare Studies
Kashmir House, Rajaji Marg, New Delhi-110 001
Tel. Nos : 011-23792446, 23006535, 23006538/9, Fax : 011-23792444
Website : http://cenjows.gov.in, e-mail : cenjows@yahoo.com

- Lieutenant General Vinod Bhatia is a former Director General of Military Operations with a lifetime of Operations and combat experience. He is currently the Director of the Centre for Joint Warfare Studies, New Delhi.

- Vijai S Chaudhari, NM (Retd) is a former Rear Admiral of the Indian Navy with a background in Anti-Submarine Warfare, Joint Operations, Network Centric Operations, Rules of Engagement, military diplomacy and defence acquisition. He is currently Additional Director at the Centre for Joint Warfare Studies, New Delhi.

- Brigadier Ranjit Singh is a serving officer of the Indian Army. He is currently on a sabbatical at the Centre for Joint Warfare Studies, New Delhi, researching International Military Co-operation.

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INTRODUCTION

International Relations is a discipline that is particularly difficult to categorise. In practice, apart from “relations between nations”, it is concerned with a vast range of expertise, issues and types of knowledge.

Diplomacy is an ancient profession and military cooperation as a practice is perhaps just as old. Military alliances, coalitions and multi-national forces are part of earliest recorded history and even feature in the epics. However, defence diplomacy has become a separate field of study only since the end of the Cold War. Evolving threats and a changing world order have given greater prominence to Military Operations Other Than War. However, two aspects stand out. Firstly, study of Military Diplomacy is still in its infancy. Secondly, Military Diplomacy is not a separate discipline but only an extension of traditional diplomacy.

This summary is an edited compilation of views from a wide spectrum of practitioners and writers, moderated with the experience of the authors. While the authors have made efforts to give credit to the original sources, the citations are by no means complete or of research standards. The authors therefore have only an editorial role in the compilation of this summary.

The summary consists of three sections:-

- **The Environment**
- **The Path Traversed**
- **More Bang for the Buck**

The final outcome from effective international military cooperation should be to maximise the contribution of the Indian Armed Forces national power. Towards this end, the **rationale** for and **relevance** of each section is tabulated below.

SECTION 1	WHAT?	WHY?	
The Environment	A theoretical background for Military Diplomacy and Military Cooperation	Establishes a context for recommen-dations in the last section	

SECTION 2	WHAT?	WHY?	
The Path Traversed	A brief ac-count of where we stand with regard to International Defence Cooperation	To establish a baseline for further improvement in the Indian context	

SECTION 3	WHAT?	WHY?	
More Bang for the Buck	Areas with potential for improvement	Explore more poten-tial for De-fence Diplo-macy and Cooperation	

THE ENVIRONMENT

International Relations

Defence Diplomacy and International Relations is a separate and distinct field of study. However, much of this separateness is illusionary. Formally, Inter – National – Relations is the study of relations between nations. The 'nations' in these interactions are nation-states – sovereign, territorially bounded political units like Russia or France. Yet, many important actors in International Relations are not nations at all. Actors on the stage of global politics include international or trans-national governmental organizations such as the United Nations (UN) or the International Monetary Fund (IMF). There are numerous regional organizations, such as the European Union (EU) or the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). Then there are non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as the Red Cross or Amnesty International. Increasingly, Nation-states also have to contend with multinational corporations (MNCs). The larger corporations have a bigger turnover than the gross national product (GNP) of most countries. Many issues also loom large in International Relations. Refugees, climate change, human rights and HIV/AIDS as well as outbreaks of infections such as Zika and Dengue are just a few examples.

Clearly, there is more to International Relations than merely 'relations between nations'. International Relations also draws on areas of study such as politics, economics, law, development studies, geography, history, moral philosophy, strategic and war studies. Each International Relations

specialist therefore focuses on a specific subarea. A more accurate description of the specialists would categorise them as experts in theory, security studies, international political economy, foreign policy studies, international history or international law (and many more). This establishes some characteristics:

- International Relations is a general term for a complex, multi-disciplinary subject area.

- One does not become a domain expert in every aspect of world politics by working in this wide-ranging and challenging area. Such an assumption may be convenient but is simply not realistic because of the range and extent of skills involved.

- The practitioner needs to 'cope' with the complexity and multi-disciplinary approach that are inseparable from International Relations.[1]

Observation: The practice of International Relations requires too vast a body of knowledge and expertise to rely on a single discipline. Instead of being a self-contained body of knowledge, it is an amalgam of diverse types of expertise, skills, knowledge and issues. Successful international relations is a team effort with participants changing according to the situation.

Relations between Nations

The current world order has its roots in the Peace of Westphalia that ended the Thirty Years' War (1618 - 1648), one of the most destructive conflicts in the history of Europe. The Thirty Year War was a series of inter-connected wars. It began in

[1]Peter Sutch and Juanita Elias, 'International Relations the Basics', Routledge, Abingdon, Oxon, 2007. pp.1-3.

1618, over imposition of Roman Catholicism, over Protestant subjects, in Bohemia. At some stage, the war pitted Protestant against Catholic, the Holy Roman Empire against France, the German princes and princelings against the emperor and each other, and France against the Habsburgs of Spain. The Swedes, the Danes, the Poles, the Russians, the Dutch and the Swiss were all dragged in or dived in. Commercial interests and rivalries also played a part, as did religion and power politics.

Most of the fighting took place on German soil, devastating the countryside as hordes of unpaid mercenaries lived off the land. The peace conference to end the war opened in Münster and Osnabrück in December 1644. It involved 194 states, big and small, represented by 179 plenipotentiaries. Thousands of ancillary diplomats and support staff did well for themselves well for close to four years, despite famine all around. They spent the first six months arguing about who was to sit where and who would enter ahead of whom. Slowly the envoys hammered out deals. Even then, it took almost three weeks just to organise the signing ceremony. The ceremony began at two o'clock on the afternoon of Saturday, October 24th, 1648.

www.alamy.com - D36W37

The treaty gave the Swiss independence from Austria and the Netherlands gained independence from Spain. The German principalities secured their autonomy. Sweden gained territory and a payment in cash. Brandenburg and Bavaria also made gains while France acquired most of Alsace-Lorraine. The prospect of a Roman Catholic reconquest of Europe ended forever. However, more than anything else, the treaty formed the basis for the system of international relations that survives to this day.[2]

The Peace of Westphalia established several key principles that explain its continuing significance and its effect on the world today:

- The principle of the sovereignty of states and the fundamental right of political self determination.

- The principle of legal equality between states.

- The principle of non-intervention of one state in the internal affairs of another state

The 'realist' school of international relations thinkers supports these principles. This also explains why the international system of states is referred to as 'The Westphalian System'. However, for more than half a century, scholars have questioned the idea of Westphalian sovereignty and its applicability. Many of these questions are connected with ideas of internationalism and globalization. According to some interpretations, these developments have eroded the concept of Westphalian sovereignty.[3]

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[2]Richard Cavendish, 'The Treaty of Westphalia', History Today, Volume 48, Issue 10, November 1998, (accessed October 01, 2016). http://www.historytoday.com/richard-cavendish/treaty-westphalia.

[3]'Westphalian Sovereignty', Wikipedia, (accessed September 28, 2016). https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Westphalian_sovereignty.

Observation: Since there is no world government, there is no world body with authority to make international law, leaving many gaps in its scope as well as enforceability. (Domestic legislatures fulfil this requirement for each country but are not competent to do so in international affairs.) This makes it difficult for nations to rely entirely on international law. Practitioners consider various sources, principally treaties between states, as authoritative statements of international law. Treaties are the strongest and most binding type of arrangement because they represent consensual agreements between the countries that sign them. At the same time, as stated in the statute of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), rules of international law exist in customary state practice, general principles of law common to many countries, domestic judicial decisions, and legal scholarship.[4] The framework for relations between nations is therefore a mixture of precedent, established practice, natural justice, international law and treaties as well as agreements.

Sovereignty

Woodrow Wilson in his 1898 book, 'The State', describes a sovereign as:

> "... a determinate person, or body of persons, to whom the bulk of the members of an organized community are in the habit of rendering obedience and who are themselves not in the habit of rendering obedience to any human superior."

[4]'Globalisation 101', Website of Suny Levin Institute, (accessed September 21, 2016). http://www.globalization101.org/what-are-the-sources-of-international-law/.

Historically, sovereignty is associated with four main characteristics:[5]

- First, a sovereign state enjoys supreme political authority and monopoly over the legitimate use of force within its territory.
- Second, it is capable of regulating movements across its borders.
- Third, it can make foreign policy choices freely.
- Fourth, other governments recognise the state as an independent entity that has freedom from external intervention.

These components of sovereignty were never absolute, but together they offered a predictable foundation for world order. What is significant today is that each of these components-internal authority, border control, policy autonomy, and non-intervention-is facing unprecedented challenges. For example, the Charter of the United Nations places restrictions on the circumstances under which members can wage war. As British jurist J.G. Starke noted, "… it is probably more accurate today to say that sovereignty of a state means the residuum of power which it possesses within the confines laid down by international law."

There are two aspects of sovereignty, internal sovereignty and external sovereignty:

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[5]Richard N. Haass, 'Sovereignty: Existing Rights, Evolving Responsibilities', Remarks at the School of Foreign Service and the Mortara Center for International Studies, Georgetown University, January 14, 2003, (accessed September 18, 2016). http://www.georgetown.edu/sfs/documents/haass_sovereignty_200301 14.pdf.

- Internal Sovereignty means some persons, assembly or group of persons in every independent state have the final legal authority to command and enforce obedience. This sovereignty gives absolute authority over all individuals within the state.

- External Sovereignty establishes that the State is subject to no other authority. Thus, it is independent of any compulsion on the part of other States. Every independent state reserves the authority to renounce trade treaties and to enter into military agreements. Each independent State is at liberty to determine its foreign policy and to join any bloc of powers it chooses to. Other states do not have any right to interfere with the external matters of an independent state. External sovereignty therefore makes every state independent of other states.[6]

State sovereignty is the concept that states are in complete and exclusive control of all the people and property within their territory. State sovereignty also includes the idea that all states are equal as states. In other words, despite their different land masses, population sizes, or financial capabilities, all states, ranging from tiny islands of Micronesia to the vast expanse of Russia, have an equal right to function as a state and make decisions about what occurs within their own borders. Since all states are equal in this sense, one state does not have the right to interfere with the internal affairs of another state.

Observation: Since a 'sovereign' acknowledges no higher authority, rules regulating interaction between sovereigns are weak and difficult to enforce. Moreover, at least in theory, all

[6]Pooja, 'Sovereignty: Meaning and Characteristics of Sovereignty', (accessed September 17, 2016). http://www.politicalsciencenotes.com/essay/sovereignty-meaning-and-characteristics-of-sovereignty/254.

sovereigns big and small are sovereign and hence of equal status in international affairs. This is a logical outcome of the Treaty of Westphalia that transferred the monopoly over violence to the state. No higher authority remained as the treaty set aside the considerable temporal powers of the Church of Rome to interfere in the internal affairs of states. Today, the situation is largely unchanged. Religious power continues to be confined to spiritual matters. The UN Charter has effectively abolished war but the Right to self-defence leaves considerable scope for the ingenuity of belligerents.

Anarchic World Order[7]

In the 16th Century, Jean Bodin proposed that sovereignty must be absolute, perpetual, and undivided. In his view, sovereignty was the highest power in a state. The sovereign is subject to no laws but is itself the maker and master of them. Sovereignty may reside in either one person or in a number of persons. In either case, it is above law, incapable of any limitation and having an absolute claim to the obedience of all. Bodin, however, admitted that in some way the sovereign is subject to the Law of God and laws of nature, and is therefore bound to respect the rights of property and personal freedom.

In international relations theory, the concept of **anarchy** follows from the idea that the world lacks any supreme authority or sovereign. In an anarchic state, there is no hierarchically superior, coercive power that can resolve disputes, enforce law, or order the system of international politics. In international relations, anarchy is the widely accepted starting point for international relations theory. Many political scientists use the term “anarchy” to signify a world in chaos, in disorder, or in conflict. Others view it simply as a characteristic of the international system that consists of independent states with

[7]‘Anarchy (international relations) ‘, Wikipedia, (accessed October 05, 2016). https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anarchy_(international_relations).

no central authority above them.

The word anarchy literally means “without a leader”. In common usage, anarchy signifies both the absence of a ruler and the disorder that some consider inevitable in the absence of a ruler. Anarchy can be viewed through realist, liberal, neorealist, and neoliberal paradigms of international relations:

- While the three established schools of thought in international relations theory and their neo-counterparts (Realism, Neo-realism, Liberalism, Neo-liberalism and Constructivism) agree that the world system is anarchic, they differ over how states should deal with the problem.

- The Realist theory of international relations asserts that states are the main power players in international politics. Realists respond to the anarchic world system with a “self-help” doctrine, **believing they can rely on no one but themselves for security**. They believe that in this anarchical system, states base their choices on survival. Moreover they view it as a ‘zero sum game’ where each state’s gain (or loss) is exactly balanced by the losses (or gains) of the adversary. Thus, the increased security of one state will always lead to a decrease in the security of others. Thus, states have to accept that others might have more power than them or are planning to gain more power. This creates competition to acquire and to balance power. According to Niccolò Machiavelli, the desire for more power is rooted in the flawed nature of humanity, extending into the political world. It leads states to seek greater capabilities. Hans Morgenthau elaborates: “international politics is struggle for power” … the struggle for power is universal in time and space”.

- Realists define power in military terms. They believe that more military power will help states to attain their ultimate goals, be it as a hegemon or a balance of power. In his 1988 *article Anarchy and the Limits of Cooperation,* Joseph Grieco wrote: "… for realists, international anarchy fosters competition and conflict among states and inhibits their willingness to cooperate even when they share common interests". Therefore, realists see no reason to believe that states can ever trust each other. Instead, they rely on themselves (the self-help doctrine) in the anarchic world system. In the course of providing for their own security, the states in question will automatically fuel insecurity among other states. This spiral of insecurity is described as the **security dilemma**.

- **Neo-realists** are often referred to as structuralists as they believe that a lot of international politics can be explained by the structure of the international system, and its central feature, anarchy. While classic realists attributed power politics primarily to human nature, neo-realists emphasize anarchy. Kenneth Waltz posits that the absence of an authority higher than states means that they can only rely on themselves for survival. This demands paranoid vigilance and constant preparation for conflict. He argues that "wars occur because there is nothing to prevent them".

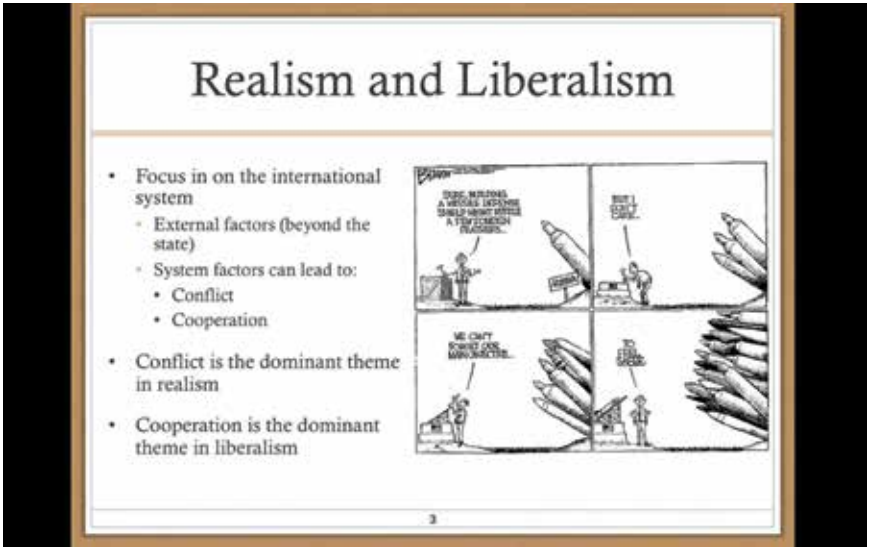
- **Liberalist** theorists argue that international institutions can mitigate constraining effects of anarchy on interstate cooperation. This is where realist and liberal thinking diverges. While liberalist theory accepts that the international system is anarchic, it contends that this anarchy can be regulated with various tools: liberal democracy, economic interdependence and liberal institutions. The liberalist goal is a completely interdependent world. Liberal theory asserts that

existence and spread of free trade reduces the likelihood of conflict. Liberalists contend that it is not in a country's interest to go to war with a nation that shares extensive economic and trade links.

Thus, for liberals, world peace is possible, even under anarchy, if states seek common ground, forming alliances and institutions for policing the world powers. Realists believe that nations gain power through war or the threat of military action. They assert that due to this power-grabbing system there is no such thing as lasting alliances or peace. On the other hand, Liberal thought, attributes more power to common institutions than to states. Rather than focusing solely on the military survival of states, liberals believe that common ideas can lead states into interdependence. Liberalism emphasizes that real power for states lies in mutually held ideas like religion, language, economies, and political systems that will lead states to form alliances and become interdependent.

Constructivist theory disputes that anarchy is a fundamental condition of the international system. Alexander Wendt, for example argued that, "anarchy is what states make of it". In other words, anarchy is not inherent in the international system; rather it is a construct of the states in the system.

The fact that nation-states are sovereign means that they are (to a large extent) legally and politically independent. This makes international law less authoritative and effective than domestic legal systems. Many scholars believe that limitations of international law are the reason for continued occurrence of war. These limitations also account for our in ability to manage a globalized market more efficiently. More positively, the international system also forms the basis for our freedom, the political protection of our way of life against the backdrop of social and cultural pluralism.



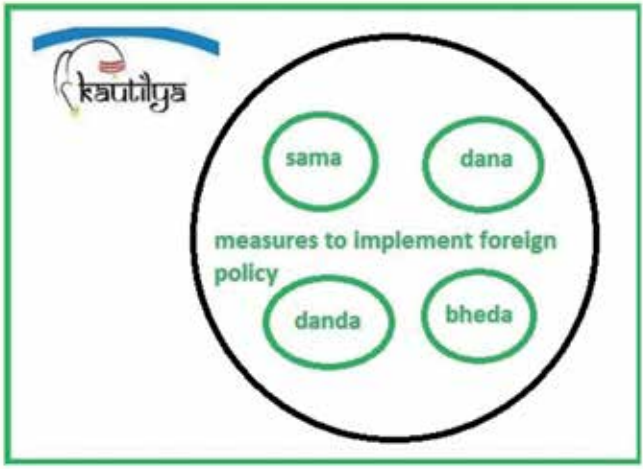
National Interest[8]

The national interest, often referred to by the French expression raison d'état ("reason of State"), describes a country's goals and ambitions related to the economy and culture. The concept serves an important purpose in International Relations, a field characterised by anarchy. On the international stage, each nation is a sovereign that acknowledges no higher authority. There is no world government to regulate relations between nation states. Thus, there are few rules in International Relations that are binding and even fewer that are enforceable. Under these circumstances, the pursuit of the national interest not only provides a basis for conduct but also a measure of consistency and stability.

[8]'The National Interest', Wikipedia, (accessed September 12, 2016). https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_interest.

In early human history, the national interest was usually secondary to religion or morality. To engage in a war, early rulers had to justify the action on religious or moral grounds even if the real motive was economic. Strategists often credit Niccolò Machiavelli (1469 – 1527) as the first thinker to advocate the primacy of the national interest in statecraft. However, Chanakya[9] (c.4th century BCE) predates Machiavelli, by more than a millennium in this regard:

> "Welfare of the state depends on an active foreign Policy."
>
> -- *Chanakya, Arthashastra,* Book 6, Chapter 2, Verse 1
>
> "A king weak in power shall endeavour to promote the welfare of his people. for power comes from the countryside which is the source of all activities."
>
> -- *Chanakya, Arthashastra,* Book 7, Chapter 14, Verse 18



[9]Also known as Kauṭ ilya and Vishnugupt.

Professor Balbir Singh Sihag, Professor Emeritus at Massachusetts University, USA and author of *'Kautilya: The True Founder of Economics'* (2014) believes that the Kautilyan approach to economics and prosperity has a sounder foundation of ethics than Adam Smith's idea of justice as the guiding principle for the economy. Moreover, Kautilya recommends a multi–pronged approach towards national security, a rarity for his times. The Arthashastra postulates two different approaches for **domestic and foreign policy**. Internally, the king must follow an ethical code of conduct. Externally, national interest must take precedence over all other considerations. For Kautilya there was no room for idealism in pursuing national interests. Kautilya understood that a stronger nation was in a better position to extract extra gains during negotiations and in making claims on common resources. He understood that national security was not an abstract concept and a nation needed to compare its strength with potential adversaries.[10]

> Max Weber once wrote that compared to Chanakya's The Arthashastra, " Machiavelli's The Prince is harmless."

An early application of the **National Interest** is seen in France under the direction of its Chief Minister, Cardinal Richelieu, in the **Thirty Years' War.** Despite being Catholic, France intervened on the Protestant side to block the increasing power of the Catholic Holy Roman Emperor. **Jean de Silhon** defended the concept of reason of state as "a mean between what conscience permits and affairs require." Over the following centuries, the notion of the national interest soon came to dominate as European politics became fiercely competitive. This introduced a form of reason on the international stage that "born of the calculation and the ruse of men". It made the state "a knowing machine, a work of

[10]Balbir S. Sihag, 'Kautilya and National Security', address at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, October 20, 2014.

reason", independent of the divine will and subject to its own particular necessities (E. Thuau, 1966).These ideas cleared the way for States to embark on wars purely out of self-interest.

Chanakya's Principles of Foreign Policy

i. a king shall develop his state;
ii. the enemy shall be eliminated;
iii. those who help are friends;
iv. a prudent course shall always be adopted;
v. peace is to be preferred to war; and
vi. a king's behaviour in victory and in defeat must be just.

\- L.N. Rangarajan, Kautilya - The Arthashastra (1992) p.546

Foreign policy that pursues the national interest is the foundation of the **realist school** of international relations. The realist school reached its greatest heights at the **Congress of Vienna**where success depended on balancing the national interest of several great and lesser powers. International Relations were built anew based on national interest instead of religion or tradition. These ideas came in for much criticism after the bloody debacle of the First World War. Some sought to replace the concept of the balance of power with the idea of **collective security**, giving rise to the **League of Nations**. However, even the League of Nationscould not arrest the slide towards the Second World War. Part of the reason for the League's collapse was that the United States refused to join. An additional burden was placed on the league by nations that did not always find it "in the national interest" to deter each other from the use of force.

The events of Second World War led to a rebirth of **Realism** and then Neo-realist thought. Many blamed the weakness of the League of Nations for its idealism. The U.S expanded its concept of national interest to include the maintenance of open sea-lanes and the expansion of free trade.

Today, the concept of “the national interest” is often associated with political realists who fail to differentiate their policies from “idealistic” policies, seeking to inject morality into foreign policy. They promote solutions that rely on multilateral institutions, which would reduce the independence of the state. Considerable disagreement exists in every country over what is or is not in “the national interest”. The term is often invoked to justify isolationist and pacifistic policies or to justify intervention or aggression. Scholars have posited that the term is an euphemism used by powerful countries for geopolitical aims such as non-renewable natural resources, for energy security, territorial expansionism and for exploiting precious minerals in smaller countries. In such cases, euphemisms become necessary to overcome opposition to overseas interventions or a hawkish foreign policy.

Defence Diplomacy

Defence Diplomacy is best viewed as a variant of soft power, used in some way to co-opt the strategic thinking of another state. Linking military diplomacy to the concept of soft power, not only encapsulates practices used by governments today, but also illustrates the underlying mechanism that makes defence diplomacy an effective geopolitical tool. As the US experience in Libya, Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria showed, in quick succession, military strength alone is insufficient to triumph in modern conflicts. Rather, in the Global War on Terror and the conflicts to come, *“success will be less a matter of imposing one’s will and more a function of shaping behaviour – of friends, adversaries, and most importantly, the people in between”* (Robert Gates). Increasingly, the ability of military power lies not just in its capacity to drop bombs, but also in its ability to look beyond the use of violence and embrace alternative means of promoting national interests.

Military Diplomacy covers the entire range of non-warlike activities, undertaken by the armed forces of any

country, intended to develop a positive attitude and trust in the international community. While the term may be all encompassing, it gives no clue as to what might actually be involved. Reasons for undertaking military diplomacy typically include:

- To 'dispel hostility, build and maintain trust.
- To assist in the development of the democratically accountable armed forces.
- To contribute towards conflict prevention and resolution.

Writers sometimes use the terms 'Military Diplomacy' and 'Defence Diplomacy' interchangeably. However, the term 'Defence Diplomacy' gained currency only during the British defence reforms of the 1990s. It describes all security related diplomacy, going beyond the purely military. 'Military Diplomacy' is mostly used in this document, as the scope is limited to purely military aspects. The term 'Defence Diplomacy', wherever it occurs refers to use of military as well as other national resources.

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Nations commonly seek to achieve the aims of military diplomacy through contacts between officials; appointment of defence attachés; cooperative arrangements of various kinds; provision of material equipment or other material aid; contacts

and ship visits; and exchanges as well as training activities. To this listing might be added activities at a relatively high and politically charged level. For example, capacity building for security sector reform or other reasons like cooperation in the defence industrial sphere. In the India-Pakistan context, communications between the Directors General of Military Operations is a prime example. Military diplomacy can also take more routine forms such as regularly communicating official positions on issues, publication of professional journals, publication of defence white papers, displays of solidarity with like-minded countries and ceremonial activities to honour international visitors.

Since the term 'defence diplomacy' came into use, in the 1990s, to describe a mixed bag of pre-existing activities, it has yet to develop into a full-fledged idea with distinct boundaries. Rather, it has continued to exist as an umbrella concept used to bundle together a loose collection of non-violent military programs under a single title. Without a clear conceptual structure and defined boundaries, it has become virtually impossible to say what constitutes an act of defence diplomacy. Instead, researchers either use their own definition or simply adopt U.S. Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart's colloquialism on obscenity – *"we may not be able to define defence diplomacy, but we know it when we see it"*.[11]

Just like international relations, Defence diplomacy too has a large scope that ranges between the significant and the mundane. None of the activities is particularly new. Some like the appointment of defence attachés, date back several centuries. Such activities once had a purely military role designed primarily to further one's own armed forces, their position vis-à-vis other armed forces and their position

[11]Gregory Winger, The Velvet Gauntlet: A Theory of Defense Diplomacy, (accessed September 19, 2016). http://www.iwm.at/publications/5-junior-visiting-fellows-conferences/vol-xxxiii/the-velvet-gauntlet.

in the world. Today these activities are an integral part of most national strategies. However, the focus has shifted to supporting the nation rather than the armed forces alone. The activities have moved from being an end more or less in themselves to being a means to wider national ends.

Defence Diplomacy Activities:-

- Bilateral and multilateral contacts between senior military and civilian defence officials.

- Appointment of defece attaches to foreign countries.

- Bilateral defence cooperation agreements.

- Training of foreign military and civilian defence personnel.

- Provision of expertise and advice on democratic control of armed forces, defence management and military technical areas.

- Contacts and exchanges between military personnel and units, and ship visits.

- Placement of military or civilian personnel in partner countries' defence ministries and armed forces (exchanges).

- Deployment of training teams.

- Provision of military equipment and other material aid.

- Bilateral or multilateral military exercises for training purposes.

Source: Andrew Cottey and Anthony Forster, "Adelphi Paper 365: Reshaping Defence Diplomacy : New Roles for Military Cooperation and Assistance." (Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2004).

Many scholars have suggested that there are two facets of defence diplomacy: pragmatic and transformative. The pragmatic form of defence diplomacy seeks to maintain conditions, as they exist between two countries. Transformative defence diplomacy seeks to significantly alter existing conditions. In Asia, the majority of defence diplomacy is actually of a pragmatic nature as South Asian countries seek to preserve peaceful coexistence without aggressively pursuing regional integration.

The nature of the international system is one of the biggest difficulties in creating a theory of Defence Diplomacy. The basic premise of international statecraft is that the world exists in a state of anarchy. Countries are responsible for protecting and promoting their own interests. The challenge in this largely self-help world is, having identified the outcome that would best serve national interests, how to make this objective a reality? While countries may share the same or similar interests, the unique characteristics of each state produce different agendas that often conflict with one another. In International Relations, the ability to get others to do what you want is called power. Statecraft is the manner in which a country wields power to shape the conduct of others in the desired manner. Joseph Nye[12] developed a concept of power, its different variants and the modes of application. Nye identifies three specific varieties of power: hard power, economic power, and soft power. Of the three, hard power

[12]Joseph Nye, 'Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power' (1991) and 'The Paradox of American Power: Why the World's Only Superpower Can't Go it Alone' (2003).

is the most established. It uses pressure to coerce another government into submitting to our will. Economic power encourages compliance by another country in return for some form of reward for its support. Among Nye's three forms of power, soft power is the most nebulous and hardest to discern. Soft power relies on the concept of co-option and the ability to convince another country and its leaders to do what we want.

The Types of Power :

Type of Power	Mechanism	Illustration
Hard Power	Coercion	Country B does Country A wants because Country A would harm B if it does not comply
Economic Power	Incentive	Country B does what Country A will reward Country B for complying
Soft Power	Co-Option	Country B does what Country A wants because B is convinced that what A wants is best.

In 'The Future of Power (2011)', Nye identifies two approaches for using soft power to influence government policy. The first method, the indirect model, works by cultivating support for a preferred position within the general public of another country. Winning over the general public to the preferred position, shapes the political atmosphere in a manner that soft power can provide the envisaged benefits. This can occur when a population exerts pressure on its government officials through democratic processes, forms of civic engagement like street protests, or the creation of conditions that limit the policy options available to leaders (Nye, Future of Power 94-97).

Indirect Model

The Indirect Model of soft power focuses largely on the use of public diplomacy. Governments use education, development and social programs to communicate directly with foreign populations as a means of gaining their support.

Nye's second method of soft power application is the direct model with a government directly appealing to the governing elites of another country in an effort to get the leaders of that country to embrace a favoured position.

Direct Model

Traditional practices of diplomacy such as state visits and international conferences are examples of this type of soft power. Essentially, desired outcomes depend upon government-to-government contacts. In such a situation, rapport between senior leaders is vital. Indeed, the personal ties between Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill were an important factor in sustaining the Allied war effort through the Second World War and in shaping the post-war order. [14]

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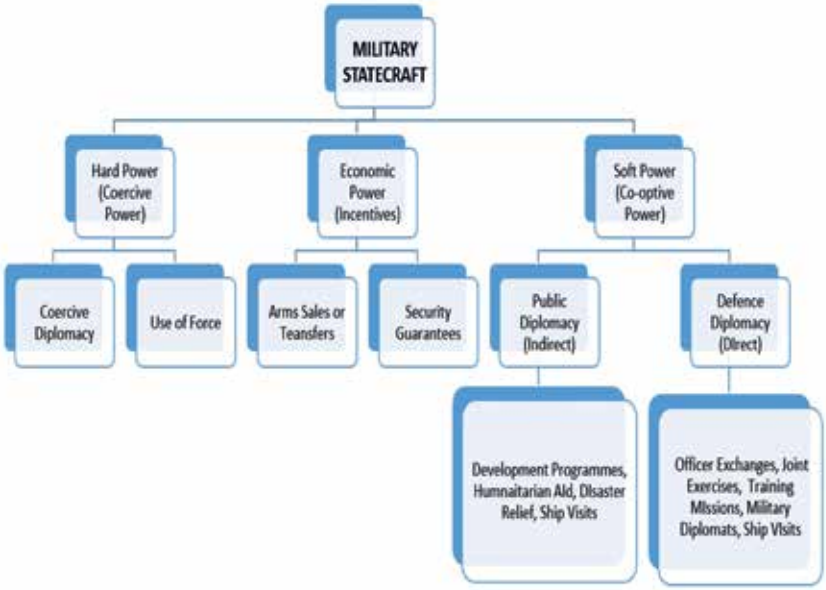
[13]Winger, ibid.



Beyond Soft Power

Soft, economic and coercive power are convenient categories for thinking about international power. However, there is no reason for them to be mutually exclusive in promoting national interest. This has given rise to the concept of **smart power**. Joseph Nye, former U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense, was among the earliest to suggest that effective strategies in foreign policy require a mix of hard and soft power.[14] In the International Relations environment, using only hard or soft power is often inadequate. Nye uses the example of terrorism where soft power would be ineffective without a hard power component. In developing relationships with the mainstream Islamic world, however, soft power resources are necessary and the use of hard power could have damaging effects.

[14]Joseph Nye, 'Smart Power', The Huffington Post, The Blog (May 25, 2011), accessed on October 16, 2016. http://www.huffingtonpost.in/entry/smart-power_b_74725.

The Center for Strategic and International Studies defines smart power as "an approach that underscores the necessity of a strong military, but also invests heavily in alliances, partnerships, and institutions of all levels ….."[15]. According to Chester A. Crocker, smart power "involves the strategic use of diplomacy, persuasion, capacity building, and the projection of power and influence in ways that are cost-effective and have political and social legitimacy"– essentially the engagement of both military force and all forms of diplomacy.[16] Nye notes that a smart power strategy indicates the ability to combine hard and soft power depending on whichever is more effective in a given situation. He states that many situations require soft power; however, in stopping North Korea's nuclear weapons program, for instance, hard power might be more effective than soft power.

The term smart power emerged only in the past decade, but the United States has used smart power for more than a century:

- 1901: President Theodore Roosevelt proclaims: "Speak softly and carry a big stick."

- 1948: The United States starts broadcasting, under the Smith-Mundt Act, to combat the outreach of the Soviet Union.

- 1991: End of the Cold War and collapse of the Berlin Wall through a combination of hard and soft power. Hard power deterred Soviet aggression and

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[15]Richard L. Armitage and Joseph S. Nye, Jr., CSIS Commission On Smart Power, 'A Smarter, More Secure America',
CSIS Center for Strategic & International Studies (2007). https://csis-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/legacy_files/files/media/csis/pubs/071106_csissmartpowerreport.pdf.

[16]Chester A Crocker, 'Leashing the Dogs of War: Conflict Management in a Divided World', US Institute of Peace Press (2007).

soft power eroded faith in Communism. Joseph Nye says:

> "When the Berlin Wall finally collapsed, it was destroyed not by artillery barrage but by hammers and bulldozers wielded by those who had lost faith in communism."

- 2007: The Center for Strategic and International Studies releases the "Commission on Smart Power" to introduce the concept of smart power The report identifies five critical areas for the U.S. focus:

  - Alliances
  - Global Development
  - Public Diplomacy
  - Economic Integration
  - Technology and Innovation.

Some scholars have sought to further differentiate between smart power and soft power. Christian Whiton described smart power in his book, 'Smart Power: Between Diplomacy and War' (2013) as: ". . . the many financial, cultural, rhetorical, economic, espionage-related, and military actions that states can take, short of general war, to influence political outcomes abroad. . . .". He adds that:

> "It most crucially should involve a revival of political warfare: the non-violent push of ideas, people, facts, and events with which our adversaries would rather not contend."

Conclusion: Smart power embraces as well as uses multilateralism while enhancing foreign policy.

Anarchy versus Stability

The anarchical nature of International Relations would, by itself, lead to instability and uncertainity. However, there are certain approaches that bring a degree of predictability and stability to dealings between nations:

The **balance of power** theory[17] is one of the oldest and most fundamental concepts in international relations. There are many variations of the balance of power theory. They range from a widespread tendency towards balance of power solutions to a law like recurrent equilibrium model. According to this model, the great powers correct imbalances among themselves and restore equilibrium. This ensures their own survival in the international system. The great powers have several ways of restoring the balance. These include military build-ups that convert economic wealth into military power, alliances and post-war peace settlements. Many scholars find that secondary and tertiary states are more likely to **bandwagon** or join powerful states or coalitions of states rather than balance against them.

Based on structural realism, the self-help anarchic system and shifting capabilities mean that new balances of power keep forming in the international system. How states balance depends on the distribution of capabilities among the greater powers. In bipolar distributions of power (two great powers) states balance through a military build-up. In multipolar distributions of power (three or more) states will balance through the formation of counterbalancing alliances. Finally, in balanced multipolar distributions of power (three or more equally powerful states), great powers are likely to pass the buck as far as the responsibility for balancing is concerned.

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[17]Steven E. Lobell, 'Balance of Power Theory', November 25, 2014. (Accessed on September 28, 2016). http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780199743292/obo-9780199743292-0083.xml.

In international relations and treaties, the **principle of reciprocity** states that favours, benefits, or penalties granted by one state to another, should be returned in kind. For example, reciprocity has been used in the reduction of tariffs, extending intellectual property rights, mutual recognition and enforcement of judgments, and the relaxation of travel restrictions and visa requirements. The principle of reciprocity also governs extradition agreements.

Hegemony is a popular term in internatioal relations. Hegemons are unusually well-endowed as far as the ingredients of international power are concerned. Many practioners believe that such an advantage gives considerable influence over the actions of other nations. This influence is based on a combination of incentives for compliance and imposition of costs for non-compliance. Simple analaysis of bilateral situations would seem to suuport the theory. However, reality is more complex. Whenever a country tries to dominate its region, 'balance of power theory' suggests that other countries will resist by forming a coalition. Attempts towards hegemony are likely to succeed only if the other countries share the hegemon's objectives. Else, the countervailing coalition must be too weak to matter.

Established practices, Policies, Memoranda of Understanding, agreements and treaties are additional ways of bringing stability and predictability to international relations. However, there is a need to balance national interest with predictability. For example, Israel's unstated policy of 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth and a nail for a nail' or the 'no negotiations with terrorists' policy in some countries. On the other hand, policies can also constrain options by excessive reliance on cut and dried solutions such as Non-Alignment or Strategic Restraint.

> The best strategy relies upon an unlimited set of options.
> - Morihei Uehiba

Regional Defence Diplomacy[18]

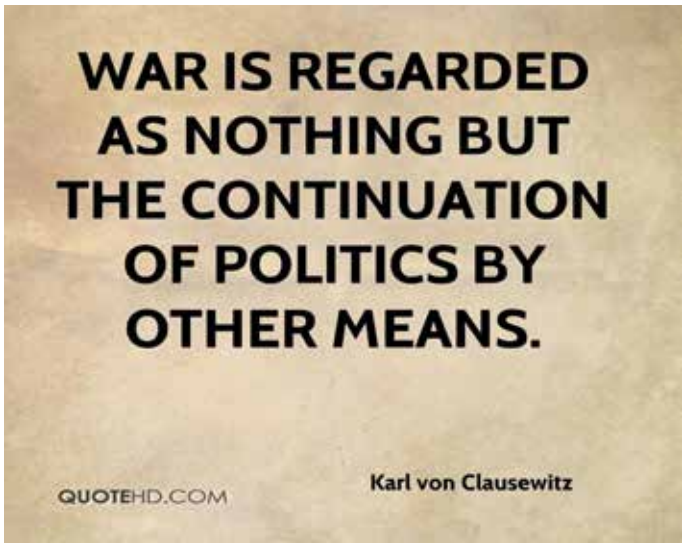
Countries conduct bilateral cooperative activities at varying levels. These range from exchange of attachés, through high-level dialogues to capacity building, combined exercises and arms transfers. Activities wax and wane according to the state of relations between the countries and changes in the environment. However, there is more bilateral defence engagement between regional countries today than at any other time in world history. The range and possibilities of such activities include: taking medical support to remote areas, disaster relief and visits by sports teams.

Regional multilateral defence and security cooperation rely on a wide variety of forums. Purely military cooperation occurs routinely and systematically through the various alliance systems, through seminars and meetings, naval exercises, and development of regional peacekeeping centres. Regional multilateral military diplomacy also takes place at the government level. For example, the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM), established in 2006.

At the edge of **multilateral defence diplomacy,** and expanding the concept of 'comprehensive', are activities that deal with 'security' beyond purely defence matters. For example, the ASEAN Regional Forum Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security (track 1, official linkages) and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (track 1.5, officials and academics together). Both examine a wide range of maritime security issues, contributing to regional security and stability. At the track 2 level (that is, officials in their private capacity and academics), there are two prominent examples

[18]Jim Rolfe, Regional Defence Diplomacy: What Is It And What Are Its Limits?' Centre for Strategic Studies New Zealand, January 8, 2015, CSS Strategic Background Paper – 21/2015/

from the Asia-Pacific Region. Again, they deal with security rather than purely defence issues. The Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia-Pacific (CSCAP), established in 1992, now includes 21 member committees. Each has the backing of a national organisation and is represented by a national research centre. CSCAP primarily works to the agenda of the track 1 ASEAN Regional Forum. In two decades of existence, CSCAP has produced a range of memoranda on issues of regional salience, as their contribution to track 1 regional security processes.



The Shangri-La Dialogue has been described as Asia's 'most prominent exercise in defence diplomacy'. It is a privately organised (by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies), and therefore track 2. Defence Ministers, senior officials and analysts, from around the region, have held annual meetings in Singapore since 2002. Shangri-La has since evolved to the extent that all speakers are officials and all speak in their official capacity and conduct much business on the side-lines of the main conference. To that extent, it qualifies as a track 1 or track 1.5 event.

An area on the fringes of Military Diplomacy is the increasing cooperation between defence industries in different countries. While marginal to the diplomatic process, the importance of this co-operation should not be underestimated. Today, large Multi-National Corporations hold roughly 70% of defence technology. Reducing costs and expanding profits the drivers for such cooperation. However, such cooperation not only feeds on an atmosphere of trust and a favourable business climate but also contributes to them. To that extent, these activities too are exercises in military diplomacy.

The underlying assumption behind all military diplomacy is that there will be positive outcomes for each participant. Moreover, military diplomacy offers a more beneficial option than military force or hard power in achieving political ends. The political objectives could be stability, security, influence, status and a host of other possibilities. There are at least nine broad intentions behind military cooperation processes, whether the cooperation is between armed forces or between armed forces and civilian agencies:

- Reduction in hostility or tensions
- Signalling a willingness to work with and trust interlocutors
- A more competent armed force with a commitment to accountability mechanisms
- Transparency in terms of capacity and intentions
- Development and reinforcement of good relationships with partners
- Changing perceptions of each other
- Confidence building
- Encouragement through incentives and rewards
- Building a domestic constituency for the armed forces.

Military Diplomacy is not a single actor game and to achieve objectives, each participant must invest in and remain receptive to the messages being sent out. At different times, some states are the 'transmitters' of military diplomacy signals and others are the 'receivers'. Defence diplomacy cannot work if the transmitting state is seen to be equivocal about its activities and it certainly cannot work if the intended recipient disregards the messages.

For **defence diplomacy** to succeed, its methods must be appropriate to the context and the environment. It is not necessarily 'diplomatic' to provide arms transfers or training skills to a region in which conflict is endemic and

tensions are high (although there may well be other reasons for the activity). Underlying all of this is the concept of trust. Conventional wisdom would have it that trust develops when countries reinforce habits of cooperation. Establishing trust is not an end in itself. States must be ready to follow up with practical defence diplomacy to translate the trust into specific outcomes.

Challenges that **defence diplomacy** faces are wide-ranging and both material as well as conceptual:

- Probably the biggest challenge is the need for each partner in military diplomacy is to consider 'partnership' to be paramount. The participants must meet as equals.

- Participants are almost sure to have different capacities. They must understand that there are benefits for each in the relationship. If one partner in the process seeks a 'senior' status, diplomacy is likely to be less than successful.

- There is a need to align the partners' aims. Even if each side seeks different benefits, both must allow for the other's needs. Ignoring this aspect will leave one side or the other feeling deceived, to the detriment of the relationship. States having different understandings of what is being attempted is another pitfall to avoid.

- Differing cultures lead to differing compulsions and differing operational procedures. There are commonalities between armed forces, but there are also significant differences. While providing capacity-building assistance, for example, it makes little sense to assume that what works for the provider will also work for the recipient.

- Matching and harmonising priorities is a major factor in the success of any Military Cooperation. Wide differences in national priorities can cause even the best plans to unravel.

- Partners bring their own perspectives to issues. This is most likely if the issue is contentious such as an international intervention. However, differing perspectives are equally common on lesser issues. Differences are also possible about the appropriate level of secrecy to be given to joint activities or ceremonial honours for visitors. These differences are cultural but may also depend on circumstances. **Defence diplomacy** that ignores the partners' perspectives and lacks empathy towards them will always be less successful. Military Diplomacy must therefore be based on an understanding of what is important to each side, what can be done together and what cannot.

- Given that much defence diplomacy is about cooperative activity, the partners must be able to work together at a practical level. That might involve one partner deliberately limiting its capabilities so that it does not overshadow the other. It could also involve ensuring that whatever is offered is useful rather than just immediately available.

- There is much scope for misunderstanding, no matter how simple the shared event. Even if both sides communicate in English, words can have different meanings in different contexts and cultures. Military diplomacy cannot be effective if the participants are 'divided by a common language'. It is even more difficult when the common language is a second language for one side.

- The reality is that there are limits to diplomacy and cooperation is not a panacea. In a state-centred

world, national interest will usually trump cooperation. This can be a problem within a close grouping such as ASEAN. The problem can become bigger in relationships that are not as close.

All the challenges stated above can be overcome with careful preparation and a determination to make the processes work. It is more difficult to deal with a situation where a state decides that the group interest hurts a core national interest. One state might choose to make its own arrangements or it may choose a national solution over a group solution. In such cases, military diplomacy makes way for 'strategic compulsions' or 'sovereign imperatives'. However, Military Diplomacy also offers certain unique advantages:

- Military Diplomacy can be conducted quietly, away from the media glare public scrutiny

- In many states, Military Diplomacy can gain informal access to higher levels of decision-making than would otherwise be possible

- The military has greater understanding of requirements for military cooperation at the ground level

- The military culture of all armed forces has a lot in common. This makes it easier to build relationships quickly and informally, smoothing the way for more durable arrangements.

Military Cooperation

Since the 1990s, a number of factors have transformed the armed forces of most countries, often in unexpected ways. Technological developments, dramatically escalating costs, increasingly restricted defence budgets as well as new threats

have led to fewer and leaner or even 'hollower' armed forces. The almost universal response has been to seek deeper international cooperation to reduce costs, maintain capabilities and achieve greater effect. Countries can, for example, cooperate on development, purchases and maintenance, or education and training, or to coordinate or share capabilities. The deeper the integration, the more military capabilities it provides access to, but at the same time places greater restrictions on national freedom of action. There is also a visible trend towards specialisation in terms of functions or tasks, i.e. cooperative arrangements in which the participants depend on one another when the necessity arises.[19]

Europe, North America and the Asia-Pacific region have widely adopted the concept of 'common, comprehensive and cooperative security'. The concept has such wide acceptance that many in the region use it almost as a mantra to avoid the perceived perils of confrontational approaches to security. However, the approach cannot eliminate confrontation even if it reduces the possibility and mitigated its effects. This thinking

[19]Tomas Bertelman, 'International Defence Cooperation Efficiency, Solidarity, Sovereignty', Report from the Inquiry on Sweden's International Defence Cooperation Stockholm, October 2014.

is visible in regional security architectures. For example, the region-wide acceptance of the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation 1976, and the development of integrated supply chains that reduce the ability of states to act autonomously against the interests of the wider group.

'Defence Diplomacy' or 'Military Cooperation' is another approach leading to a culture of non-confrontation and one that encapsulates all three non-confrontational concepts. The two ideas overlap, but are not identical. Military cooperation is actually a sub-set of defence diplomacy.

Observation: Military Cooperation is a subset of Defence Diplomacy.

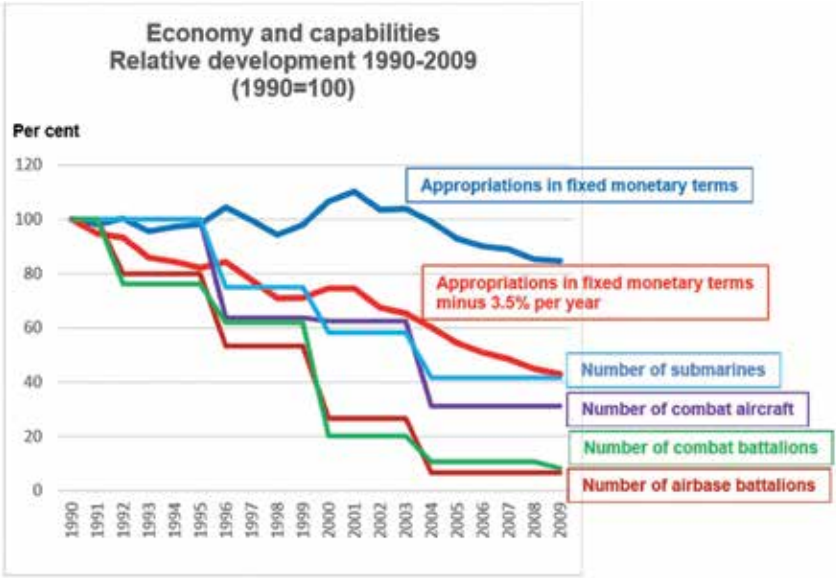
Various forms of cooperation are possible for developing a military capabilities while making the most effective use of resources. It is also possible to cooperate on use of the final product, through joint exercises and training, joint operations, or planning for joint defence. However, joint operational planning does lead to a high degree of mutual dependence. This makes it necessary to establish a legal basis such an inter-governmental agreement. Peacetime **military cooperation** takes place under six broad categories:

- Policy
- Capabilities
- Equipment
- Personnel/Education
- Training/Exercises
- Operations.

The basic question for every country is: "How integrated the cooperation is to be?" In other words, what dependencies and restrictions, on national freedom of action,

are acceptable? Particularly when acquisition of equipment and use of capabilities is involved, the advantages must be weighed against the disadvantages. It is possible, for example, to cooperate on development, purchases and maintenance, or education and training, or to coordinate or share capabilities. The deeper the integration, the more military capabilities it provides access to. However, greater integration also imposes greater restrictions on national freedom of action. If a country belongs to an alliance, specialisation can go further. Denmark, for example, has decided to manage without submarines of its own. Belgium and the Netherlands have decided not to have main battle tanks. Belgium and the Netherlands have combined their naval forces, and the Baltic countries rely on the combat aircraft of other NATO member states. Iceland has no national military defence at all. In fact, no European country, on its own, can now develop the military capabilities required to meet a powerful adversary. Even all European countries combined no longer have the capabilities required for major crisis management operations.

Cost trends make it increasingly difficult to maintain the traditional range of 'balanced' capabilities that the armed forces need. The trend is towards specialisation in terms of functions or tasks, i.e. cooperative arrangements in which the participants depend on one another for specific resources. For countries that are members of defence alliances, this is natural. However, the impact of economic limitationslooms over every aspect of defence spending. The figures below refer to the Swedish armed forces but the problem is universal and few armed forces escaped a similar fate. In the 1950s and 1960s, Sweden maintained independent credible and modern armed forces as well as a defence industrial base. In half less than half a century, all this stands considerably diminished and unsustainable on financial grounds alone.



Organizational changes in selected units 1990–2009 compared with defence appropriations in fixed monetary terms and adjusted for annual depreciation of 3.5 per cent.[1]

Defence cooperation often raises complicated issues. Therefore, there is a tendency to limit participation to a relatively small group of countries linked by geographical boundaries or cultural proximity. This has given rise to a range of different forms of cooperation that could be dubbed '**minilateralism**'. The impulse towards cooperation in smaller groups is partly a response to the difficulties faced by members of unwieldy multinational institutions like the EU and NATO. Members find it difficult to incorporate their own requirements in new military capabilities. Even among allies, national interests often stand against collective interests. At least one high-level Swedish governmental inquiry[20] has concluded that no form of international defence cooperation can, under the present conditions, offer increases in effectiveness or raise capabilities to an extent that would have a decisive impact on the country's defence economy or defence capability. The study concedes

[20]Ibid.

that international cooperation has achieved many positive results through, increased effectiveness and savings. It has also been possible to retain certain capabilities that might otherwise have disappeared. However, in the final analysis the effects remain marginal. They do not effectively address the fundamental problem of the widening gap between the tasks of the national Armed Forces and their capabilities.

Conclusion: For more than half a century, financial constraints and soaring costs of advanced defence technology have been a constant fact of life for all armed forces. As a result, there has been an almost universal trend for the range of capabilities and equipment numbers of major defence systems to dwindle. Most armed forces are therefore faced with a widening gap between their tasks and capabilities.

THE PATH TRAVERSED

India's Defence Diplomacy

India maintains defence and **military relations** with many countries including Mauritius, Seychelles, Maldives, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Cambodia, Japan, Philippines, and Republic of (South) Korea, Thailand, Vietnam and ARF, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Israel, Oman, Iran, UAE, Botswana, Lesotho, Zambia, Namibia, Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea. Sudan, Djibouti, Tanzania, Kenya, South Africa, USA, Brazil, UK, France, Russia, Czech Republic, Poland, Ukraine, Hungary, Belarus, Germany, Greece, Italy and Australia. Over the last decade India's military diplomacy contacts and activities have increased exponentially. Indian defence forces exercise with countries that include the US, UK, Russia, Japan, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Thailand, Tajikistan, Seychelles and Singapore, both at home and abroad.

Indo-Singapore military cooperation and the consequently more mutually supportive relations has been a success story. Singapore was looking for training areas and skies closer home and found them both in an India that was willing to explore new ways of defence cooperation. In the past, India also has endeavoured to combine military diplomacy or cooperation to support its larger strategic interests as in Sudan for its oil, and in Yemen. However, India has been unable to live up to its considerable potential in this area. Even the cooperation with Singapore has fallen short of its true potential. Some Singaporean training facilities that

went to Australia could well have come to India but for our laid-back approach.[21]

The China Factor

With India's spotty record of creating trust and goodwill has led many neighbours to China as a countervailing option. India therefore needs to review its bilateral and multilateral relations in South Asia and the developing world. It must shift focus to mutual gain and 'interdependence' (as in the Indo-Bhutan equation) and away from a race with China. Chinese jostling for space in the military diplomatic arena, especially in the South Asian and Indian Ocean regions, should however be of concern to India. As **C. Raja Mohan** states:[22]

> "China is consciously promoting it (military diplomacy) … Beijing (China) uses its armed forces as an instrument of diplomacy to enhance China's national power. ….. Chinese ministry of defence promised to intensify its military diplomacy by maintaining military attaches in 109 countries: annually sending more than 100 military delegations abroad and receiving more than 200 visiting military delegations. Beijing also plans to conduct high-level strategic consultations and professional and technical exchanges; and organizing study abroad exchanges for mid-grade and junior officers."

Engaging South Asia

Some of the options for deepening India's Military Cooperation with South Asia include:

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[21]KA Muthanna, 'Military DiplomacY', Journal of Defence Studies Vol 5. No 1. January 2011.

[22]Ibid.

- Military conferences – this could also include exchanges and meetings at the levels of defence ministers and senior civil servants of the Defence Ministry.

- Joint border interactions/meetings – bilateral and tri-lateral.

- Joint maritime patrol and surveillance to monitor the sea-lanes of communication and EEZs. Sharing domain awareness.

- Joint humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, as was highlighted by India's speedy response during the tsunami of December 2004. This could be in the form of communications, joint relief operations, mutual assistance, etc.

- Joint combined exercises – bilateral and multi-lateral - comprising forces from one or more military service.

- UN peace support and related activities.

- Seminars, conferences and symposia on military related subjects.

- Training institution(s) exchanges and conclaves for trainees and faculty.

- Military sports events – at the local and central levels.

- Military adventure activities – at the local and central levels.

- Alumni get-togethers of Indian military training institutions.

- India could also set up a unilateral military assistance programme covering areas ranging from training to materiel assistance.

- Institutions and security think tanks, such as IDSA, USI, etc could offer, fully funded, research fellowships to members of the defence establishment and militaries of the region. These research fellows would gain an insight into Indian defence thought while providing insights into the defence thinking of their own nations. America's Pacific command funded Asia-Pacific Centre for Strategic Studies in Hawaii is an example of systematic outreach out to defence and military establishments in the region.

MORE BANG FOR THE BUCK

It is even better to act quickly and err than to hesitate until the time of action is past.

- Carl von Clausewitz (1780 – 1831)

Limitations

Given the nature of the Indian bureaucratic decision making processes India's military diplomatic strengths often remain underutilised or even unused. Some of the limitations are that lead to this situation are listed below:

- The over centralised approach of India's bureaucracy, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), and a convoluted and cumbersome decision-making processes. Lack of a definite structure and a road map for engaging other countries makes matters worse. Defence cooperation flows from the foreign policy of the nation. However, the broad contours of policy framework for defence cooperation are not spelt out by MEA/MoD in the form of short and long-term objectives. Thus, defence cooperation is planned and executed by each service according to its own understanding and priorities, mostly at its own pace.

- IDC Directorate, HQ IDS, albeit dealing with International Defence Cooperation does not play any role in coordinating and synergizing the substantial effort by the Services towards defence cooperation. This is largely due to lack mandate and inadequate resources.

- Absence of a Single Point Contact in the Armed Forces. In the absence of a single point of contact for defence cooperation, MEA and MoD are often not clear about whom to address about a specific requirement. Moreover, ad hoc arrangements also create communication gaps amongst the Armed Forces.

- Interaction with MEA / MoD. Each Service deals directly with MEA / MoD and more than one agency within each Service may be involved. Such issues could be handled more effectively by a single agency.

- In the past, a major portion of Indian military diplomacy has consisted of promoting the Indian Defence Public Sector rather than relationships built on institutional and personal interactions at all levels.

- Lack of consistency and dedicated funding for military diplomacy prevents the development of a long-term approach. The resultant uncertainty does not inspire much confidence in any bilateral relationship.

- In the absence of a nodal agency for Defence Cooperation, follow up action and accountability is often lacking. This often leads to loss of credibility and conveys lack of seriousness.

Diplomacy is only an extension of **foreign policy**. The MEA, MoD and the Armed Forces working in vertical silos can hardly promote efficiency in implementing our foreign policy. There is a manifest need for integration, not just at the personnel level but also in terms of procedures and processes.

- Defence Diplomacy requires a military presence

'on ground'. One of the authors was in the audience at the third meeting of Joint Military Working Group. The first question by the hosts was about when they would actually see any Indian military presence on the Indian side. The Indian side remained non-committal.

- Inherent contradictions exist in the planning and execution of defence cooperation. Funding is by MEA and execution by MoD. There is a need to review this policy and make funding of defence cooperation activities integral to MoD. MoD could fund military training under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme. Rules regarding spending of ITEC funds also need a review. Archaic distinctions between advanced and developing countries could be abolished to start with. Defence cooperation expenditure is insignificant compared to the overall defence budget; as such, no major imbalance would occur by realigning the budget on functional lines.[2324]

Opportunities

India has the wherewithal to become a global hub for military training and education. Possible focus areas include:[25]

- Counter Terrorism.
- Cyber Warfare.
- CBRN Training.

23Muthanna, ibid.

24Brigadier Ranjit Singh, India : A Global Military Training Hub, Unpublished monograph

25Ibid.

- Special Forces Training.
- Para Training.
- Training for UN Peace Keeping.
- Disaster Management.
- Instructors on Deputation to Friendly Foreign Countries.
- Faculty for conduct of specialised training in the host countries.
- Leverage Alumni of Premier Institutions. Each service needs to formulate a policy to sustain association of alumni with premier institutions.
- Think Tanks affiliated to each Service and HQ IDS can be important assets for conducting Military Diplomacy.

Unexplored Areas

India has substantial assets in terms of Test and Evaluation as well as firing ranges that could create huge leverage in the area of military cooperation:

- DRDO has a large network of test facilities that could contribute towards Defence Cooperation initiatives. There is also considerable potential in following emerging trends of setting up expensive research facilities on a multinational basis.
- With vastly increased ranges of weapons and constant pressure of urbanisation, it has become difficult to conduct live weapon firings in many part of the world. It would be in India's interest to maintain and constantly upgrade its existing facilities which are a vital asset for the Armed Forces. Benefits form Military Cooperation would be a bonus.

> There is little that bureaucrats hate more than innovation, especially innovation that produces better results than the old routines. Improvements always make those at the top of the heap look inept. Who enjoys appearing inept?
>
> - Frank Herbert, Heretics of Dune

Weaknesses

As in many other areas, India's Defence Diplomacy also suffers from certain inherent weaknesses, structural as well as attitudinal:

- Prevarication: In 1992, an Indian frigate chanced upon an Australian maritime patrol aircraft at the Eastern edge of the Andaman Sea. The Indian Fleet Commander considered it a case of intrusive surveillance and initiated a strong protest. The Australian side analysed the aircraft's digital flight records and concluded that there may have been a difference of opinion but safety was not compromised. This was roughly in line with the facts on ground. The Australian Navy suggested that the two countries establish a common radio frequency for on the scene commanders to de-conflict the situation during future incidents. This was minor decision without any significant policy implications. However, despite regular reminders, five years later the Australian side had still not received any response whatsoever. There are more recent examples but this should suffice to highlight issues that can derail defence cooperation besides showing the Armed Forces in poor light.

- **Implementation**: Indian Defence Diplomacy has traditionally been long on declarations and short on implementation.

- **Simplification**: The Indian system of

implementation, with its Byzantine system of controls poses a formidable barrier for a potential partner. Unfortunately, potential partners are more interested in timelines and deliverables than in the complexity of our decision-making processes. Simplification of delivery mechanisms will go a long way towards boosting the credibility of Indian defence cooperation programmes.

- **Competition**: There is a sense of urgency, particularly when equipment issues are involved. This is because either a threat remains unaddressed or a defence system is not available for use. In such matters, speed is obviously of the essence. Potential partners find it even more difficult to understand inordinate delays when the request is relatively routine and has only minor financial implications.

> "Nine-tenths of wisdom is being wise in time."
> - Theodore Roosevelt

Enabling Change

The authors of this summary consider certain changes to be essential to create conditions for vigorous Defence Diplomacy and beneficial Defence Cooperation. These changes fall into three broad categories: attitudinal, structural and procedural:

Attitudinal

- Accept and cater for the fact that Defence Cooperation takes place against a background that is competitive and not benign.

- Based Defence Cooperation on timeliness and outcomes.

- Defence Diplomacy is a team effort. The team must therefore work together as a single entity, without fragmenting its efforts.

- Smart Power is more complete use of diplomatic resources than just relying on Soft Power.

- Defence Diplomacy is part of the larger diplomatic effort.

Structural

- Strengthen the JS (PIC) organisation in the Ministry of Defence. Appointment of the following additional personnel could be considered, within four months, in the first instance:

    - 1 - Brigadier (equivalent) from existing resources.
    - 1 – Director (Civil/ Foreign Service).
    - 3 – Colonel (equivalent) from existing resources.

- Revitalise and provide necessary resources to International Defence Cooperation Directorate (IDC) in Headquarters IDS.

Procedural

Commencing 2017 – 2018, shift the Defence Cooperation budget to the Ministry of Defence.

- Standardise Defence Cooperation policies based on categorisation of countries. For example:

    - Near Abroad
    - Distant Abroad

- Strategic Partners
- Commercial
- Friendly Countries

- Avoid terms such as ‘minor’ and ‘peripheral’ even in internal references.

- Empower IDC Directorate in Headquarters IDS to support JS (PIC) and to coordinate with the three Services.

- Undertake an overhaul of procedures for Defence Cooperation to ensure:
  - Systematic planning based on specific outcomes.
  - Timely decision-making and execution, benchmarked against our competitors.
  - Alignment of accountability, responsibility, execution, budgets and financial authority.

Agenda for Reform

Despite the many disparate considerations, there are three requirements that must underpin all Defence Diplomacy:

- **Timeliness**: Defence Cooperation is linked with core and emotive issues related to operational security of the state. Some of these are policy issues that may call for protracted deliberations and negotiations. However, most are operational, training or equipment issues that easily fit into existing policies and guidelines. If the matter is inordinately delayed, there is always some interested third country waiting to pick up the slack. Instead of case by case by consideration, non-policy matters need to be dealt with under pre-existing

categories such as Vital Countries, Strategic Partners, Alliance Partners, Commercial, etc. A firm response and a clear timeline within 3 months should be reasonable and achievable target. Proposals languishing for years at end are obviously not the answer.

- **Trust**: Just because the other country is significantly smaller does not entitle India to a patronising attitude. Any relationship that is not imbued with mutual trust and respect is doomed from the start.

- **Targeted Outcomes**: In the end it is all about 'deliverables'. Both sides must bring something that the other values to the negotiating table. Agreed outcomes must follow within a reasonable and mutually agreed timeline. There is only so much that can be achieved with repeated but empty statements of goodwill.

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