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Breaking Glass Ceiling? Mapping EU-India Security Cooperation

LARA KLOSSEK, SHOUNAK SET, TOMASZ LUKASZUK

ABSTRACT This year marks the 15th year since India and the European Union (EU) agreed on a Strategic Partnership in 2004. Over the years, despite robust bilateral relations between individual European states and India, the EU-India relations have largely been in the area of *potential* rather than *accomplishment*. This brief evaluates the emerging security partnership by focusing on three key areas, viz. peacekeeping, nuclear issues, and maritime security. It provides policy recommendations towards implementation of the roadmap that the two sides have agreed upon, and future avenues for security cooperation.

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INTRODUCTION

Earlier iterations of the EU-India Summit have largely focused on trade and investment issues.[1] The 15th EU-India Summit, held virtually on 15 July 2020, gave greater attention to security issues. Media reports prior to the Summit observed that "in the public eye and in strategic circles in New Delhi, the value of the EU as partner has been constantly underestimated before, since it is not a traditional hard power, many could not imagine a role for Europe in dealing with the security pressures New Delhi is facing."[2] This might be changing, however, as the current global order—where the centrality of the United Nations-led system, as well as multilateralism are key—appears under threat. The 15th EU-India Summit culminated with the release of two crucial documents: the EU-India Joint Declaration of 2020, and the EU-India Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025. Both documents made salient references to issues of foreign policy, security and strategic technologies, arguably reflecting the ongoing transformation in EU-India security cooperation. The introductory article of the Roadmap committed to "further strengthen and expand EU-India dialogue mechanisms on foreign policy and security issues of common interest."[3] Three key aspects of security directly related to the UN system – peacekeeping, nuclear cooperation, and maritime security – found prominent mention in the documents.

While these three areas represent traditional security concerns, they have gained significance due to unfolding global dynamics and are essential to the conduct of international security governance. In contrast to emerging security concerns (like Artificial Intelligence for instance), these have established legal frameworks and enduring historical trajectories. In addition, India and EU partnership in security can act as a stabilising force in the global order given both their steady support to multilateralism, and their profile as rising powers. This creates unique convergences of interest and can facilitate an expansion of security cooperation, which in turn can create greater understanding towards emerging security concerns and also buttress the overall relation between India and EU. This brief discusses security cooperation between India and the EU in the peacekeeping, nuclear issues, and maritime domains. It considers recent events, ponders the meaning of the 15th EU-India summit, and offers policy recommendations to strengthen the partnership.

PILLARS OF EU-INDIA SECURITY COOPERATION

Peacekeeping: Shared interests, reluctant partnership?

The economic fallout caused by the COVID-19 pandemic appears to aggravate funding issues for peacekeeping operations, which already had been constrained due to budget cuts by key financial supporters, such as the United States.[4] At the same time, there are predictions that the impact of the pandemic might lead to destabilisation of states that were already weak and fragile,

to begin with, and thereby require more peacekeeping deployments. Further, peacekeeping missions are already involved in the immediate response to the global health crisis.[5] Coordinated peacekeeping efforts and strong partnerships are needed if the international community wants to address this current scenario. India and the EU, two of the most vocal and active peacekeeping supporters in the world, had envisioned peacekeeping cooperation in the early years of their strategic partnership. In a communication from the European Commission, the EU expressed the idea to formalise regular cooperation and to further engage India in the area of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.[6] An ambitious list of possible avenues for implementation was included in the 2005 Joint Action Plan.[7] At the recent India-EU summit, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi reminded the two actors that their partnership is "vital for global peace and stability", and stressed that the India-EU partnership can play an important role in the current pandemic.[8]

Indian peacekeepers have shown their commitment to assist countries during the pandemic, continuing their regular mission duties, such as providing infrastructure, despite the Covid-19 threat.[9] India has also deployed a substantial number of medical personnel and recently announced upgrades to two of its field hospitals in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan to assist more COVID-19 patients.[10] The EU's CSDP missions, i.e. the EU military training mission in Somalia, have started to provide advice to medical teams of the Somali army to tackle the COVID-19 emergency.[11] Moreover, the EU has announced a €60-million package to support a regional response in the Horn of Africa to streamline efforts to manage the pandemic; this is done through the supply of personal protective equipment and assistance to vulnerable groups such as refugees.[12] India and the EU's immediate responses to the COVID-19 pandemic, apart from reflecting their commitment to helping the international community, follow the traditional pattern of their peacekeeping contributions: India primarily provides military troops to the UN missions, and the EU sends its personnel through its own CSDP missions and acts as the largest UN peacekeeping financer.

Given this set-up, it can be argued that cooperation can take two paths: India can participate in CSDP missions, or the two can collaborate in UN peacekeeping. The first strategy is difficult for various reasons, primary of which is that India has said that it will participate only in UN-led missions.[13] Furthermore, India is yet to build familiarity with CSDP missions– something for which both partners are responsible.[14] As a consequence, the interoperability between CSDP and UN missions, instead of their complementarities, has been highlighted in the past. Nascent steps to change this took place in 2018 when the Indian Navy escorted a World Food Programme vessel in support of the CSDP Operation ATALANTA, and in 2019 when a delegation of European Union military representatives visited Indian authorities in Mumbai and New Delhi.[15] The other way forward would be for

India and EU to partner in the field of UN peacekeeping. The problem, however, is that their contributions vary significantly both geographically and in nature. India's most significant contributions have been to the UN missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan; these have seen only minor European troop contributions, and therefore there is no interaction on the ground. Furthermore, India's contribution to UN peacekeeping is predominantly in the form of military contingents. Training cooperation thus necessarily would have to involve military-to-military interaction between India and the EU. A step forward in this regard could be reached as the EU is planning on assigning a security adviser to New Delhi, who could establish these crucial interactions between their militaries.

Despite the obstacles, India and the EU have engaged in joint activities outside the mission scenario. First, both are strongly committed to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda initiated by the UN in 2000, which requires the inclusion of women in all phases of the peace process and in addressing the gendered impacts of conflict. India has answered to the UN's call for more female deployments through its decision to send an all-female police unit (AFPU) to Liberia (2007-2016), as well as a Female Engagement Team (FET) to the DRC (2019-); it has also pledged to assemble additional AFPUs and FETs.[16] Moreover, the country's peacekeeping personnel undergo trainings on gender issues. Similarly, the EU has aimed to integrate a gender perspective into its field activities and increase the number of women in CSDP missions and operations.[17] The common priority area has so far translated into the financing of a female military officers' course in Delhi by European member states.[18] There is space for an exchange of best practices and lessons learnt between actors committed to the WPS, given that the number of women in both UN and CSDP missions remains low, particularly in senior positions, and gender-mainstreaming in the planning of missions is far from being achieved.

Second, both India and EU have been actively involved in trainings of third countries. India, for instance, has sent mobile training teams to Vietnam (2017) and Myanmar (2018) and has offered training to Kazakhstan's first-ever peacekeeping contingent. Since 2016, India has organised annual training courses for African partners together with the US.[19] The EU, for its part, has training missions in Somalia, Mali, Niger and the Central African Republic, and financially supports African peacekeeping training centres and invites third countries to CSDP trainings. Finally, there has been direct interaction between India and the EU, through the participation of military and police of European member states in training at the Indian peacekeeping training centre.[20] While these initiatives are predominantly bilateral, their formats could easily be replicated under an EU frame.

Overall, in the last 15 years since the signing of their strategic partnership, India and EU's cooperation in peacekeeping has met with little enthusiasm. Consequently, peacekeeping fell behind other security

areas, such as maritime security or non-proliferation, where regular security dialogues are already in place.[21] The recent joint summit declaration reflects the prioritisation of other security areas and does not explicitly mention peacekeeping.[22] Similarly, the summit outcome document *A Roadmap to 2025* has given only limited space to the topic and sounds less ambitious than, for instance, the *2005 Joint Action Plan*. Peacekeeping is mentioned twice in the document, once regarding the aim for regular security consultations between the EU and India and exchange on strategic priorities, and another regarding consultations on UN peacekeeping including the WPS agenda. Otherwise, it is indirectly touched upon, as the Roadmap aims at strengthening the military-to-military exchanges and "further enhance mutual understanding through seminars, visits and training courses hosted by defence institutes on both sides."[23] It could be argued that the low salience of the issue in the documents indicates that peacekeeping – once identified as a promising area for cooperation– has been put on the backburner at least in terms of a larger-scale partnership. At the same time, it could be read as a much-needed realistic outlook towards what can possibly be achieved in the short run.

Nuclear Equation: Energy, Diplomacy and Research

The global engagement on nuclear issues typically pivots around two primary themes, viz. research and development, and nuclear diplomacy. The 15th EU-India Summit has been noteworthy on both counts, as the Joint Statement and the Roadmap have highlighted key developments in the context of nuclear cooperation. The salient takeaways are in the form of nuclear energy[24] and nuclear diplomacy and have a bearing on energy security (and *ipso facto* climate change) and disarmament and non-proliferation initiatives. Although similar collaborations have occurred intermittently (and among India and individual European states), the scale and scope of these mechanisms combined with the context of international politics mark a watershed. Although France[25] (and to a lesser extent Germany) has been an active partner in the Indian nuclear programme,[26] the establishment of nuclear cooperation agreement with India under the aegis of the EU is novel. This is also the latest addition to the 14 existing bilateral, civilian nuclear agreements among India and other countries.[27]

The EURATOM-India Agreement "on research and development cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy"[28] inked during the Summit, figured prominently in official statements and media coverage. It found place in the official European Commission press conference, the subsequent Joint Declaration, and the Roadmap. This marks a new chapter in the EU-India security cooperation and the implementation of this agreement is listed as one of the deliverables under the Roadmap. The fact that it took 13 years[29] to negotiate this agreement is testament to both the significance of the agreement, and the hitherto existing inertia on both

sides. The Agreement opens up a plethora of possibilities since EU is the largest producer of nuclear energy[30] while India is rapidly augmenting its domestic nuclear power generation capacity,[31] and both of them are heavily dependent on energy imports. If the expanding Indian economy drives unprecedented levels of energy consumption to place energy security as a key policy priority, then the EU places a premium on diversifying its energy matrix for strategic attributes, namely its overdependence on Russian gas. This, combined with the imperative of reducing dependency on non-renewable sources, creates a unique convergence for mutual research, development and collaboration in nuclear power.

Against this political-economic setting, both India and EU host extensive nuclear R&D establishments with complementarities that can be leveraged for tangible outcomes in a positive-sum game. India is on the cusp of becoming the first country to commission a fast-breeder reactor using thorium with its Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor,[32] and it can work with EU in the pursuit of R&D in the emerging Generation IV nuclear reactors.[a] Incidentally, the US, EU and UK are lagging behind Russia in R&D in the area of Generation IV reactors;[33] an India-EU joint venture could be a game-changer with immeasurable commercial and economic benefits for both sides. India's three-stage nuclear programme envisions harnessing the vast reserves of domestic thorium but faces impediments in commercial exploitation of same – recent advances in thorium reactor technology in Europe suggests exciting opportunities.[34] Essentially, both the EU and India are heavily invested in energy security and *ipso facto* climate change, and they can draw on the strengths of their respective nuclear sectors for mutual cooperation.

Quite propitiously, the multi-decade megaproject, the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER), has commenced assembly stage – and has found affirmation by both sides in the Joint Statement and the Roadmap. EU and India are part of the seven-member consortium managing the global project that involves 35 countries. Aiming to generate power through nuclear fusion, which has existed only in academic papers (and in nature) till now, it portends revolutionary potential.[b] Arguably, the ITER represents the most complex technological endeavour attempted by humanity, and this unique enterprise goes beyond mere experiment to construct a Demonstration Power Plant (DEMO), slated to be

a Generation IV reactors are characterised by advanced features denoting efficiency and safety of several magnitudes over existing reactors and are highly prized by the global nuclear industry and particularly in Europe.

b Nuclear energy can be derived by either splitting the atoms (i.e. fission) or by combing them (i.e. fusion) – and although the latter is safer and cleaner (by generating less radioactive waste), it has only existed in galactic bodies like the Sun. A successful fusion experiment has eluded mankind till now and would essentially usher in a paradigmatic scientific transformation.

operational in the early 2030s. The success of ITER would result in energy generation "with an inexhaustible, environmentally benign and universally available resource."[35] ITER then illustrates a successful EU-India research venture acting as a springboard for broader collaboration.

Considering nuclear diplomacy, both sides have agreed to regular exchanges on disarmament and non-proliferation issues. While the Joint Statement framed it within the broader rubric of "global peace and security",[36] the Roadmap substantiated the process by identifying platforms like the Annual India-EU Dialogue on Disarmament and Non-proliferation. Of particular interest was the emphasis to "strengthen cooperation and work towards tangible outcomes on shared objectives of non-proliferation and disarmament."[37] This becomes more interesting given how the Joint Statement declared, "India and the EU will continue to cooperate on international and regional issues of common interest including Iran and Afghanistan" – an implicit reference to Iran's nuclearisation. Such diplomatic alignments come in tandem with growing collaborations in R&D in the nuclear sector; as such, linkages among specialised sub-state organisations can provide ballast to the overall relationship.[38] Yet, greater significance lies in Indian nuclear diplomacy pertaining to the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).

Indian foreign policy agenda is dominated by its quest for membership in the NSG, and the exchanges with EU would supplement its regular diplomatic initiatives. Although the primary opposition is from China, the EU-India exchange bears promise as an additional mechanism of outreach and should not be underestimated since the NSG is dominated by the EU member-states. Similarly, the EU benefits by having a dialogue with India, a key player in disarmament diplomacy, amidst the decline of erstwhile arms control arrangements like the INF Treaty. Indeed, the global nuclear order is facing severe challenges on account of technological advancements and US intransigence, with serious repercussions. In addition, as India has progressively gained membership into proliferation-related multilateral export control regimes –Wassenaar Arrangement, Australia Group and Missile Technology Control Regime – a closer India-EU partnership can contribute to positive outcomes within these forums as well. Therefore, identification of emerging strategic concerns like 5G, Artificial Intelligence, and Outer Space as arenas of cooperation in the Joint Statement and the Roadmap foretells of potential strategic cooperation between India and EU.

Maritime security: Common threats drive closer cooperation

An institutional multi-layered cooperation in the maritime domain developed between India and the EU in the 20th century, contributing to the modern global maritime order. Threats to this order from both state and non-state actors have driven India and the EU closer in maritime security cooperation. The EU-India Summit of July 2020 marked a watershed. At the moment of the establishment of diplomatic relations

between India and the European Economic Community in 1962, there was a significant disproportion in their maritime strengths. India was still focused on land and territorial disputes and conflicts with its biggest neighbours – China and Pakistan. Its sea power capacity was in the process of recovery after the colonial time and limited to the closest neighbourhood within South Asia – the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. Members of the European Economic Community, meanwhile, among them colonial powers like France, still governed their overseas territories and secured them through naval forces. From some of them, India bought defence equipment (France) or utilised their know-how and services in training or regular service (UK). Those bonds with France and Germany have remained essential for critical equipment for the Indian Navy until today, manifesting itself through joint naval exercises as well.

The role of the Indian Navy and budget allocations within the armed forces budget changed after the 1971 war when it played a significant role in the war against Pakistan. The same year, India started its dialogue with the European Economic Community in support of the UN Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace. That dimension of maritime security was crucial for India as the biggest littoral in the Indian Ocean Region, in an environment of growing rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union, taking into account the possibility of an escalation of the arms race among great powers in the Indian Ocean Region. There was the potential to pose a serious threat to the maintenance of peace, security and stability in the region. India did not succeed in implementing the Declaration but the UN Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean established to study the implications of the implementation of the Declaration still serves as an important forum of 43 countries (six among them from the EU) of dialogue to enhance cooperation in maritime safety and security.

The 3rd Conference on International Law of the Sea was an essential moment in EU-India maritime cooperation despite the EEC not being a party to the negotiations of the Convention.[c] Both India, representing the interests of developing countries and EEC, protecting the interests of the increasing number of its members—significantly influenced the provisions of the convention as they introduced key regulations that have shaped modern maritime security. The rules-based order at sea and the holistic approach towards maritime security—including legal order, environment and blue economy—constituted the most important regulations. The EEC (since 1993, the EU) and India successfully contributed to the new architecture of the protection of free movement of ships and protection of the rights of littoral countries, as well as marine environment, actively participating in drafting UN conventions and programmes

c It was given observer status in 1974 and finally became a contracting party to the Convention.

for sustainable development and security of the global maritime domain. They introduced those programmes at the local level (in the form of the EU's Integrated Maritime Policy and the Sagarmala programme in India), becoming the leaders in maritime governance in the 21st century.

The first two decades of the 21st century also saw the rise of negative phenomena undermining the rules-based order created in the last two decades of the 20th century with participation of India and the EU. The incidence of piracy in the Indian Ocean in its Western (Horn of Africa) and Eastern (the Strait of Malacca) ends, created a real threat to the Strategic Lanes of Communication (SLOCs) that constituted the bloodstream and communication bridge between India and Europe. As much as 90 percent of goods in their commerce passed these SLOCs, including oil and gas from the Persian Gulf for India and other leading economies of Asia. Having concluded the 2004 strategic partnership agreement, India and the EU decided in 2005 in their Joint Action Plan to "work towards the conclusion of a Maritime Agreement".[39] The EU launched the European Union Naval Force ATALANTA (EU NAVFOR) in 2008 within the framework of European Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) and in accordance with relevant UN Security Council Resolutions. India began cooperating with the EU NAVFOR antipiracy operation in the Western Indian Ocean in 2009 immediately after it was launched. In 2017, the Italian Flagship and Headquarters of the EU's Naval Force Operation Atalanta, ITS Fasan, conducted joint manoeuvres with the Indian Navy vessel INS Trishul off the coast of Somalia, representing the first-ever joint EU-India naval exercise.[40]

The rise of China, its growing assertiveness in the Indian Ocean Region and questioning of UNCLOS regulations, has constituted another threat to the rules-based order at sea in the 21st century. In response to the coercive activities of China in the South China Sea and growing military presence in the maritime neighbourhood of India, India and the EU reaffirmed in a joint statement at the summit in 2017, their commitment to enhance maritime security cooperation in the Indian Ocean and beyond.[41] They also underlined the importance of freedom of navigation, overflight and peaceful resolution of disputes, in accordance with the universally recognised principles of international law. The joint conference, "Securing the maritime commons: India, the European Union and Indian Ocean maritime security", held in New Delhi in 2019, started the cooperation between EU CRIMARIO and India's IFC-IOR (Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region), created in 2018.[42] The two platforms have complementary goals that can serve as a channel of information-sharing and confidence-building, as well as in helping build capacity among Indian Ocean nations and their extra-regional partners to face common challenges related to the movement of ships.

At the 2020 summit, India and the EU agreed to launch a dialogue on maritime security and consultations on security and defence, thereby elevating the existing contacts from the level of the Navy officers and think tanks to the leadership. The participants of the summit have also decided to enhance naval cooperation, which meant the move from India's traditional bilateral linkages with strategic partners from the EU's biggest countries to wider cooperation with other EU member countries with significant naval capacity in all its aspects. They emphasised the need to preserve safety and stability in the Indian Ocean.[43] In the document released after the Summit, "EU-India Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025",[44] the cooperation in maritime security was one of the priorities. Strengthening military-to-military relations and exchanges, including deepening the cooperation between the European Union Naval Force (EUNAVFOR) ATALANTA and the Indian Navy, are mentioned as key instruments of executing the provisions of the Roadmap.[45]

Having cooperated bilaterally and multilaterally in maritime security in its broad meaning, the EU and India created an impact on the shape of maritime security. The 21st century with the dynamic growth of trade between Europe and Asia, and its multidimensional and non-traditional threats forced both entities to change their policies. India shifted its perspective on the EU, no longer treating it as only as a trade and investment partner. The EU decided to change the paradigm of its sea power, relocating the part of its assets from soft to hard power.

The 2020 summit was the crucial moment in that context, ending the period of mutual doubt about the true intentions, which began with a tragic incident involving Indian fishermen and Italian Navy seamen from the Enrica Lexie.[46] Both partners have realised that their mutual restraint against deepening maritime cooperation in the military dimension has been used by China in the last decade to implement its expansion in the Indian Ocean. Bearing in mind the role of maritime transport in Indo-European commercial cooperation, the issue of security in this aspect is also of key importance.

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Peacekeeping – Experts have argued that UN peacekeeping could today be at a transformative moment due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its expected impacts on the UN endeavour.[47] India and the EU, as some of the largest contributors to UN peacekeeping, have a lot at stake in shaping the future of this instrument. This, in turn, could move peacekeeping higher up on the agenda of their security partnership. In the meantime, the most feasible avenue to move the cooperation forward appears to be the field of UN peacekeeping training.[48] Here, the reiteration of prioritising the WPS agenda and increasing the number of women in peacekeeping—during the last peacekeeping summits and in policy documents—could serve as a good starting

point.[49] Moreover, both India and the EU have in the past conducted trainings for third countries, sometimes engaging the same partners, i.e. Vietnam and several African countries.[50] India and the EU could join hands in their training efforts. Smaller projects like this might eventually pave the way for the earlier more ambitious vision of India-EU cooperation in peacekeeping.

Nuclear Cooperation – Nuclear cooperation between India and the EU takes place along three vertices: energy cooperation, research and development, and nuclear diplomacy. While there has been substantial engagement on each of these in the past, what is missing is a sustained pace and direction. Therefore, these engagements, despite their intensity, has been mostly episodic and driven by external developments. For instance, the landmark India-USA Civil Nuclear Agreement (2008) generated a dynamic Indian outreach to Europe. Initially, the India-EU Energy Panel in 2005 proved to be beneficial towards germinating the seeds of the landmark India-USA Civil Nuclear Agreement by facilitating dialogue on nuclear energy cooperation.[51] In the latter phases, the Indian outreach to the members of the NSG intensified in 2008 for the India-specific NSG waiver – and European states played an indispensable role in the process. While the Annual India-EU Disarmament dialogue is a welcome step, an India-EU High Technology Dialogue – along the lines of the US-India High Technology Cooperation Group would be beneficial. It can identify potential areas of technology cooperation and along with nuclear, can supplement the already identified sectors of 5G, AI and Outer Space. The Roadmap[52] lists establishing a joint Working Group for Outer Space, and envisions further cooperation through the existing Working Group on Information and Communication Technology; these already provide the elementary foundation for an India-EU High Technology Dialogue.

Maritime security – The EU should become a part of IONS meetings and naval exercises, what would build-up India's role in the Indian Ocean Region and strengthen its position towards China. The EU, as an important strategic trade partner of China, could act not only as India's ally in defence of the liberal system of international law of the sea and the institutional framework of the international maritime cooperation but also as a factor encouraging China to cooperate and make adjustments to its maritime policy. India should consider the support of the EU to join the Quad,[d] as part of the Quad-plus concept in the same context. The current US administration is highly critical about Europe and its expansion of the military budgets and capacities, in order to share the part of the responsibility for liberal global order. The participation

d Quad – Quadrilateral Initiative announced by Prime Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe in his speech at the Parliament of India in August 2007, proposing an idea of a "broader Asia" security dialogue involving India, Japan, Australia and USA.

of the EU naval forces in strengthening the security architecture in the Indian Ocean would be probably welcomed in Washington. The EU should become part of the Sagarmala project and extend its contribution to the process of expanding the maritime infrastructure in the Bay of Bengal and Arab Sea. EU members from all its subregions have untapped potential in maritime technologies. The good practices of the Integrated Maritime Policy as a unique, global programme of the holistic approach towards maritime governance can be utilised in India and other Bay of Bengal countries. The joint EU-India project of defence industry cooperation of naval shipyards should be created. The level of military spending on the Navy in China is growing following the New Maritime Silk Road programme. In such technological military competition, the EU and India should combine forces.

CONCLUSION

EU-India relations today appear different than they were in the first two decades of the 21st century. The three principal aspects of the security cooperation between India and the EU surveyed in this brief suggest interesting developments in the field of security cooperation itself – and this is noteworthy. The areas of peacekeeping, nuclear cooperation and maritime security represent disparate challenges and opportunities and differential levels of India-EU cooperation. However, they cumulatively suggest novel trends and merit greater engagement by analysts and practitioners alike.

As the second decade of the new millennium unfolds, the world is undergoing irreversible changes – an unprecedented pandemic, an overbearing China, an unpredictable United States – these are but manifestations of the deeper global churning. India and EU are well-placed to explore and expand their security cooperation, while their response to these challenges can generate a novel dynamic in the global order and may even act as a stabilising force in an era of uncertainty. While mutual convergences of trade, technology and connectivity should be leveraged, the salient arenas of cooperation in the security dimension of India-EU relations should be kept in view. ORF

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Lara Klossek is a Marie-Sklodowska Curie Global India Research Fellow at the Department for International Relations, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and researcher at Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals (IBEI).

Shounak Set is a Marie Sklodowska-Curie Global India Research Fellow at King's College London, specialising in Foreign Policy Analysis and Strategic Studies.

Tomasz Lukaszuk is a Marie Sklodowska-Curie Global India Research Fellow at Global India Program, member of the Faculty of Political Science and International Studies, University of Warsaw, and former Ambassador of Poland to India (2014-2017) and Indonesia (2005-2010).

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20, Rouse Avenue Institutional Area, New Delhi - 110 002, INDIA
Ph. : +91-11-35332000. Fax : +91-11-35332005.
E-mail: contactus@orfonline.org
Website: www.orfonline.org