



STRATEGIC VISION
INSTITUTE

VISION

VISIONARY INSIGHTS INTO THE STRATEGIC INQUESTS OF NATIONS

SVI FORESIGHT

VOLUME 8, NUMBER 8

AUGUST 2022

Compiled:

Ghulam Mujtaba Haider

Edited by:

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai

Strategic Vision Institute
Islamabad

SVI FORESIGHT

VOLUME 8, NUMBER 8

AUGUST 2022

Compiled:

Ghulam Mujtaba Haider

Edited by:

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai



STRATEGIC VISION
I N S T I T U T E

Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this edition are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Strategic Vision Institute.

Strategic Vision Institute (SVI)

Strategic Vision Institute (SVI) is an autonomous, multidisciplinary, and non-partisan institution, established in January 2013. It is a non-governmental and non-commercial organization, administered by a Board of Governors (General Body) supervised under a Chairperson and administered by a Management Committee headed by a President/Executive Director.

SVI aims to project strategic foresight on issues of national and international import through dispassionate, impartial, and independent research, analyses, and studies. The current spotlight of the SVI is on national security, regional and international peace and stability, strategic studies, nuclear non-proliferation, arms control, and strategic stability, nuclear safety, and security and energy studies.

SVI Foresight

SVI Foresight is a monthly electronic journal. It has a multi-disciplinary perspective highlighting contemporary strategic and security studies. The Journal is envisioned to be a collection of policy-oriented articles written by its Research Associates, Visiting Faculty, and professional experts. The objective is to provide the readership with a concise all-around and real-time policy-oriented discourse on contemporary strategic regional and international developments, highlighting their relevance to Pakistan.

Contents

Editor's Note.....	3
Astana Trilateral Summit 2022: What did Russian President Achieve?.....	4
America's Low-Earth Orbit Strategy Has Gotten Lost in Space.....	6
I2U2 QUAD: An analysis of India's extension in West Asia	7
How to deal with India in Afghanistan?	10
Salient Features of The Tenth NPT Review Conference 2022.....	12
How the voting rights granted to non-Kashmiris reinforce the Hindutva agenda	15
How The future of nuclear non-proliferation regime.....	17

Editor's Note

The 'I2U2' first leaders' summit held between India, Israel, the U.S., and UAE marked the construction of the security architecture in West Asia that stretches from the Strait of Malacca to the Suez Canal to create a balance of power in the tri-polar West Asian region by incorporation of India as a balancer and an extra-regional manager. However, India in the I2U2 is a cause of concern for the regional states in South and East Asia because this partnership strategically benefits India by filling it in as an international stakeholder in the strategic maritime theaters in the world that include the Red Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, the Arabian Sea, the Horn of Africa and the Indian Ocean.

Moreover, India is trying to establish its relationship with the Taliban with a hope that it will regain its previous status in Afghanistan. Hence, a comprehensive strategy is needed to stop India from making its sway in Afghanistan under the Taliban. India has recently opened its embassy in Kabul and will gradually expand its work across the country by establishing a good working relationship with the Taliban, which will hamper Pakistan's interest. Islamabad does not want a pro-Pakistan government in Afghanistan but one which at least does not allow the Afghan soil to be used against it.

Besides, this issue contains articles on several key issues of international politics: Astana summit 2022, US space operations, NPT review conference 2022, and India's Kashmir policy.

Please see [here](#) the copy of the *SVI Foresight* electronic journal. You can find us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) and can also access the SVI [website](#).

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai

Editor, SVI Foresight

Astana Trilateral Summit 2022: What did Russian President Achieve?

Hamdan Khan

Since he launched the fateful invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the Russian President had not traveled outside the former Soviet territories. His only visit outside Russia was to “friendly” Central Asian States in June, where he predictably received a warm reception. The first trip by Putin outside former Soviet territories proved to be to the Iranian capital Tehran for the Astana Trilateral Summit — a forum established for the settlement of the Syrian conflict and features key players in the Syrian conflict: Russia, Iran, and Turkey. Unsurprisingly, the Syrian conflict took a back seat and the aftermath of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine dominated the discussions at the trilateral summit.

After the boycott of Putin by the Western world, the Russian leader has been attempting strategic and economic reorientation toward Asia and has achieved considerable success in making up for the losses in revenues incurred owing to the Western economic sanctions by selling oil at heavily discounted prices to countries like China and India. The trip to Iran provided the beleaguered Russian leader an opportunity to dissipate the impression of Russian isolation — no matter if the support extended is from a state under the severest of Western sanctions – Iran. The outright endorsement of his Ukraine invasion and scathing condemnation of the Western world was precisely the music Putin wanted to hear and the Iranian Supreme Leader had plenty to offer.

Nonetheless, being under Western sanctions has positioned both the countries abreast and Russia, by offering even cheaper energy rates, has captured the energy and steel markets previously held by under-sanctions Iran. The shift did cause some resentment in Iran and Putin sought to assuage the Iranian grievances by signing the \$40 billion deal between the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) and Gazprom for the development of oil and gas fields in Iran. Nonetheless, the suspicions do persist as the Iranian Supreme Leader pushed Russians to follow up and fulfill the agreements signed between the two countries in the oil and gas sectors.

Putin’s Tehran visit has cemented Russia’s position as an important power broker in the Middle East having friendly relations with countries on both sides of the regional Middle Eastern divide. Besides its longstanding relationship with Iran, Russia’s intervention in the Syrian civil war forestalled the almost certain downfall of Bashar’s regime and the country is also a party in the

Libyan civil war, wherein it patronizes the warlord Khalifa Haftar. Moreover, Russia now has a multifaceted relationship with the USA's Arab allies — particularly Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Qatar — primarily owing to the convergence of their energy interests in OPEC Plus. The Arab countries also avoided harshly denouncing the Russian invasion of Ukraine — as the West would have anticipated — so as to avoid antagonizing Moscow, and top Saudi and Emirati royals reportedly declined calls from President Biden during the initial days of the invasion.

Days before Putin visited Tehran, President Biden took a trip to the Middle East and in his address to a gathering of Arab leaders, tried to reassure Washington's Arab allies that the superpower remains committed to the region and urged oil-rich Arab nations to increase their oil production to mitigate global oil price shock caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Following Biden's visit, the de facto Saudi ruler Muhammad Bin Salman and President Putin during a phone call agreed to keep coordinating within the framework of OPEC Plus. Accordingly, during the cartel's meeting held on August 3rd the OPEC Plus members agreed to make a small increase in the oil production, which is unlikely to drastically impact the energy prices as President Biden counted upon.

Even more remarkably, in utter defiance of the US sanctions, Saudi Arabia is importing Russian oil at discounted price for domestic use while selling its oil at higher prices in the international market. In effect, in a major geopolitical turnaround for Moscow in the Middle East, Putin has been able to reaffirm its partnerships, and the days of Arab capitals uncritically following Washington's lead are all but over.

Putin's meeting with Turkish President Erdogan during Astana Summit also captured headlines — initially after the Russian President was left awkwardly standing for around 50 seconds waiting for his Turkish counterpart before their meeting and successively for the discussions between the two strongmen to strike a deal to freight the Ukrainian grain from its three Black Sea ports (the deal has now been reached). During the discussions on Syria, Erdogan reportedly talked about the Russian President as “My dear friend Putin” in an exhibition of the close relationship between the two strongmen. Though Turkey and Russia feature on the opposite sides of equations in the Syria, Libya, Azerbaijan-Armenia, and Ukraine conflicts, they have long-lasting trade and energy ties. Turkey, despite being a member of NATO, did not join the Western

sanctions against Russia and is now buying more oil from Moscow. Correspondingly, Moscow looks to Turkey as a partner — nonetheless a difficult one — among a host of antagonists and as a crucial market for its energy products and wheat. Yet another meeting between the two leaders in the Russian city of Sochi further hollows Western gambits to isolate Russia for its invasion of Ukraine; meanwhile, Putin continues to assemble allies.

Hamdan khan is a Research Officer at Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad

<https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2022/08/06/astana-trilateral-summit-2022-what-did-russian-president-achieve/>

America's Low-Earth Orbit Strategy Has Gotten Lost in Space

Akash Shah

Last month, Russia announced that it will quit the International Space Station (ISS) after 2024 and launch its own orbiting station. Many believe that Russia is using the cooperation related to the ISS as a bargaining chip to secure leeway with the economic sanctions imposed by the West after its invasion of Ukraine. The sanctions are gradually strangulating the Russian economy and this could represent a desperate attempt to find a way out. Regardless, Russia is not the first country to push for its own space station and it was bound to happen sooner or later.

Emerging space powers like China and India already have plans to send lunar missions and independent space stations into low-Earth orbit (LEO). In fact, China has successfully launched two out of three modules of its space station Tiangong; the last module is set to be sent into space by the end of 2022. Similarly, India is determined to launch its space station by 2030. Given this trend, more countries with the resources and ambition to have their own space stations are likely to follow suit in the coming decade.

Low-Earth orbit is already the most congested region in space with the highest concentration of satellites and space debris. Since it is the most accessible orbit, states and private entities have launched satellites for communication, remote sensing, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR). At present, there are more than 4,000 satellites orbiting the Earth, 3,000 of which are LEO satellites. The United States alone has an ambitious plan of launching a constellation of military satellites into this orbit notwithstanding, that more than 2,500 private

Starlink satellites orbit the Earth already. Experts believe that as many as 50,000 satellites could be hovering in LEO in the next decade.

When it comes to space law, apart from the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 which defines the broad rules of the game for all space players, there has not been any substantial progress. The policy side has also lagged tremendously behind technological developments. This could have serious repercussions if a consensus is not reached regarding a comprehensive space policy, at least for low-Earth orbit. Satellites in LEO have both commercial and military utility and the line dividing the two is not distinct. In an event of a direct military confrontation between two countries that have extensive space-based infrastructure, one side could be tempted to use its anti-satellite weapons (ASAT), which at least four countries overtly possess, to target the space assets of its enemy. The probability of Kessler syndrome becoming a reality, especially since the density of space assets is expected to explode exponentially in near future, is getting higher. Even if the debris caused by the use of ASATs is not taken out of the equation, close encounters between satellites in orbit are already a frequent phenomenon that will become worse.

Major stakeholders in space should be working toward building a consensus to formulate an elaborate space policy in general, and an LEO-focused policy in particular, to protect their multibillion-dollar space stations. In the worst-case scenario of a collision cascade caused by space debris, there would be no winners or losers. Not only would it cost billions of dollars to spacefaring nations, but it would put the lives of astronauts aboard space stations in danger as well. As unabated constellations of small and medium satellites are launched into LEO, the window for policy intervention and avoiding havoc in the sky is already closing.

Akash Shah is a Research Officer at Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad

<https://nationalinterest.org/blog/buzz/america%E2%80%99s-low-earth-orbit-strategy-has-gotten-lost-space-204226>

I2U2 QUAD: An analysis of India's extension in West Asia

Komal Khan

The 'I2U2' first leaders' summit held between India, Israel, the U.S., and UAE marked the construction of the security architecture in West Asia that stretches from the Strait of Malacca to

the Suez Canal to create a balance of power in the tri-polar West Asian region by incorporation of India as a balancer and an extra-regional manager.

Abraham Accords 2020, signed between the Arab States with the UAE in lead and Israel, extended forth normalization and partnership agreements between Israel and extra-regional medium powers, particularly within the domain of defense and military technology, and economic connectivity, under new power dynamics. India is the primary facilitator and beneficiary of this ongoing US-led strategic engineering called multilateralism. Multilateralism is the strategic alignment wherein issue-specific partnerships are developed as deterrents to the transitioning multilateralism in the world order.

Democracy vs Capitalism

Previously, the world order had Capitalism at its core; presently, it has democracy. In the transforming world order, democracies have been engaged to form a security network by collaborating on non-security issues. Therefore, I2U2 also indicates a security framework by taking into account six non-security domains of cooperation that include energy, space, transportation, food security, water, and health.

India's nominated identity as the largest democracy in the world, despite human rights subjugation to religious-politic extremism, fixes it as the policing state for the U.S. under bilateral bargaining of relative interests in strategically significant regional theatres in the Indian Ocean that include South Asia, West Asia with the Middle East, in particular, the coast of East Africa, and the islands in the Indian Ocean in from East (Sri Lanka) to the West (Comoros Archipelago). Notably, India is a member of six out of nine multilaterals for defense and security cooperation from 2016 to 2021.

They include India-France-Australia Trilateral Dialogue 2020, Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) 2017, Australia-Japan-India (AJI) Trilateral 2015, India-Italy-Japan Trilateral 2021, Australia-India-Indonesia Trilateral 2017, and Japan-US-India 2018. India's membership in such multilateral forums, particularly in defense and security, deputizes India with decision-making authority even if India lacks it in international forums such as UNSC or NSG.

Meeting the purpose of the I2U2, India and the UAE are assigned to function as the U.S. associate for building regional consensus on de-factor engagements with Israel, thereby

impacting the Palestinian and Iranian interests based on their non-engagement with the U.S.-led medium power partnerships. I2U2 is similar to the multilateral partnership in the Indo-Pacific like the QUAD, which weights balance of power in favor of the democratic block and the U.S. by building consensus towards international treaties such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas which the U.S., otherwise, would not have been able to maintain since it is a non-signatory of the treaty.

Therefore, India in the Indian Ocean, and now in West Asia has assumed the charge of one of the U.S. facilitators in promoting its policy of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific and the Freedom of Navigation, particularly with respect to the Strait of Hormuz is the transit route to 30% of the total oil trade in the world. In June 2019, the Indian navy initiated maritime security operations named 'SANKALP' in the Gulf in order to ensure India's safe transit through the Strait of Hormuz and also indicate the Indian military's strategic presence, however, not deployment, in West Asia. Notably, India fulfills nearly 80% of its oil needs through oil imports.

Is India trying to establish its hegemony?

India's approach as an international manager for the U.S. in the Middle East benefits India with the assertion of Indian strategic autonomy beyond South Asia. Moreover, it is in line with India's global ambitions. I2U2 also provides India with military footprints in the Middle East. Significantly, it assures India's economic and energy security and protects the Indian diaspora in the Gulf.

I2U2 is expected to add to the Indian economy in the long term through autonomous economic agreements on India's terms rather than the terms defined by multilateral economic forums such as the RECP. The immediate economic effect of the partnership is an investment of two billion dollars and provision of technology for agriculture, and financial support for renewable energy in the states of Madhya Pradesh and Gujrat. India and UAE have also entered into a free trade agreement under the emerging partnership to increase their bilateral trade from fifty-nine billion dollars to one hundred billion dollars in 2027.

I2U2 gives India access to Israel's advanced defense technologies. Due to Israel being the major defense technology supplier to India that witnessed a significant 175% of increase in arms imports between 2015-2019 under Modi, I2U2 signals a substantial buildup of India's defense and military technology, therefore, contributing to a strategic imbalance in South Asia.

The U.S. holds responsibility for providing Israel with India as a substitute for China as a potential buyer of Israel's arms because, since the 1990s, the U.S. has been vetoing Israel's arms trade with China. Israel's surveillance and operational capabilities have been used by India in Kashmir and on LOC and LAC against Pakistan and China. Amidst India-China military standoff 2021, Israel leased Heron drones deployed on the LAC.

As far as Indian military deployment in West Asia is concerned, Indian military projection beyond Asia is compromised to India's strategic rivalry in South Asia on two fronts that is China and Pakistan. Even in the case of QUAD, India is reluctant to engage militarily with the U.S. because it cannot afford a confrontation with China and Pakistan when it aims to pursue its economic ambitions and global level.

India would only resort to a military option in the Indian Ocean that serves India's vital national interests. Other primary factors that would determine India's calculated engagement in West Asia would be India's escape from deliberate strategic rivalry with Iran in the Strait of Hormuz and, specifically, with China in the proximity of Djibouti and Bab-el-Mandeb.

However, India in the I2U2 is a cause of concern for the regional states in South and East Asia because this partnership strategically benefits India by filling it in as an international stakeholder in the strategic maritime theaters in the world that include the Red Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, the Arabian Sea, the Horn of Africa and the Indian Ocean.

Komal Khan is a Research Officer at Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.

<https://www.globalvillagespace.com/i2u2-quad-an-analysis-of-indias-extension-in-west-asia/>

How to deal with India in Afghanistan?

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai

India-Pakistan relations have always been troublesome. India, following the partition, thought Pakistan would not be able to sustain itself and soon merge with India. However, that proved wishful thinking. Hence, it started destabilizing Pakistan from its north-western border. Be it India's support to Faqir of Ipi in the 1950s to destabilize the border region with Afghanistan or later on India's support for the Pashtunistan cause, India tries to utilize every opportunity to create chaos in Pakistan.

The September 11 incident changed the global dynamics, and the advent of the war on terror brought another opportunity to India to make its foothold strong in Afghanistan and use Afghan soil against Pakistan. India took several measures that helped her make sway in the country. First, India got US support and started humanitarian aid and infrastructure building in Afghanistan. Secondly, India established a cordial relationship with the Afghan leadership. Thirdly, by investing in Afghanistan, it worked on its soft image in the country. Fourth, in the name of developmental projects, India expanded its network in the country that reportedly used to support anti-Pakistan elements on Afghan soil. Through the twenty years since the fall of the Taliban, relations between Islamabad and Kabul remained fragile, and we often saw a blame game. However, the fall of Kabul allowed Pakistan to re-establish its clout in Afghanistan and convince the Taliban regime not to allow Afghan soil to be used against Pakistan. For the said purpose, Pakistan needs the following measures to carry out.

One is to adopt a carrot and stick policy for the Taliban. Pakistan's leverage on the Taliban before the fall of Kabul has been considerably minimized. Taliban openly criticize Pakistan on the one hand and allow TTP on its soil that carries out attacks on the Pakistani security forces. Since the Taliban takeover of Kabul, Islamabad is only offering carrots to the Taliban, which has almost no output. Hence, Pakistan needs to exploit the weaknesses of the Taliban and convince them to act against TTP or at least pressure them to strike a peace deal that could end militancy in the tribal belt. Pakistan can also raise the TTP issue in an international forum while hinting at the Doha agreement, where the Taliban has pledged not to allow Afghan soil against the US or its allies. Since Pakistan was a frontline state and an ally in the war on terror, hence, Taliban shall stop TTP from operating on Afghan soil.

Two, Pakistan shall cooperate with China and sign a trilateral security agreement with the Taliban, which obligates the Taliban to take action against any group that attacks any neighboring countries. With Beijing's collaboration, Pakistan can work on communications infrastructure to make it viable to reach the Central Asian States. Any China-Pakistan joint venture will boost Pakistan's clout in Afghanistan and bare India from making its roots strong as they did after the US invasion.

Three, Pakistan has the opportunity to cooperate with Iran in Afghanistan. In the past, there was a divergence between Islamabad and Tehran over the Taliban in Afghanistan. Iran used to

support the Northern Alliance, an anti-Taliban group. However, now there is no significant divergence between the Taliban and Iran. Iran also has good relations with China, so all three regional countries can go for security and trade agreements with the Taliban, which will be helpful for all the parties.

Four, Pakistan needs to work on its soft image in Afghanistan, as it has tarnished in the last two decades. Most of the Afghan populace believe Pakistan cannot be a friendly country to Afghanistan. Pakistan had provided a handful of aid to the post-US invasion of Afghanistan; however, Islamabad has not projected it in the way it needed to be done. India has given Afghanistan three billion dollars post-9/11 while Islamabad one billion dollars. The relationship between the two states' leadership was not smooth, so that did not allow for broader cooperation in trade, security, and other fields.

Hence, a comprehensive strategy is needed to stop India from making its sway in Afghanistan under the Taliban. India has recently opened its embassy in Kabul and will gradually expand its work across the country by establishing a good working relationship with the Taliban, which will hamper Pakistan's interest. Islamabad does not want a pro-Pakistan government in Afghanistan but one which at least does not allow the Afghan soil to be used against it.

Zafar Iqbal Yousafzai is a Research Officer at Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.

<https://criticaloutsider.com/2022/08/30/how-to-deal-with-india-in-afghanistan/>

Salient Features of The Tenth NPT Review Conference 2022

Sher Bano

After four weeks of speeches, debates and closed-door negotiations on the 1968 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), diplomats from 151 countries failed to reach consensus on a conference document designed to review and strengthen implementation of the treaty due to Russian objections to language addressing the nuclear security crisis at Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, which was seized by Russia in March. Daryl G. Kimball (executive director of the Arms Control Association) said that the NPT is often called the cornerstone of nuclear non-proliferation and global disarmament, but the debate and the results of this meeting reveal

that there are cracks in the foundations of the treaty and deep divisions between states with nuclear weapons.

The purpose of the NPT conference was to enhance compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to enhance global security by effectively addressing the nuclear arms race and the growing threat of nuclear weapons use. The conference focused on measures taken for disarmament by stressing on agreement to unconditional action within a specified timeframe. The Russian Federation and the United States committed to continuing negotiations on successive framework to the New START Treaty before it comes to end in 2026; and hereby, adhere to the implementation of the New START in letter and spirit at present. In the wake of rising tensions between Russia and the U.S. following Putin's war on Ukraine, the US and Russia have pledged to participate in nuclear arms control talks aimed at establishing reasonable and effective limits on their largest nuclear weapons which marks a significant effort towards retention of the nuclear arms control agreement.

However, on other disarmament issues, the conference was unable to secure agreement on specific action steps. Diplomats from the five nuclear-weapon states (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States) rejected pragmatic proposals for specific, time-bound commitments to fulfill their NPT disarmament obligations. The nuclear-weapon states failed to come up with new, creative but realistic ideas and the necessary political will to meet those obligations, but instead came with every intention of evading when pressed about their lack of progress towards nuclear disarmament.

As conference time ran out, many states parties expressed dissatisfaction with numerous elements of the August 25 draft outcome document, but chose not to oppose the consensus. Many non-nuclear weapon states were justifiably upset with the lack of ambition specificity on nuclear disarmament issues. At the 2010 review conference, the NPT nuclear-weapon states pledged to “accelerate concrete progress on steps leading to nuclear disarmament,” including “all types of nuclear weapons,” as well as to work hard toward the entry into force of the 1996 Agreement Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Article VI of the NPT commits the States parties to “continue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament.

In the draft document of the conference, the NPT states parties expressed their deep concern about the lack of tangible progress in further reductions in world stocks and in the implementation of disarmament commitments by the nuclear-weapon states since the 2015 Review Conference. But noticing such a lack of progress does not replace commitment to actions that actually lead to stopping and reversing the nuclear arms race. Not surprisingly, the NPT nuclear-weapon states also resisted calls by non-nuclear-weapon states to unequivocally condemn recent threats to use nuclear weapons, such as those issued on February 24 and April 27 by Russia against any state that might interfere with its policy invasion of Ukraine.

In the NPT Review Conference draft outcome document, nuclear-weapon states would only commit to refrain from any inflammatory rhetoric on the use of nuclear weapons. At the beginning of the NPT conference, France, the United Kingdom and the United States issued a working document that attempted to distinguish between “irresponsible” offensive nuclear threats from Russia and “responsible” nuclear threats for “defensive” purposes of their own nations. The Russian delegation defended what it called Russia’s nuclear “warnings” as simply part of Moscow’s nuclear deterrence strategy.

In contrast, the state’s parties to the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) issued a strong consensus political declaration on June 23 at the first meeting of the state parties to the TPNW. That declaration states that any use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is a violation of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations. The TPNW statement further condemned unequivocally any and all nuclear threats, whether explicit or implied and regardless of the circumstances.

The main committee’s draft report reiterates the importance of commitment to the key principles of the NPT, such as nuclear arms reduction, complete and total disarmament, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. However, the fundamental challenge remains the lack of urgency to address the growing nuclear threats, as well as the absence of timelines and concrete action points. A key conclusion that emerges is the focus on the aspect of humanitarian consequences, as well as actionable points, such as the New START successor framework, as well as the possible implementation of a reporting mechanism within the NPT.

Sher Bano is a Research Officer at Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.

<https://www.eurasiareview.com/31082022-the-salient-features-of-the-tenth-npt-review-conference-2022-oped/>

How the voting rights granted to non-Kashmiris reinforce the Hindutva agenda

Zukhruf Amin

India's decision of allowing anyone who is living ordinarily in Jammu and Kashmir to get registered as a voter in the region, which will be in accordance with the provisions of the Representation of the People Act, has revived fears among the Muslims of yet another attempt of reinforcing Hindutva agenda in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). As announced by the Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) Hirdesh Kumar, it is expected that the decision will add almost 2.5 million new voters to the existing 7.6 million voters in Kashmir.

According to the CEO, it is not mandatory for someone to hold a residence certificate from Jammu and Kashmir in order to register to vote. Hence, non-local voters will have voting rights in IIOJK now. It will alter the disputed territory's political and demographic landscape. The move to allow non-Kashmiris to vote – has once again unveiled India's hegemonic aspirations of consolidating a Hindu Rashtra by enforcing the Hindutva agenda.

IIOJK under new threat?

The apprehensions of a demographic change in the Muslim majority territory have been triggered under the Hindu nationalist BJP's government. In the wake of this decision, the political and social landscape of the IIOJK is under threat from the Modi-led Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). It was until August 2019, that the voting rights in IIOJK were limited only to its permanent residents, as promised under Articles 370 and 35(A) of the Indian constitution. However, the August 5 move by India officially marked the beginning of a new wave of suppression of Muslims in IIOJK.

New domicile laws introduced after the revocation of its special status also aimed to allow the outsiders for settling in and alter the demography of the disputed territory. In this regard, the systematic increase in the ratio of the Hindu population has been the key objective. In May 2022, the Delimitation Commission's decision of redefining the electoral boundaries in IIOJK, by increasing the representation in the Hindu-majority Jammu region and decreasing it in the Muslim-majority Kashmir, was another step toward alienating the Muslims. The local Muslims

fear that rising Islamophobia in India and anti-Muslim hatred behind Modi's Kashmir policy will rob them of their separate identity.

Many Indian lawmakers, including the opposition parties and Kashmiri politicians, have renounced the BJP's decision to grant voting rights to non-locals, calling it a part of a deep-rooted conspiracy to alter the demography and enforce the Hindutva agenda. Former Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti called the BJP's decision the last nail in the coffin of the electoral democracy of Jammu and Kashmir. For the people of Kashmir, it is an assault on their identity as the Muslim majority region. Since 5th August 2019, Modi has been hell-bent on influencing the electoral systems for reinforcing Hindu nationalism.

Nationalism is being used to gain support for Hindutva ideology

The abrogation of IIOJK's special status, granting domiciles to Hindus, and redrawing of the electoral boundaries and voting rights to non-locals are part of a larger political agenda of the Modi-led BJP government. The aim is to influence the upcoming elections in India and turn the electoral majority into a minority in the disputed territory. Voting rights to outsiders will have dire consequences for the region.

Kashmir is not merely a territorial conflict, but a matter of human rights violations now, which are on the rise. The wave of brutality finds no end. There are increased incidences of pellet-firing guns, forced disappearances, fake encounters, murders, gang rapes and other atrocities at the hands of the Indian security forces. Hindutva-driven repressive policies targeting the Muslims in IIOJK are a constant reminder that the situation in Kashmir has the ingredients of an unprecedented escalation. It has illustrated the reality that Modi's policy on Kashmir is not just an electoral strategy, but an extension of the extremist vision of Hindu nationalism to achieve its political goals.

By institutionalizing the demographic changes, it is feared that Muslims will be disempowered by the local legislatures, which will ultimately reinforce Hindu majoritarianism. A proactive strategy is the need of the hour to project India's human rights violations. Pakistan needs to sensitize the international community on the human rights atrocities in Kashmir. By upholding the principles of democracy, India should ease the restrictions imposed on the Muslim majority territory. As promised in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions, the people of

Kashmir should be allowed to decide their future by exercising the right of self-determination through a transparent plebiscite.

Zukhruf Amin is a Research Officer at Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.

<https://www.globalvillagespace.com/how-the-voting-rights-granted-to-non-kashmiris-reinforces-hindutva-agenda/>

How The future of nuclear non-proliferation regime

Amber Afreen Abid

The nuclear non-proliferation regime comprises of numerous legally binding initiatives. The nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime. The NPT is a landmark international treaty designed to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and weapons technology and to achieve nuclear disarmament. The Treaty envisions a review of the operation of the Treaty after every five years. The Tenth Review Conference (RevCon) of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) met in New York from 1 to 26 August 2022, to discuss the future of the international security environment with the growing threat of the use of nuclear weapons.

The NPT review conferences play an important role in analyzing and assessing the implementation and results of the agreement and charting the course of action over the next five years. Twenty-five years after its entry into force, the decision to extend the NPT indefinitely was taken at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. The 10th RevCon follows the 2015 RevCon that ended without consensus on adopting a key outcome over the next five years. The 2010 RevCon was the last time NPT state parties successfully adopted an outcome document that identified conclusions and recommendations for activities such as the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

The 10th Revcon And its Implication

The 10th RevCon comes at a time when geopolitical tensions and nuclear weapons threats are at their highest levels since the end of the cold war. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has

highlighted the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on geopolitics, as well as the growing inequality and crises facing peace and security around the world. The crises fester from the Middle East and the Korean Peninsula to the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, and to many other factors around the world.

As a result, some of the key action areas focused on reaffirming states' commitment to preventing the use of nuclear weapons, reducing and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons arsenal, reinforcing disarmament agreements and decreasing tensions in the Middle East and Asia, as well as addressing the impact on nuclear non-proliferation in the aftermath of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

NPT state parties have emphasized concerns over the risk of a nuclear disaster because of the Russian occupation of the Zaporizhzhia NPP. The draft report calls for the restoration of Ukrainian control of the NPP to ensure safety and security. However, the RevCon failed to reach a consensus due to Russian objections to language addressing the crisis at Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant.

RevCon's failure

The committee was unable to reach anything significant on nuclear disarmament. The draft came out that demonstrated the collective cooperation on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, but the conference lacks the urgency to address the challenges.

The future credibility of the treaty rests on its full implementation. NPT is currently facing numerous challenges, which entail the issue of non-proliferation and disarmament to its failure to integrate the three nuclear weapon states into its fold which are Pakistan, India, and Israel. The NPT has not been able to bring nuclear weapon states to one table, without discrimination; hence, it is becoming increasingly difficult to universalize the non-proliferation norms.

Though NPT has been credited with successfully preventing the horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons, it has numerous loopholes. So far, it has been unable to make any progress towards disarmament, which is the crucial element of the treaty. The existing limitations in the treaty and the further emergent challenges make the future of NPT very bleak. If such challenges persist, they could threaten the very existence of NPT. Hence, in order to keep the NPT

mounting, and for the maintenance of its sanctity, it is imperative to address the challenges and should advance with the non-discriminatory approach.

Amber Afreen Abid is a Research Officer at Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.

<https://www.globalvillagespace.com/the-future-of-nuclear-non-proliferation-regime/>