

ABSTRACT
DISCUSSION ON INDIAN SECURITY POLICY

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India's national security policy is a product of geography, history, and the numerous internal divisions which undermine its domestic stability, and threaten to drag it into new military conflicts with its neighbors. After having fought four major wars since independence in 1947, and after suffering numerous internal crises, India has begun looking beyond its immediate frontiers and has shown an increasing willingness to intervene in regional conflicts.

New Delhi's efforts to promote a regional sphere of influence through the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace proposals have been heavily reinforced by a major naval expansion program including the deployment of aircraft carriers and a large fleet of submarines. Impressive force projection capabilities were demonstrated by India's recent intervention in the Maldives and in the Sri Lanka crisis. Sooner or later, India's assumption of regional responsibilities will almost certainly bring about increased tensions with the United States which routinely deploys naval task forces into the Indian Ocean and maintains a staging base for the Rapid Deployment force on Diego Garcia.

Despite rejecting the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and detonating a "peaceful nuclear device" in 1974, India continues to press for global adherence to a Comprehensive Test Ban. With a clear nuclear weapons capability, New Delhi promises not actually to assemble nuclear weapons unless Pakistan explodes its own nuclear device. Should this threshold be crossed, both countries are technologically and logistically prepared to build dozens of atomic bombs within months.

In conclusion, India is a powerful and increasingly assertive actor in South Asia troubled by serious religious, ethnic, and communal divisions which threaten potentially disastrous consequences for the entire region.