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International Terrorism and National Security Strategy

What is the place of *international* terrorism in the formulation of Indian National Security Strategy (NSS)? The answer to this question remains unsettled. The resilience of Al Qaeda in its base on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and its growing network of affiliates as well as continued threats from state and non-state entities across the border represent clear international threats to Indian National Security. At the same time, unique challenges from internal movements and the urgency of other non-traditional security threats beg the question of how far developments in transnational terrorism should guide and figure in the formulation of Indian National Security Strategy. This paper outlines the key trends evident in the evolution of International Terrorism and assesses their resonance for India. I contend that trends in the evolution of international terrorism in the next decade are of mixed and partial relevance for India. My paper suggests that India's NSS response should be attentive not just to areas of convergence with the international community on terrorism but also areas of dissonance, stemming from India's own experience, context, identity and strategic environment.

I ask the following questions:

1. How do trends in the evolution of terrorism relate to Indian interests and experience?
2. How can India balance a global role in combating international terrorism with unique domestic challenges to national security?

Before embarking on the rest of this paper, it is pertinent to explicate the scope of my paper. For the purposes of the IDSA strategy project, I restrict my paper in three important ways. First, I focus on examining international or transnational terrorism only. While India's domestic challenges and context play an integral role in directing India's counter-terrorism initiatives at the multilateral level, in this paper I do not contend with the important subject of domestic terrorism and political violence. Secondly, I do not explicitly delve into the issue of counter-terrorism, although counter-terrorism studies naturally constitute the other side of the terrorism studies coin. For the purposes of this paper, I confine myself to studying the implications raised for Indian NSS by developments in international terrorism. Lastly, the paper does not make concrete recommendations for policy in the vein of a briefing but

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instead outlines the contending pressures and issues that India will balance into the next decade in formulating a response to international terrorism as a part of a broad-based NSS¹.

The paper is broadly organized as follows. In the first section, I assess the place of terrorism within Grand Strategy and National Security Strategy (NSS)², drawing on a comparative study of how terrorism figures in the national security strategy of key countries comparable to India in role and interests. Section two outlines the key contours of the evolution of international terrorism and discusses how these relate to and impact Indian experience and interests. Based on the core trends emphasized in the literature as well as the empirical record of international terrorism, I argue in section three that these trajectories and preoccupations partially reflect the challenges faced by India, thus setting up dilemmas for India's role in leading global terrorism initiatives. This informs my discussion, in the fourth and last section, of policy orientations for India in the coming decade.

1. Terrorism in National Security Strategy

National Security Strategy

Before discussing the place of international terrorism in thinking about National Security Strategy (NSS), it is important to lay out a working analytical conception of NSS. NSS drawing from the larger concept of grand strategy refers to the drawing together of the military, diplomatic, economic and political resources at the disposal of the state to best serve long-term national interest. As Gaddis succinctly puts it “Grand Strategy is the calculated relationship of means to large end.” (Gaddis 2009) Such strategizing is not unconstrained however. NSS must be based on an understanding of the limits and constraints of a state's power and resources and also cognizant of the cultural and ideational

¹ As the paper develops and with feedback from the workshop, this could eventually be added to the paper.

² Throughout this paper I shall use the terms ‘Grand Strategy’ and ‘National Security Strategy’ interchangeably. This is appropriate given the wide array of topics included under the idea of National Security Strategy’ in the IDSA Strategy workshop agenda. Some would argue that National Security Strategy is one, albeit a major, component of an overall Grand Strategy but a preliminary analysis of various NSS documents suggests a similarly broad view.

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'screens', within which a state operates (Feaver 2009)³ NSS is responsive to changing threats, structures and opportunities, which is why it is a fluid concept. Finally, a successful NSS needs to coherently tie policy to underlying philosophical commitments and orientations. Dissonance delegitimizes the strategy and makes for politically costly policy outcomes.

Thus, stemming from the above discussion, in incorporating transnational terrorism into the formulation of Indian NSS, policymakers should deliberate three dimensions: first, where India 'wants to go' in relation to responding to international terrorism. Second, they should undertake a candid assessment of the material and ideational constraints impacting India's ability to respond to international terrorism and third, the need for coherence between those capabilities and the pursuit of policy options.

The Place of Terrorism in National Security Strategy

India's experience with terrorism, both domestic and international, is long and tumultuous so the place of terrorism in Indian National Security policy is ahead of the curve compare to other major states. Indeed, broad changes in the international environment since the attacks in New York and Washington D.C. on September 11th, 2001 have led to a revamping of NSS in several key states with comparable stakes in international security to India. In the last couple of years, the U.S., U.K., France and Turkey etc. have revised statements of National Security Strategy⁴. In 2008, Germany's CDU party began actively deliberating over Germany's first NSS since the end of the 2nd World War⁵. These moments renew attention to the importance of rethinking national security strategy in a world that looks markedly different than at the immediate end of the cold war. A common idea that appears across these articulations is that National Security Strategy needs to be geared to contend with a

³ Peter Feaver "What is Grand Strategy and why do we need it" Available at http://shadow.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2009/04/08/what_is_grand_strategy_and_why_do_we_need_it

⁴ Turkey's 'Red Book' is not publicly shared but its contents are the subject of public speculation and comment. The other national security statements and France's White paper are freely available.

⁵ See the German White paper available on http://www.ecfr.eu/content/entry/commentary_germanys_national_security_strategy/

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new 'age of uncertainty' and risk.⁶ These uncertainties stem from two other commonly cited features- the replacement of threats from states by threats from non-state actors and the related identification of international terrorism as a primary national security concern. Thus, terrorism is now firmly a front burner national security issue for many liberal democracies, expanding the notion of NSS from state-centric military issues⁷. As mentioned above, India's long experience with thinking about terrorism as an integral part of national security should make it relatively easy for the formulation of an NSS that incorporates the issue of international terrorism but as I will argue below and throughout this paper, the thrust of how international terrorism is thought to be developing does not present easy answers for Indian policy makers in this realm.

National Strategy as Danger or Opportunity:

Despite the place of terrorism as front and center of the NSS of many important states in the international system, the place of international terrorism presents a dilemma for those of us interested in Indian NSS. If strategy stems from a sense of 'danger', then the resilience of Al Qaeda as a global network and the rise of Islamist groups clearly places international terrorism on the Indian security agenda. This sense of danger or 'emergency' as some have seen it (Schepple, 2004 and forthcoming) has already created a set of legal and normative instruments that call for states to adopt a unified and standardized approach to combating terrorism⁸ and India's global commitment and leadership within the emerging regime is already evident in its key role in drafting the Draft Comprehensive Agreement on International Terrorism.

However, as the ambivalence of the Obama administration's own NSS suggests, a central focus on international terrorism risks undermining attention on other, arguably equally

⁶ The very title of the latest British National Security Strategy statement is centered on this idea of uncertainty.

⁷ Of course, some of India's key partners do not face a direct threat from international terrorism, which Indian NSS should also take into account.

⁸ I draw on John Lewis Gaddis's idea that suggests that American Grand Strategy has stemmed from creative responses to danger at pivotal times. See John Lewis Gaddis (2009) "What is Grand Strategy?" Keynote Address at Duke University February 26, 2009. Available at <http://www.duke.edu/web/agsp/grandstrategypaper.pdf>

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credible long-term threats to national security, which the array of topics raised at the IDSA strategy workshop attests. Given the limited military, diplomatic and economic resources available to states the question of how much international terrorism should figure in an NSS becomes rife and the costs of overreaction are significant. In the Indian context, these questions are compounded by the disjuncture between the particular understandings and foci of terrorism held by Western liberal democracies and India's own unique challenges as a state where internal insurgency and externally sponsored terrorism have long figured in the national security calculus. Thus, if 'strategy' reflects a proactive and forward thinking approach rather than one that is reactive to 'danger', then it is debatable to what extent Indian policy towards terrorism should respond to *international* trends. Given the limits of resources and constraints on statecraft, it becomes imperative to review closely how far the trajectories of International Terrorism resonate with Indian interests. The next section of this paper undertakes such an analysis briefly.

2. Trends in International Terrorism and the Indian Context

In this section I outline the main distinguishing characteristics of contemporary transnational terrorism from a synthesis of expert and scholarly analyses as well as data on the empirical record of international terrorism⁹. I then argue that these trends have mixed resonance for Indian security interests.

The evolution of terrorism is understood and traced in a fairly standard way by terrorism experts and scholars. The era of 'transnational terrorism', with its explicitly *political* agenda and formalized organizational structure, emerged in the 1970's as a product of the internationalization of the Israel-Palestine conflict.¹⁰ High profile airline hijackings, hostage

⁹ A variety of databases – government, think tank and academic collect incident data on international terrorism. For some mainstream sources see this web page compiled by students at Haverford College. http://people.haverford.edu/bmendels/terror_attacks Much of my analysis is based on the U.S. government's data on International Terrorism which forms the basis of the State Department's annual *Country Reports*.

¹⁰ Before this phase, the common delineations of the history of terrorism refer to pre-modern examples such as the Zealots-Sicari, the Thugs or the Assassins and the era of

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taking and attacks on leaders and diplomats first set terrorism on the international agenda during this period and saw the promulgation of the first piecemeal UN conventions on terrorism. Scholars trace the next shift to the end of the cold war with the evolution of political conflict in the Middle East and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, which together laid the foundation for the emergence of Al Qaeda. To those assessing the significance of the Sarin gas attacks in Tokyo, the 1993 attacks on the World Trade Center and the U.S. Embassies in Africa, all signs appeared to point towards an ‘especially disquieting’ set of impulses, logics and scale driving political violence (Juergensmeyer 2000). Thus, the notion of the ‘new terrorism’ has gained ascendancy, backed by data tracking the empirical record of terrorist attacks. This view broadly coheres with the way U.S. and other Western liberal democracies understand the emerging threat from terrorism. The trends identified as constituting the ‘new’ terrorism center on the following ideas that I organize under seven broad themes. My purpose in this section is not to account for the veracity of these trends but instead to highlight mainstream understandings of contemporary terrorism.

Goals and Motivations: The decline of ‘traditional’ terrorism and the rise of Religious/Islamist terrorism

The first dimension concerns new *goals* and *motivations* of terrorism. With the end of the cold war and the collapse of the Soviet Union, inspiration as well as material support for leftist parties dried up (Hoffman 1999). Ethnic nationalist violence that erupted at the end of the cold war is also placed within the category of ‘traditional terrorism’. ‘Traditional’ organizations seek ‘identifiable’ things such as secession, autonomy or territory and explicated these causes in the wake of their attacks. The short-lived interest in the connection between poverty as a root cause of terrorism has waned in the light of little empirical support for this proposition. The focus in particular is thus now squarely on the role of religion and on Islamist movements in particular. In contrast, ‘new terrorists’ may not link their actions to comprehensible political demands, instead citing religious or apocalyptic

modern terrorism originating with the Reign of Terror in the aftermath of the French Revolution and carrying on to the anarchist anti-Tsarist groups in Russia (Rapoport 1983; Laquer 1999).

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goals (Hoffman 1999). This has led to a debate about the extent to which grand strategies such as 'containment' or 'deterrence' can be extended in dealing with violent non-state actors.

Organizational Structure: The rise of networks and decline of state-sponsors

The second dimension refers to the changing *organizational structure* of international terrorism. This refers both to the prevalence of networks of non-state groups and the diminishing role of states in fostering international terrorism. The 'new terrorism' thesis accords importance to transnational networks, cells and 'protean' structures between geographically and politically far-flung groups as exemplified by the idea of a 'leaderless Jihad'. These networks contrast to previously clear command and control structures between groups and state sponsors of terrorism (Hoffman 1999, Hoffman RAND article, Stern 2003; Laqueur; 9/11 Commission report). What's more these groups learn and adapt from each other. As Enders and Sandler state, it is an irony that 'collective action amongst terrorist groups in sharing training and financing has been quite substantial' in contrast to that of states.

This shift goes hand in hand with a perceived *decline in state sponsorship* of terrorism. Some argue that state sponsorship remains salient but has taken on a more covert and passive form (Hoffman 1999a; Crenshaw 2001; Byman 2005). But even these arguments rest a lack of 'capacity argument' which holds that state sponsors often lack the means to crack down on terrorist activity within their borders. Thus state sponsorship is increasingly centered on the provision of safe haven, or even more passively as 'breeding grounds' for terrorism but the notion of active sponsorship is in decline.

Changing *scope* and *nature* of terrorist attacks

The very notion of terrorism rests on the premise of indiscriminate violence. But while earlier forms of terrorism implied attacking instruments and symbols of the state, it has now come to focus directly on noncombatants and civilians. Since groups may have religious goals that are only tangentially related to political objectives, they are seen as willing to inflict

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and sustain large amounts of civilian casualties¹¹. While winning is not always a defined and realistic goal for such groups, losing is “unthinkable” (Morgan). Juergensmeyer argues that while these goals may appear irrational and ‘pointless’ to outside observers, people who are part of these movements understand such acts as being purposive and part of a larger ‘script’. This move towards indiscriminateness also accounts for the increased use of suicide terrorism, although later work on this phenomenon has suggested other, more rational logics for the preference for suicide attacks (Pape 2005). This also leads to the fear that terrorists would gravitate towards weapons of mass destruction.¹² Indeed, the Obama Administration’s NSS identifies the primary threat to US National Security coming not from terrorism per se but from nuclear weapons deployed by terrorists.

Three elements make up this assertion: first, the increasing danger from WMD’s/CBRN’s in the hands of terrorists who exhibit a growing preference for high casualty symbolic acts or ‘spectaculars’ (Hoffman 1999; Enders and Sandler 2002; Cronin 2003) Secondly, linked to the previous point, terrorist groups are willing to inflict and sustain high levels of violence in the face of overwhelming odds. Thirdly, the danger from cyber-terrorism and the conduct of a war of ideas via the internet also reflects a change in the nature of terrorism.

Increased Lethality

These trends work together in augmenting the *lethality* of terrorism. Indeed, despite a steady decline in overall incidents from their peak during the 1970’s, there has been a rise in the lethality stemming from ‘spectaculars’.

Targets of Terrorism

¹¹ Hence many authors point to the fatwa issued by Bin Laden and associates in 1998, which argued that it was the duty of Muslims to kill Americans, regardless of their proximity to the U.S. government. The 9/11 Commission notes that this was ‘novel’ in its call for indiscriminateness (9/11 Commission).

¹² Since there has been no major manifestation of this scenario, some scholars acknowledge the technological conservatism of terrorist groups who they argue exhibit a preference for the traditional instruments of guns, bombs and targeting planes (albeit used on an unprecedented scale on 9/11) (Hoffman).

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The new shifts also account for changes in the *targets* of international terrorism and the sources of that threat. Two ideas emerge from the patterns of international terrorism: First, that the *U.S.*, as well as U.S. interests and allies, is now the *primary target* of transnational terrorism networks.

Sources of Threats: The predominance of Al Qaeda

As a consequence, the primary threat is assessed as coming *from* Al Qaeda and emanating from its base in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region. The current strength of Al Qaeda is the subject of debate. Experts such as Hoffman, argue that Al Qaeda has passed the ‘longevity’ test that few terrorist groups manage to and is now operating exactly as its name ‘the base’ suggests¹³. This is due to its ability to ‘evolve, adapt and adjust’ to post 9/11 counter-terrorism measures. Hoffman identifies four dimensions of Al Qaeda: *Al Qaeda Central*, which contains the ‘remnants of the pre 9/11 Al Qaeda organization’, *Al Qaeda affiliates and associates* which have ‘benefited from Bin Laden’s largesse and or spiritual guidance and/or have received training, arms, money and other assistance from Al Qaeda.’ The last two dimensions of Al Qaeda refer to Al Qaeda locals which refers to ‘adherents who have or have had some direct connection with al Qaeda’ and finally, Al Qaeda Network which are radicals with no direct connection to Al Qaeda but are ‘motivated by a shared sense of enmity and grievance towards the United States...’ Hoffman assesses the primary threat to come from the first two dimensions of Al Qaeda (Hoffman Testimony 2005). Because of the varied dimensions of Al Qaeda and its tendency to inspire disaffected ‘bunches of men’ there is also a renewed policy and scholarly interest in the mechanisms and causes of *radicalization*.

The preceding section has briefly outlined the main lines along which transnational terrorism is understood to be developing and the main contours along which states will try to plan to combat terrorism in the coming decade. It is important to note that each of the dimensions

¹³ Most groups and movements do not last more than a year, according to research on terrorist life cycles. However, with its resurgence on the Afghanistan-Pakistan border and its ability to have emerged intact from the U.S. campaign, Al Qaeda is now seen as even more threatening.

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of the ‘new terrorism’ is refuted, contextualized or problematized in alternate accounts which emphasize continuities in the targets, motivations and ideas surrounding terrorism (Cronin 2003; Duyvestyen 2004). However, there is a broad policy and academic consensus on these trends in international terrorism; which has led to a specific research and policy agenda, as exemplified by the thrust of the NSS articulations of major Western liberal democracies¹⁴.

3. Implications for Indian National Security Strategy

As readers will have surmised from the above discussion, these trajectories have complex and mixed implications in the Indian context. On one hand, some trends reflect India’s interests and security preoccupations closely. As Admiral Mehta acknowledges, the existence of ‘sinister non-state forces’ and their connections with state actors present security dilemmas for India¹⁵. Al Qaeda will constitute an important threat to Indian security, compounded by its growing affiliations with Pakistan-based groups such as the JeM, LeT and LiJ, which have the capacity to threaten security even by themselves. Secondly India’s growing ties with the United States figure increasingly in both states’ national security strategies and will continue to do so¹⁶. Shared interests in counter-terrorism cooperation, intelligence sharing and in the stability of Pakistan are important cornerstones in this partnership. These ties will augment the threat from Al Qaeda and its affiliates in the coming decade. The specters of nuclear proliferation and its connection to international terrorism and of cyber terrorism also represent problems for Indian National Security for which solutions must necessarily rely on international cooperation.

¹⁴ See Abrahms and Foley (2010) for a concise review of this research agenda.

¹⁵ Address by Admiral Sureesh Mehta “India’s National Security Challenges – An Armed Forces Overview” at India Habitat Center 10th August 2009.

¹⁶ See for example the 2008 US National Intelligence Council’s Report entitled Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World which devotes specific attention to China and India as ‘Rising Heavyweights’ and the 2010 NSS released by the Obama Administration which refers to India as a rising ‘center of influence’.

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Despite these commonalities of interest, it is also important to see what is left out in the emerging international agenda on terrorism. The trends outlined above sideline issues that are vitally important in the Indian context where ethno-nationalist violence, leftist motivations for violence and the continued salience of active state sponsorship remain vital threats. For instance the idea that poverty may in fact spur terrorism is not as easily dismissible in the Indian context as it appears to be in the realm of transnational terrorism given the identification of the Naxalite movement as the greatest threat to Indian national security by the Prime Minister. Thus while networks of non-state actors are relevant for Indian security, the strong relationship between these networks and supportive states remains important in ascertaining the Indian agenda.

Furthermore, India's long-standing experience with contending with internal and external terrorism highlights issues that have not yet been fully realized in the international discourse on terrorism. For instance, concerns about the role of Pakistan's ISI point us to the many shades of state sponsorship evident in empirical reality of terrorism. While experts such as Byman (2005) have urged policymakers to assess state sponsorship as constituting a spectrum of behavior rather than a rigid category, this has been difficult to translate into international strategy. India is in good position to spearhead agenda setting in the realm of counter-terrorism by distinguishing between 'rogue elements' within states in contrast to the over-broad concept of state sponsorship itself. This has ramifications for how states think about not just the ISI but also other such elements such as the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, to give one prominent example. Similarly, the somewhat simplistic and uncritical linking of 'Islamism' with terrorism represents practical and ideational disjunctures with India's multi-cultural and diverse identity on one hand and its experience of the plurality of threats on the other, belying simplistic associations. Attentiveness to cultural and ideational 'screens' and the strengths inherent in a pluralistic democratic polity must highlight these issues in the formulating NSS.

Lastly, an area of growing scholarly, policy and activist concern is the impact of counter-terrorism measures on civil liberties and human rights. Now that what Schepple has referred to as the 'international state of emergency' following 9/11 has begun to wane, attention on the damage done to human rights is emerging as an issue integrally related to international

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terrorism. Although this paper consciously does not contend with trends in counter-terrorism, it is pertinent to note that issues such as political assassinations, targeted killings and the use of torture are now on the table. India's ability to formulate a strategy that is attentive to these issues and that champions human rights is important in influencing both domestic and international perceptions¹⁷.

I have thus far suggested that the implications of transnational terrorism for Indian NSS are mixed and that any deliberation on grand strategy should be attentive not just to the commonalities in interest but also to the particularities of the Indian experience. Trends that drive the international agenda on terrorism do not fully account for the gamut of interlinked threats facing India. These problems reflect a more complex security environment than is reflected in the international terrorism agenda and emphasize continuities rather than a clear shift from patterns of the past. Indeed, the Indian context suggests a need to be attentive to linkages between 'old' and 'new' forms of terrorism and the relationships between transnational and domestic movements. What would the key components of a national strategy on terrorism look like? This last section contends with the balances that India will have to navigate in incorporating the trajectories of transnational terrorism into a comprehensive national security strategy.

4. Elements of an Indian National Security Strategy related to Terrorism

¹⁷ The UN has identified the importance of states maintaining attention to human rights alongside counter-terrorism activities. As UNSC Resolution states, "States must ensure that any measure taken to combat terrorism must comply with all their obligations under international law... in particular international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law." As a 2010 Human Rights Watch report puts it, at present the Indian government's definition of terrorism is seen as too 'vague' and 'overbroad' as compared with the UN special rapporteur's definition of terrorism which specifies only those acts to be terrorism that 'are committed with the intention of causing death or serious injury; are committed for the purpose of provoking terror or coercing the government to do or refrain from doing any act; and are in line with international conventions relating to terrorism.'" Human Rights Watch identifies a few priority actions for the Indian government to take into account- including a more specific definition of terrorism, prevention of arbitrary arrest and detention and promoting freedom of association.

As I stated at the start of this paper, NSS depends on getting ‘where you want to go’ keeping in mind the optimal equation of material and ideational constraints and strengths.

India's interest vis-à-vis international terrorism is threefold. First, it is to secure India against Pakistan based groups and Al Qaeda affiliates which represent the primary international threat to India. Secondly, it must do this while avoiding getting involved in long-drawn counter-terrorism campaigns that will detract from other strategic concerns as well as domestic threats. Thirdly, it must assume a leadership role in the emerging counter-terrorism regime that is cooperative with major players but attentive to the perspective afforded by its own experience. This involves shaping the international terrorism regime's agenda as well as complying with it.

Limits and Constraints: While India does not have the preponderance of military force that states such as the U.S. and the U.K. have tried to bring to bear in combating terrorism, the benefits of such an approach are far from clear, as is evident from current U.S. dilemmas in Afghanistan or the still unsettled legacy of military operations against the LTTE by the Sri Lankan government. Thus it is both a constraint as well as an opportunity that Indian national security strategy will have to develop a combination of tools in combating terrorism.

At a multi-lateral level, India must continue its global role as a norm entrepreneur in the international effort against terrorism. This means doing what it can to comply with international counter-terrorism measures to stop the ability of networks to operate easily across borders. But at the same time, it must use its own experience to push for the inclusion of issues that are being sidelined on the basis of dominant interpretations and filtering of terrorism trends. Thus, India must:

- Extend, as it is already doing, its conception of international terrorism to focus on the emergence of transnational networks
- Emphasize the continued salience of state sponsorship of terrorism but be attentive to its myriad forms

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- Not shy away from enduring debates about the definition of terrorism- India has strong reserves of political capital with many developing countries and in West Asia for whom the definition of terrorism is far from settled. While there are risks in doing so, India must be open to deliberation on definitional issues that are key to achieving meaningful consensus beyond piecemeal measures.
- Stemming from the previous point, balance interests and relationships in West Asia alongside issue convergence with the West
- Work to persuade important states for whom terrorism is *not* a front-burner issue of the depth of challenges posed to India from these quarters and its resilience despite these challenges.

Bilaterally, two relationships are key in thinking about international terrorism and Indian NSS- that of India's complex relationship with Pakistan and India's growing ties with the United States.

With regard to Pakistan:

- India's view of Pakistan as the 'epicenter' of international terrorism is now conventional wisdom. This constitutes a vindication of sorts for Indian diplomacy but the changed context now facing Pakistan requires a flexible and nuanced response from India. Such a response requires understanding the constraints placed on the Government of Pakistan from radical movements and terrorist groups and locating those elements that are chiefly responsible for supporting violence targeted at India. Thus India must
- Rhetorically and behaviorally demonstrate interest and support for the stability of Pakistan as well as Afghanistan while calling attention to rogue elements within the state apparatus.
- Understand and support capacity building in counter-terrorism for these states
- Be attentive to linkages between domestic groups of concern for India and transnational networks.
- Make an effort to locate and proscribe multiple existing avatars of groups - both in terms of decreasing the operations of the groups as well as delegitimizing them

With regard to the United States:

- India's growing ties with the U.S. and the U.S.'s status as the primary threat of International Terrorism bring with it increased threat from Al Qaeda and its affiliates
- India must navigate the U.S.-Pakistan relationship with this shared interest in ensuring Pakistan's stability and capacity to sustain counter-terrorism measures
- Side by side, India must act as a check against too narrow a U.S. approach towards combating terrorism – thus resisting pressure to commit too readily to too broad an agenda against 'international terrorism'.

Conclusion

This paper has sought to highlight the tensions and balances India must navigate in deciding how responsive to be to emerging patterns and developments of International Terrorism in thinking about National Security Strategy. While the threat from international terrorism is considerable, India must weigh its response in light of unique domestic challenges and an array of other pressing interests that also require the resources and management of statecraft. This also prompts the larger question of how central a place India should accord threats from terrorism in formulating a forward thinking NSS, so that it is attentive to 'danger' but seizes 'opportunity'. I hope to have suggested that this is a conversation worth having.

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