

A Journey from Conflict to Peace: Mapping India–Australia Relations from the Perspective of Peace and Conflict Studies



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Abstract

Peace and Conflict Studies is basically an interdisciplinary study that seeks to explore the sources or reasons of conflict and the way out of resolving those conflicts with an eye to reduce tension emanating from disagreements over the manner in which the conflicting units want to interpret an issue and establish peace. However, it must be borne in mind that peace cannot be taken for granted and establishment of peace is a protracted process which requires constant negotiation, persuasion and monitoring the entire process of peace settlement through confidence-building and, above all, active and willful participation of all stakeholders.

Now the paper seeks to deal with the question as to whether Indo-Australian relations can be construed from the perspective of Peace and Conflict Studies. To get the answer, this paper will carry two different parts. First part is concerned with the relations between India and Australia during cold war period, that means the situation of conflict and violence in the history of their relations and the second part will be focusing on their eagerness to reduce conflict and their willingness to create a positive ambience for cooperation, simultaneously this part will try to decode the factors behind this eagerness or willingness.

Keywords: Peace, Conflict, Defense White Paper, ASEAN, Strategy, Bilateral Relations, Stakeholders.

Introduction

Peace and Conflict Studies (PCS) is an interdisciplinary study to understand the source or reason of conflict and the process or intentions to overcome the conflicts in our day-to-day life as well as politics. PCS addresses inequality, violence, security, stability, instability, rights and all levels of other factors contributing to peace and conflict from the individual to global issues. PCS can help to develop one's idea regarding the conflict resolution and peace building theories, research and practice.

The fight for peace has engaged societies since the beginning of the history of civilization as well as violence and conflicts. As the cold war ended, Peace and Conflict Studies focused towards the complex issues related to political violence, human security, human rights, social justice along with International conflicts.

Here it's necessary to decode the general concepts of conflict and peace first, to explore the idea of this paper. Basically, conflict is a clash in between incompatibles. Scholars of this arena have identified five major causes of conflicts: 1) Incompatibility of ideas 2) Desire for Dominance 3) Inequality 4) Preservation of one's identity and 5) quest for Survival. Among these, in cold war period, India-Australia relations have been highly affected by the aforesaid first and fourth causes. On the other hand in PCS, according to Johan Galtung, peace is something where there may be an overt absence of war.¹ The aim of peace studies is to reduce conflict and create an ambient atmosphere for cooperation. The purpose is to open channels of communication between two adversaries for a better understanding of each other perspective.² In bilateral relations, establishment and maintaining of peace always demand some compromises. Third party intervention, multi track diplomacy, bilateral negotiations are more effective measures to reach this target.

So far the State is concerned, we have seen two different types of conflict, Intra-State and Inter-State. In the first case, issues like ethnicity,

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religious intolerance, increasing inequality, behavior of political parties and bureaucracy, state policies etc usually play major role. On the other hand, when the questions of Inter-State conflict arise, some issues like role of non state actors, boundary problem, security dilemma, strategic positions of states as per their national and global interest and outlook etc must be underlined. In International Relations (IR) Peace should be understood from the point of view of security, i.e., national interest broadly.

Aim of the study

The aim of the article is to understand India-Australia bilateral relations through the prism of Peace and Conflict Studies (PCS). India- Australia relations have evolved from a negative and indifferent interaction between two separate world views during the second half of the twentieth century to an enhanced level of political, economic and security engagement from the beginning of the first decade of this century. The history of bilateral relations of these two is nothing but the journey from conflict to peace. This article will try to analyse the basic issues of changing attitude of Australia and India towards each other through the light of PCS.

Before venturing into the bilateral relations between India and Australia from the approach of Peace and Conflict Study (PCS) the aims and the survey of recent literatures in this area should be focused for the clear understanding of importance of the present study.

Review of Literature

I have studied some books of different scholars dealing with different aspects of India-Australia relations. My objective is to examine to what extent these materials have reflected the issues of my article and to find out the gap in the perspective of the present work. It is necessary to mention, this is not an exhaustive review but one that is based on some important and relevant books published in-recent years.

The book *India – Australia Relations: Evolving Poly- Centric World Order* (2017), edited by Darvesh Gopal and Dalbir Ahlawat, published by Pentagon Press, New Delhi, is noteworthy in the context of my work. Throughout its several chapters this book has tended to explore the multilayered dynamics in the Indo-Pacific region. The book also reflected the variety of policy-principal structures of major and minor stakeholders of this region and showed how the desire for a stable order in the Indo-Pacific has intensified competition between global and regional players and has led to power imbalance in the region. The first chapter, *New Strategic Order and Uncertainties* by D. Gopal and Dalbir Ahlawat and the second chapter, *Shifting Strategic Dynamics in the Indo-Pacific Region: Implications for Australia and India* by Dalbir Ahlawat and D. Gopal, wanted to define the advantages and disadvantages of changing US-China backed geo-strategic and security landscape in the Indo-Pacific region. The third chapter, *Indo-Pacific Region: A Nebulous Construct or a Fulcrum for India-Australia Partnership?* by Y. Yagama Reddy; the fourth chapter, *Evolving a New Geo-political, Strategic and Regional Security*

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Architecture in the Indo-Pacific Region by G. Jayachandra Reddy and the fifth chapter, *Indo-Pacific Region: Implications for India- Australia Relations* tried to explore various ideas related to the Indo-Pacific Region from various theoretical aspects and focused the process of evolution of Indo-Pacific region as the 'New Theatre' of global economy and politics. The heading of the next chapter is, *India-Australia Relations and the Maritime Geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific*, written by Pragya Pandey, followed by the subsequent chapters on *Managing the Challenges of India's Indo-Pacific Policy* by Lindsay Hughes; *Why is Australia so Enthusiastic About the Indo Pacific?* authored by Alan Bloomfield; *Australia and the Dispute in the South China Sea* by Munmun Majumdar and *Maritime Security in India-Australia Partnership* wanted to establish basically two major facts that. Firstly, that, it's impossible to face economic and military challenges for a single state right now and secondly, as the numbers of stakeholders and players of global politics are significantly on the rise so collective global initiatives in any issue demand more technicalities of norms. And it is this background against which these chapters tried to see Indo-Pacific as a new geo-strategic construct. The title of the book has rightly been reflected through its content. What is missing in this book is that, none of the authors have tried to explore India-Australia relations from the history of their bilateral relations of conflict to peace. The book is based on qualitative research and authors have applied content analysis methods where data is subjective in nature. Though the discussions contained in the book are highly valuable for policy makers and scholars engaged in the study of India-Australia relations but none of them has dealt with my research topic.

Biswanath Chakraborty and Debasish Nandy (eds) *Bharater Bideshniti O Samparker Gotiprokriti (Dimensions of India's Foreign Policy and Relations)*, (2015), is another significant book in this field. The book has five different parts. The first two parts, i.e. part-I and part-II have dealt with the theoretical aspect of Indian foreign policy, India's nuclear policy and India's Geo Strategic approach to Indian Ocean Region and the dimensions of India's neighbourhood foreign policy. The part III contents six different chapters related to India's relations with major powers like USA, Russia, France and Britain. The Part IV of this book carries four chapters. These are: India's Look East Policy, India-South East Asia relations, EU-India relations and India-Central Asia relations. Part-V, the last part of this book has three chapters dealing with India-Latin America Relations, India- Africa relations and India- Australia relations. In this book the last chapter of the last part is directly related to my work and the others parts like, part III and part IV are helpful to understand the impact of major powers in India-Australia relations as well as the importance of India's Look East Policy and India-South East Asia relations in the bilateral relations of Australia and India. The title of the book is appropriate as far as the chapterization and their contents are concerned. Though all the articles are enough rich by using

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necessary primary documents along with sufficient secondary sources and needless to say they are very much contemporary, but what I intend to show through my work, has not been reflected by any of the articles of this book. In fact the last chapter of the last part is a chronological description of the history of India-Australia relations. But still, it did not attempt to analyse their bilateral relations from the perspective of Peace and Conflict Studies. The author has used descriptive research methodology. It would have been better if he used analytical research methodology.

The book *Australia and India : Mapping the Journey 1944-2014*, written by Meg Gurry and published from Melbourne University Publishing, Melbourne, Published in February 2015, is a significant one in the field of Australia-India relations. Throughout the seven chapters of this book, Gurry has tried to describe Australia's Foreign Relations with India from the Australian perspective. In this aspect, Gurry has shown the elitist mentality of Australian leaders and at the same time she wanted to establish that, India should not be treated as Australia's neglected neighbour as the political leaders of Australia have been trying to set up a good relations with her for last sixty years. From Whitlam to Julia Gillard – everyone came under Gurry's scanner. In the author's opinion it is *Identity Politics* which have been in power to control of shaping Australia's foreign policy. Australia- India relations has been purely affected by this. Fact is, the author has shown indirectly, the base of this identity politics was cultural, political and diplomatic interests. As far as the title is concerned, it is justified through its elaborate analysis of history. Bilateral relations of these countries have evolved from a negative and indifferent interaction between two separate world views during the second half of the twentieth century to an enhanced level of political, economic and security engagement from the beginning of the first decade of this century. That is a journey from conflict to peace. So, it would have been better if the authors tried to apply the theory of Peace and Conflict Studies (PCS) to explore their relations in the last half of the last century as well as in the first half of the twenty first century. Using of the theory of PCS could be helpful to identify the variables of author's *Identity Politics*. Secondly, though Australia was indifferent to India since its independence, but at the same time she developed her economic relations with Southeast Asia and China. Now, the argument is, why Australia has not paid any major economic attention to India in the second half of the twentieth century, the author has not described it clearly. The USA has always played a vital role in Australia's foreign policy towards India. This important aspect has not been properly touched. Defence White Papers (DWP) of 2009, 2013 etc. have clearly exposed Australia's tension about China and at the same time these DWPs have recognized India's potentialities. The problem of this book is, it has not clearly shown the relations between this changing

attitude of Australia with author stated *Identity Politics*. To write this book author have used descriptive research methodology as well as content analysis method. Notwithstanding the fact that the

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studies referred to above are certainly pertinent and important, these have seriously neglected the bi-lateral relations between India and Australia in the context of Peace and Conflict Studies (PCS). The present study is therefore, an attempt to explore the bi-lateral relations between these two nations through the lens of peace and conflict study, which I firmly believe is going to be an important text to fill in the existing gap in that area of study so far.

At the very beginning, when India started its journey as an independent nation, her relations with Australia were full of negativity and conflict due to their different strategic outlook, position and world view. But in course of time, in response to the International political and economic situation, they came closer in search of peace through conflict resolution and conflict management. India and Australia are now sharing some vital and prestigious platforms of world politics. Let's have a look to their journey from conflict to an ambient atmosphere for cooperation.

The politics of cold war, rather the demands of cold war, went a long way to create the mental distance in bilateral relations between India and Australia. Their relations have evolved from a negative and indifferent state. The noxious environment of mental distance as well as mutual volatility had been created by the cold war politics in there relations.

This period witnessed Australia's strong support to US-led western world while India developed a closer relationship with the erstwhile Soviet Union and relied on her for its defense imports. When SEATO was proposed, India clearly exposed her ambivalence attitude. Australia's association with Pakistan, particularly in SEATO, highly impacted the Indo-Australian relationship. Australia took exception to the accession issue of Kashmir when it was taken up for discussion. Robert Menzies and his counterpart Jawaharlal Nehru were sharply divided on the ongoing politics of third world. Menzies upheld the global interests of the western world whereas Nehru was leading the struggle against colonialism sponsored by the western world. Manzies used to think that India was not yet deserved for self-rule and this had infuriated the nationalist leaders in India. At that time, Australia established herself as a defense partner of Pakistan. In 1960, Nehru's Speech in the UN General Assembly on South African Apartheid was dubbed by Menzies as "an absolutely poisonous... a nauseating exhibition"³. In 1971, Australia expressed adverse attitude regarding India's Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation with USSR. Even after this Treaty of Friendship, Australian High Commissioner to India Patrick Shaw (1970-1973) requested USA to maintain military supplies to Pakistan. In 1974, India's nuclear explosion was criticized by Australia. India's stand on Vietnam's intervention in Cambodia and Soviet intervention in Afghanistan also came under the scanner. When India got a nuclear submarine from the former USSR in 1987, Australia doubted India's motives in the Indian Ocean Region. Nehru's idea of NAM, Asianism and liberation of colonies came in conflict with the pro-

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west attitude of Australia. Between two separate world views during the cold war period, it reached a new height of political, economic and security engagements from the beginning of the first decade of this century.

The end of the cold war brought an opportunity to come out from this obscure situation. After the end of the cold war, India, in the backdrop of the exigencies of the new economic-political milieu created by globalization, started to reshuffle its foreign and economic policy with the aim to adjust itself to the needs of global politics in which Australia could have been accommodated. But, unfortunately, that did not take place. India, at that time, adopted its 'Look East Policy', but India's non-entry into the APEC had a cascading effect on the relations of these two States in 1991. India had applied for APEC membership in 1991, 1994 and in 1997. In every case, India's appeal was thrown away and it casted the blame on Australia. The explosion of Pokhran in 1998 created a major setback in their relations. After the explosion, Australia imposed severe sanctions on India and suspended all official-level visits and snapped defence relations. Australia recalled its ambassador. It is important to note that although China, Pakistan and North Korea also conducted nuclear experiments, the level of Australia's response was not the same. Ganganath Jha identified the issue as: "Australians are giving an impression that the Chinese are very responsible nuclear power and conveniently ignore the reality that China has been supporting the nuclear proliferation of Pakistan and North Korea!"⁴

Since 2000, however, relations between these two countries in different sectors started to gain momentum. In that year, the Australia-India Joint Working Group on Energy and Minerals was established. The Australian Defense White Paper (DWP) of 2000, for the first time, spelt out the strategic importance of India. Unlike the past, Australia came to realize the strategic importance of India in the Indian Ocean Region, from the beginning of the 21st Century. This realization paved the way for the first India – Australia Strategic Dialogue held in New Delhi on 30th August, 2001. In April 2002, during his speech in New Delhi, the then Australian Foreign Minister, Alexander Downer, spoke in the same vein when he characterized the relationship of both the countries as 'growing' from 'troubled' to 'lively' with the ultimate objective of making it 'exciting'.⁵ Australia's Defense White Paper of 2003 Stated: "India's weight in international affairs will continue to grow, as will Australia's economic relationship with India".⁶ An agreement inked by the two countries on terrorism in 2003 and a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Defence Cooperation reached between the Defence Secretary, Shekhar Dutt, and the High Commissioner of Australia to India, John Mc Carthy, in March 2006 were the two other worth-mentioning incidents of this period in cementing their relations. After the beginning of the negotiation of Indo-US civil nuclear deal the Howard Government expressed its willingness to sell out uranium to India in 2007. Indeed, in 2006-07, India was the fourth largest merchandise export market for Australia. In between 2002 and 2007, the Indian

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market for Australia's exports has grown faster apart from Australia's top 30 export markets. In August 2009, \$20 billion Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) supply contract was signed between India and Australia. Under this agreement 1.5 million tonnes of LNG was targeted to be shipped to India per annum for 20 years.⁷

At that time, both the countries decided to establish India-Australia Joint Working Group on Defence Co-operation. They signed Defence Information Sharing Arrangement in 2007. Both of them participated in Multilateral Malabar CY 07-02 Naval Exercises – also known as Quadrilateral Initiative – in the Bay of Bengal in 2007, and in multilateral naval exercise in the Andaman sea in September 2007. These incidents clearly vindicated India's long-cherished desire to play an important role in the Asia Pacific Region. Furthermore, participation in Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) by both of the countries in 2008; agreements on intelligence dialogue, extradition and terrorism in 2008; Singh-Rudd Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation in 2009 etc proved Australia's recognition towards India's desire. In 2009, Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith visited India. Singh-Rudd Joint Partnership Agreement reaffirmed Australia's firm support for India's APEC membership. It is important to mention that, from 2009, specially with the Singh-Rudd Agreement, Australia has been emphasizing on India's strategic potentialities with a different outlook. That has been reflected through Australia's 2009 Defence White Paper: "As India extends its rich influence into the areas of Shared Strategic Interest, we will need to strengthen our defense relationship and our understanding of Indian Strategic thinking...."⁸

Definitely there are some causes behind this closeness. It seems that these India-Australia engagements since 2000 are the upshot of some major developments taking place in Asia-Pacific Region during last 10 to 15 years. During this period, the Asia-Pacific region has emerged as a new economic hub, and, in this region India established herself as a major economic power. Today India is in a position to provide 100 crore dollar to ASEAN to establish digital communication system between India and ASEAN countries. In 2015, India-ASEAN bilateral trade exceeded 76.5 billion dollar. With more or less 7.5 percent economic growth rate per year, India emerges as the seventh largest economy in the world. India and Australia – both the countries – share more than one ASEAN-driven platforms. Undoubtedly, India's growing economic potentiality, coupled with its closeness with ASEAN, affects Indo-Australia relations. Therefore, for the advancement, already achieved in India-Australia engagements, the growth of ASEAN-driven multilateral cooperative initiatives must be referred to here.

Another important aspect, in this context, is the rise of China and India as important driving force of economic growth in Asia. India's contribution to annual global GDP has gone up from 6 to 16% during the last 5 years.⁹

Third important factor is, India's growing economic potentialities. Needless to say, that attracts Australia. This is basically vies-e-versa in character. Both India and Australia have signed a Free Trade Agreement in goods with ASEAN and both are important stakeholders in formation of a Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East Asia (CEPEA) as a part of EAS process.¹⁰

India signed Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) with Singapore in 2005 and CECA with Malaysia in 2010. Australia also signed FTAs with Singapore in 2003, with Thailand in 2005 and with ASEAN (AANZFTA) in 2010, with Malaysia in 2012. India has Signed bilateral FTAs with Thailand in 2003, with South Korea in 2009 and a FTA in goods with ASEAN in 2010. On 8 July 2014, Australia and Japan entered into the Economic Partnership Agreement. So, primarily ASEAN together with a larger South East Asian Region is considered to be important for not only the common economic and trade destination for both India and Australia but also for interconnectedness between them. Both of them have evinced their interest in negotiating a FTA, including goods, services and investment. Lastly, a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) between Australia and India was launched in May 2011.

Today, both of the countries are the members of ASEAN Post – Ministerial Conference, ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), East Asia Summit (EAS) and India is a Post-Forum Dialogue member of the Pacific Island Forum (PIF). On the other hand, Australia became an observer member of SAARC. India and Australia – both are important stakeholders to ASEAN-driven multilateralism such as ARF and EAS. As per the Declaration of 2009 both the countries agreed to cooperate within multilateral frameworks in Asia, in particular, the EAS and ARF. Basically these institutions have provided a common platform through which both the Countries can interact on a number of issues. Joint Statement 2009 stressed on joint efforts for regional cooperation under the aegis of the EAS. In 2002, India secured the Dialogue Membership of PIF during the 33rd annual meeting of the forum.

Its fact that both of them are tensed with the rise of China. China's growing presence in the Bay of Bengal marked by its Naval base in Gwadar Sea Beach of Pakistan, a treaty with Bangladesh for using its Chittagong Port, an agreement sealed with Sri Lanka in 2005 on the use of the Port of Colombo and an army base in the Coco Island of Myanmar along with its spectacular presence in South China Sea is causing a threat to both India and Australia, especially, for India.

In this context the reaction of Australia should be noted. Australia's Defense White Paper 2009 identified China's rise as a challenge for peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region. "... China will also be the strongest Asian military power, by a considerable margin. Its military modernization will be increasingly characterized by the development of power projection capabilities... But the pace, scope and structure of China's military modernization have

the potential to give its neighbors cause for concern if not carefully explained..."¹¹ The India-Australia Agreement on Security Cooperation of 2009 is a response to the prevailing uncertainty in the Asian power equation.

DWP of 2009 clearly exposed Australia's perception about China. The DWP was basically a route map of Australia's future defense plan against the Chinese attitude in South China Sea as well as in the Asia Pacific Region. In addition to that, DWP 2009 focused Australia's Defence Blue Print against Chinese 'String of Pearl' strategy in the Bay of Bengal. Keeping the China factor in mind, Australia did not forget to invite India to attend the occasion with the ultimate aim of moving Australia's relation with India to a higher level where Australia and U.S.A signed an agreement for establishing a naval base in Darwin on 16th November 2011. Close review of the DWP of 2009 throws deep insight into Australia's strategic thinking on the emerging Asian architecture, specially India.¹²

In 2012, India's expectation in improving its relation with Australia reached a new height with the consent of the Labor Party of Australia (ALP) to sell Uranium to India. Basically this decision has pushed back some major setbacks in the way of consolidating her relationship with India. One incident can be cited to show that Australia has changed her mindset about India's nuclear sincerity and responsibility. In 2011, when Pakistan demanded for a similar deal with her, the then Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith tried to steer clear of Australia's stand point :

"Pakistan does not have the same record so far as the proliferation is concerned. There have been serious expressions of concern about proliferation in the past.... Pakistan has not voluntarily placed itself under the authority of the International Atomic Energy Agency or the Nuclear Suppliers Group."¹³

In 2011, 'The Ten-Point Plans' were taken into account to establish a close trade relations between India and Australia. It is important to note that in 2012 Australia was India's sixth largest source of imports. Both the countries have been negotiating to establish a FTA between them since 2011-12 with a deep respect, and, as a result, a Free Trade Agreement between India and Australia has been partially placed within four years of the commencement of the initiative.¹⁴ Both countries agreed to convene a *track 1.5 strategic dialogue* starting from 2012. In the question of the strategic significance of Indian Ocean Region, Australia has started attaching importance to India. It is necessary to mention, through IOR-ARC Australia recognized India's power potentiality several times. India held the chair of IOR-ARC for a two-year period from 2013 to 2015.¹⁵ Additionally, Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), an India-initiated group, can be cited as another venture of closer relation between these two countries. As we have seen, Australia, in a move to demonstrate the willingness to realize each other and to boost up cooperation between them on maritime matters to make the region peaceful, hosted the IONS conclave in 2014 in Perth.¹⁶

Like 2009, the Defense White Paper of 2013, offers fresh insights into Australia's approach towards changing geopolitical landscape in Asia. DWP, 2013, recognizes India's growing military and economic importance in this region. It depicts India as an ".....important strategic, diplomatic and economic actor, 'Looking East' and becoming more engaged in regional frame works".¹⁷ The same DWP further adds that "India will become a very important partner in building security in the Indian Ocean and broader Indo-Pacific region".¹⁸ It is no less than a fact that the DWP of 2013, in its every analysis, highlights the importance of India and it manifests Australia's keen desire to exercise an important role in Asia Pacific region along with India so that an interdependent India-Australia relations can be formed.

How much India gets the importance from Australia, that can easily be understood by mentioning a statement made by former High Commissioner of Australia to Pakistan, L.H Border. He stated, "...we played a part in Kashmir and we supported UN resolutions on Kashmir. We seemed closer to Pakistan than we were to India. ...there was the Commonwealth and SEATO link... but times have changed and development of our relations with India seems to be judged to be of greater importance to us than our links with Pakistan."¹⁹ This is an example as well as the essence of Australia's changing mentality to India, and this has been expressing through the attitude of Australian Leaderships.

The security interests of Australia and India overlap in broader Asia. At the same time, the Asia-Pacific Region became the primary area of Australia's strategic interest. Simultaneously, on the basis of the United States' security observation regarding Asia and the Asia Pacific, Australia could easily identify the pulse of power-relation of this region which has been primarily reflected in 2007 *Defense Update* of the Government of Australia, where it did say that, Australia and India shared a common interest in enhancing regional peace and security. This is one of the major common interests which stitched India and Australia by a string. So far as the bilateral relations are concerned, it's about mutual benefit of both. Australia has recognized the potential importance of India for its national interest, on the other hand, India's need to secure uninterrupted Energy supplies can be met through Australia. Maritime security (specially in the eastern Indian Ocean), counter-terrorism brings the closeness, where their common interests converge.

It goes without saying that settlement of peace among nations is not a hassle free technique that goes without interruption; rather it is a continuous process requiring constant efforts to take the stake holders on board through building confidence, supervision and monitoring the entire process. Peace should never be taken for granted. Peace settlement initiatives may veer in relation to changing situation. Given India's growing economic and political potentiality against Australia's own interest in global politics, its foreign policy approach towards India seems to be a means for establishing *peace* among these two. From Indian side, same attitude has been

established boldly. Peace is effectively means of prevention of war. Not only that, target to establish peace can force one to avoid indifferent attitude to another.

Bob Hawk to Tony Abbott, almost every Prime Minister of Australia were on official visit to India. Narendra Modi was the first Indian Prime Minister to visit Australia in 2015 – 28 years after Rajiv Gandhi's Australia visit in 1986 . In a bid to maintain and upgrade the present bilateral equation between these two countries, Arun Jetley, the current Indian Finance Minister, in his visit in March 2016, highlighted the potential of the Indian Economy to grow beyond the current rate of 7.6 percent and the large scope for higher Economic exchanges between the two nations. Now it is to see for us whether India's vibrant economy caused by some recently introduced measure, such as Goods and Services Tax (GST) along with some innovation-based initiatives taken by the Government and the conducive market environment in India, attract Australia to engage herself in trade relations with this country. There is ample scope for improving the bilateral trade relations through participation and cooperation at regional level platforms across Indo-Pacific region. Platforms like, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and East Asia Summit (EAS) can strengthen economic ties between these two countries. In this context, it is noteworthy that India is now the third largest source of immigrants to Australia and the second largest source of skilled professionals.²²

The predecessor of Scott Morrison,, Malcolm Turnbull, agreed to cooperate with India in renewable energy sector with his country's expertise. Malcom Turnbull's visit in 2017 has continued to progress the relationship. In 2017 India and Australia have established a \$100 million strategic research fund.²⁰ Indian warships arrived in Australia for military exercise in the month of June of 2017.The Indian Navy and Royal Australian Navy hold their first ever bilateral naval drill of the cost of western Australia this month.²¹ In September 2017, India, Japan, Australia and USA took the Quadrilateral Initiative against Chinese One Belt One Road (OBOR) policy.²³

The foreign ministry officials of Australia, India, Japan and United States met at Singapore on 7th June 2018 in a Defense Consultation known as "The Quad". The Quad meeting is a symbol of convergence for India-Australia in one hand and on the other, it established the recognition of India as an important geopolitical power by the other three countries. The Quad meeting was followed by India-Australia 2+2 Foreign and Defense Secretaries' Dialogue held on 10th October 2018. Except these, in 2018, several important bilateral and multilateral initiatives have been taken. 'AUSINDEX' in July, 'KAKADU' in August-September, and in November 2018, the 'Black Carillion Submarine Rescue Exercise' should be taken into account in this regard.²⁴

The fact is that, potentialities and capabilities always demand respect without which one can't move towards mutual understanding. When one tries to

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understand the position of other by giving away any rigidity, the journey to peace from cumbersome situation to normality becomes the easiest one. India-Australia relation is a prominent example of this.

Peace is an overarching expression that denotes the ambitious quest of living together in harmony.²⁵ Therefore, to right the wrong endeavors have been initiated by the governments since 2000 from Australian end. In line with the ventures taken by the previous governments, the current regime comes forward to extend their support for India's APEC membership, support for India's candidature for permanent membership in the UN Security Council, India's membership for APC and so and so on. In bilateral relations, Peace is not just the absence of violence or war, it means, mingling, trying to stay together instead of huge differences and outlook, so that national, regional and sometimes international interest can be served properly. Maintaining peace, i.e. the good relations is a continuous process; therefore establishment of peace should not be treated as the ultimate goal. So the nurturing of peace process is the way to open channels of communication for understanding each other perspectives. That's the thing exactly happened in India-Australia bilateral relations.

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