

INDIA-U.S. DEFENCE TIES

BY SAMEER PATIL

The recently signed Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) between India and the U.S. symbolises the strengthened defence and security partnership between the two countries and the growing interoperability capabilities between the two militaries. Since the signing of the Framework for the U.S.-India Defense Relationship in 2005 (renewed in 2015), bilateral defence engagement has been thriving, characterised by high-level dialogues, joint exercises, defence trade and technology cooperation. American support has also ensured India’s entry in global technology export control regimes – Australia Group, the Wassenaar Arrangement and the Missile Technology Control Regime. Membership of these regimes has enabled India’s access to high technology in the civilian space and defence sectors. U.S. military equipment has added considerable value to India’s power projection capability.

MAJOR AGREEMENTS AND MECHANISMS:

2009	Counter Terrorism Cooperation Initiative
2012	Defence Technology and Trade Initiative
2015	Framework for the India-U.S. Defense Relationship
2015	Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region
2016	Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement
2016	Framework for the US-India Cyber Relationship
2018	Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement,
2019	Industrial Security Annex
2020	Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement

MAJOR DEFENCE EQUIPMENT SOLD TO INDIA:

EQUIPMENT	YEAR OF PURCHASE
C-130J transport aircraft	2008
C-17 transport aircraft	2009
P-8i maritime patrol aircraft	2009
Chinook CH-47 heavy-lift transport helicopters	2015
AH-64E Apache attack helicopters	2015
Harpoon anti-ship missiles	2016
MH-60 Seahawk Maritime helicopters	2020

MAJOR JOINT EXERCISES:

SERVICE	EXERCISE	COMMENCED IN	FREQUENCY
Army	Yudh Abhyas	2004	Annual
Air Force	Red Flag [Multinational Exercise]	IAF began participating in 2008	Annual-IAF participates once in 5 years
Navy	Malabar	1992	Annual
Special Forces	Vajra Prahar	2012	Intermittent
Tri-service	Tiger Triumph	2019	N.A.

DIALOGUES:

- 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue
- Defence Policy Group
- Homeland Security Dialogue
- Strategic Intelligence Dialogue
- Cyber Security Dialogue
- Maritime Security Dialogue

Current bilateral defence trade: \$20 billion (since 2005)

EXISTING DEFENCE TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION:

PROJECT	STATUS
Near term projects	Air-launched Small Unmanned Systems (UAS), Light Weight Small Arms Technology and Intelligence-Surveillance-Targeting & Reconnaissance
Medium-term projects	Maritime Domain Awareness Solution and Virtual Augmented Mixed Reality for Aircraft Maintenance
Long-term projects:	Terrain Shaping Obstacle and Counter-UAS, Rocket, Artillery & Mortar (CURAM) system for the Indian Army

MAJOR COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIPS:

U.S. COMPANY	INDIAN PARTNER	EQUIPMENT
BAE Systems	Mahindra Defence	Manufacturing and assembly of M777 howitzers
Boeing	Bharat Forge	Titanium forgings for the Boeing 737 aircraft
Boeing	Dynamatic Technologies	Components for Chinook Helicopters & P-8i aircraft
Lockheed Martin	Tata Advanced Systems	Components for C-130J aircraft
Sikorsky Aircraft Company	Tata Advanced Systems	Aerospace components