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INDIA'S STRATEGIC POSITION IN MULTILATERAL COUNTER-TERRORISM: NAVIGATING ALLIANCES, CHALLENGES, AND COLLABORATIVE SOLUTIONS AT THE UN

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Abstract

The article discusses the strategic position of India in multilateral counter-terrorism operation with special consideration given to India as the active participant in the United Nations and South Asian Association of regional Cooperation (SAARC). Expanding on its experience in fighting terrorism on the frontline, the discussion addresses the Indian demand of a clear and comprehensive definition of terrorism, its drive towards intelligence sharing, its capacity-building programs and its tougher approach to prevent terror financing flows. The cooperation between India and the United States, its demands to reform the UN anti-terrorism mechanisms and the political problems in the Security Council are also analyzed. Simultaneously, the paper recognizes the ongoing challenge-including but not limited to the state sponsorship of terror and local conflicts, as well as loopholes in international law and internal political agendas. To counter it presents a list of cooperative measures: harmonization of legal regimes across borders, specific capacity support, the enhancement of information sharing with technological support, the enhancement of financial supervision, and the integration of human rights protection into prevention and enforcement measures.

Key Words: Anti-terrorism- Counter-terrorism- Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF)- Human rights-SAARC- Security Council- Technology- United Nations (UN)

INTRODUCTION

Terrorism is like the tentacles of an octopus which have spread all around. The effect of terrorism has been witnessed by many countries around the globe. India, being a country which is often affected by terrorism and also emerging as one of the largest democracies in the world, always has counter-terrorist strategies. India has been acting with regional and international organizations to avoid terrorism. At the regional level, India is actively engaged with the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and at the international level, India is actively involved in the UN Global Counterterrorism Strategy and Global Counterterrorism Forum. India, in such conditions, has always required clearer norms, clearer institutions and more feasible forms of cooperation.

India's involvement in the United Nations can be understood through three main themes. The first is that terrorism needs to be defined globally and universally so as to close the loopholes in the legislation and reduce the scope of selective interpretation. The second is the need to share intelligence more, to establish capacity and mobilize resources in a more effective manner such that even the states that lack the capacity can still meet the global requirement. Third is a greater control of funding terror sources, rendering the flow of money more transparent and the front organization more identifiable and removable. India does not merely visualize these objectives in the security terms, but in the terms of investment in rule of law and protection of human rights which it recognizes that without the means of prevention the latter loses its right.

India, being a democratic country, is working very hard to promote itself, but it faces many problems. The big countries are always fighting for power. For this, they disagree about which groups are terrorists. And not all countries are equally strong or capable to tell that a group is a terrorist. In Indian politics and the politics of other countries, which is regional politics or which is national politics, makes it very important on sensitive issues. Because of this, international cooperation often stops at just talking instead of taking real action.



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India has built many partnerships or corporations both at regional and international levels. India works with major countries like the USA on intelligence technology and thus preventing terror financing. India always wants stronger neighbors, even if they have different politics, because all the neighbors of India have a common threat that is terrorism.

The United Nations Security Council is reluctant to make changes in its structure. It needs function. All this happens because many powerful countries are blocking it to make reforms. India now has become an important global member framing global rules and building alliances with other countries. To counter terrorism, India mixes its goals with practical plans, showing it care more about safety of the world.

To fight Terrorism more effectively, the world should work together in areas such as making similar laws across the countries, helping the weaker countries to build better systems to counter terrorism, Share informations using better technology among the world. Stop the flow of terror money with financial transparency, protection of human rights while preventing terrorism. These steps if taken by the world countries make India and world safer from terrorism.

Regional Cooperation and Strategic Alliances

Even though India has been an important part of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the role played by India in SAARC in preventing terrorism is little. This happens because India has an enemy, which is Pakistan, who is also a part of SAARC. But India's cooperation with BIMSTEC and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization has been promising for reducing terrorism.

India is an active participant in regional anti-terror drills, including SCO, Peace Mission and BIMSTEC joint counter-terrorism training. Security cooperation through the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD), BRICS, and G20 has further strengthened India's regional architecture in addressing transnational threats, with a focus on cyber-security and disinformation campaigns.

India's regional counter-terrorism efforts have been shaped by a mix of diplomatic challenges and promising collaborations. Within the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), progress has been slow, largely due to long-standing political tensions with Pakistan, which have often disrupted meaningful cooperation on security matters (Affairs, 2021) As a result, India has shifted greater attention to more functional regional groupings where collaboration has been more productive.

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) has emerged as a more effective platform. India has taken part in joint counter-terrorism training exercises under BIMSTEC, strengthening coordination with countries like Nepal, Bhutan, and Thailand on issues such as terror financing and cross-border threats.

Global Contributions

India's objectives within the UN's counter-terrorism agenda are broad and interlinked. First, it aims to ensure that the global framework reflects the realities of modern threats, pushing for a comprehensive definition of terrorism that goes beyond political or ideological divisions. This objective has gained particular relevance in the light of continuing controversy regarding the classification of some of the non-state actors, as well as the urgent need of internationally coordinated standards. Secondly, India is asking for strong global cooperation by sharing more intelligence, helping countries improve their capabilities, and using more sophisticated tools to fight terrorism, which is always changing.

In the situation, India's work at the UN shows it is trying to balance its own national security needs along with the responsibilities of the world. The main idea of India to counter terrorism is not just through diplomacy, but it is also through a strong international system where everyone respects human rights and everyone responds to the global security threats. To do this, India should follow the international relations, especially constructivism, which says that countries are shaped by global rules and shared values. India also tries to start a fair and equal discussion between countries which pushes India's



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accountability and also works to stop terrorist funding. India acts as a mediator helping different countries work together, even though there are some disagreements..

Partnerships Beyond Borders: The U.S.–India Connection

As we look deeper, we can see that India is making very strong efforts to improve global anti terrorism measures at the UN. These efforts still faces many challenges. These are geopolitical tensions, divergent national interests amongst UN Member States and ideological and operational complexities to define and deal with terrorism. The section that follows this will provide a nuanced examination of these challenges, followed by proposed strategies to promote effective collaboration in the global struggle against terrorism., India's involvement in global efforts to fight terrorism to the United Nations has been multifaceted, reflecting its commitment to improve international security and cooperation. As a member of various global forums and initiatives to combat terrorism, India is actively committed to shaping discussions and executives that seek to respond to the evolutionary threats posed by terrorism. India constantly highlights the importance of a global approach which incorporates military, economic and diplomatic measures. Key platforms, such as the global strategy to combat the United Nations terrorism, provide India with ways to collaborate with other nations and plead for shared responsibilities among the Member States (Abrahms and Awasthi, 2024).

India has built a strong collaborative relationship with the United States, one that has significantly influenced its counter-terrorism strategies. This partnership has included intelligence sharing, joint military exercises, and regular bilateral dialogues designed to address both long-standing and emerging security threats. Through initiatives such as the U.S.–India Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism, New Delhi has sought to align aspects of its own security policies with Washington's approach, making use of American technological expertise and operational know-how to reinforce its domestic security framework (Singh, 2025). Yet, the cooperation has not been without friction; differing national priorities and broader geopolitical interests occasionally complicate efforts to maintain fully unified action.

In addition, India is an ardent defender of the progression of reforms in global governance executives dealing with terrorism. India has always pleaded for a more structured and more complete international legal framework which crystallizes the definitions of terrorism, thus reducing the ambiguities which can hinder global cooperation. This advocacy has intensified following numerous cross -border terrorism incidents which underlined the urgent need for a unified position on the designation and penalization of terrorist organizations and individuals (Mukerji, 2024). By defending these reforms, India seeks to facilitate the creation of a more effective basis for multilateral cooperation in the fight against terrorism.

India at the UN Security Council

In the context of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), India is faced with the double challenge to defend multilateralism while sailing in the complex geopolitical landscape characterized by the variable interests of permanent and non -permanent members. Despite being a non -permanent member of the UNSC on several occasions, the efforts of India to promote a cohesive multilateral response to terrorism have encountered resistance, in particular nations with different opinions on terrorism sponsored by the State and geopolitical alignments. Progress has been progressive because India has managed to place counter-terrorism on the agenda, but often has trouble achieving consensus concerning specific actions and resolutions aimed at treating identified threats.

Key positions articulated by India at the UN highlight its commitment to alleviate the risk of terrorism in a proactive manner. India's proposals have included calls for a complete international terrorism agreement, improving the capacity of the United Nations terrorism control office and strengthening international financial regulations to combat the financing of terrorism (Ashok, 2024). In addition, India has participated and organized international conferences, such as the process of the heart of Asia - Istanbul, which aims to improve regional cooperation against terrorism emanating from Afghanistan. These efforts show that India really focuses on regional dialogues and the teamwork for a global cooperation against terrorism while still respecting the situations.



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Structural and Political Challenges

India faces many challenges for its global anti-terrorism efforts at the United Nations. One of the biggest problems identified is the state-sponsored terrorism. Some neighboring states are sponsoring terrorism. This is the biggest challenge for India. Another biggest challenge is the regional instability. Many neighboring countries do not have regional stability, which will promote terrorism. Also, there is little trust in the United Nations. Since countries are not having trust in the United Nations, it is very difficult for a country like India to work with the United Nations to counter terrorism.

The global tools which are used to fight terrorism also have serious weaknesses. Terrorism today changes quickly, but the United Nations' efforts are not up to the mark. The real causes of terrorism are poverty, inequality, political anger, unemployment, etcetera. These problems could not be solved by a global organization such as the United Nations. So India wants a more balanced approach, not only the punishment or prevention, but a large-scale development which will reduce the terrorism.

To conclude, India is trying very hard to improve its global cooperation against terrorism, but it also faces many problems which it has to deal with. The main problems are the tensions with other countries, broken international systems, geopolitical rivalries, domestic and global politics. Even though we have these problems, it is very important for India to keep pushing for better cooperation because India is both a key leader and a victim of terrorism.

Suggestions to enhance local and international organizations.

India should focus on forming stronger regional associations as a major multilateral terrorism actor. This may include redefining the relationship with the Association of South Asia, to Regional Cooperation, (SAARC), and in particular, enhancing effective counterterrorism cooperation mechanisms among its member states. Joint training programs and workshops focused on anti -terrorist tactics, information exchange and crisis management protocols could be implemented to build collective capabilities (Jindal, 2025). Worldwide, India should be closely aligned with frames such as the Global Counterterrorism Forum (GCTF) to facilitate shared objectives and resources, thus maximizing the impact on various international contexts.

Using Soft Power and Diplomacy to Fight Terrorism

The use of soft power as a tool in anti -terrorist efforts present an opportunity for India to counteract extremist narratives. Through humanitarian initiatives, cultural exchanges, educational programs and community commitment, India can promote alternative narratives that decline tensions and promote mutual understanding among various communities (Jindal, 2025). The diplomatic commitment to countries that face similar threats can open roads for dialogue and association, thus creating a multiple layer approach to combat terrorism that transcends military tactics. The historical and cultural ties of India in the region are well positioned to undertake such initiatives to promote peace and stability.

CONCLUSION

In the light of the aforementioned strategies, the role of India in improving anti -terrorist multilateral efforts in the UN is underlined by its historical commitment to regional stability and its ability to influence global. In the complexities of international relations, India can catalyze a more unified front against terrorism taking advantage of its strategic associations, promoting intelligence cooperation, advocating stronger UN mandates and using soft power strategies. The combination of these efforts presents a promising way to improve collaborative anti -terrorism initiatives, positioning India as a fundamental player to shape the future global security panorama.



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