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INDIA'S MULTILATERAL APPROACH AT THE UN: COUNTER-TERRORISM AND CLIMATE CHANGE AS CASES IN POINT



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June 2021

Manipal Academy of Higher Education
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**INDIA'S MULTILATERAL APPROACH
AT THE UN: COUNTER-TERRORISM
AND CLIMATE CHANGE AS CASES IN
POINT**

**A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of Geopolitics and
International Relations in Partial Fulfilment for Master's Degree in
Geopolitics and International Relations**

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By
MEENU SHARMA

June 2021



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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation entitled "**India's Multilateral Approach at the UN: Counter-Terrorism and Climate Change as Cases in Point**" submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Geopolitics and International Relations of Manipal Academy of Higher Education is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University.

(Meenu Sharma)

CERTIFICATE

I recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AML	Anti Money Laundering
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BASIC	Brazil, South Africa, India and China
CBDR-RC	Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities
CCIT	Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CFT	Combating the Financing of Terrorism
CII	Confederation of Indian Industry
CSER	Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility
ECS	East China Sea
EU	European Union
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GHG	Green House Gas
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOI	Government of India
GTI	Global Terrorism Index
GW	Giga Watt
HFC	Hydro Fluorocarbon
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contribution
JWG	Joint Working Group
LMDC	Like Minded Developing Countries
MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MLACM	Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters
MoEFCC	Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change
MRV	Measuring, Reporting and Verification
NAM	Non Aligned Movement
NDA	National Democratic Alliance
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
ODS	Ozone Depleting Substance
OIC	Organization of Islamic Conference
OPEC	Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
PPP	Public Private Partnership
RCEP	Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership
REDD/REDD-plus	Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
SAR	South Asian Region
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organization
SCS	South China Sea
SDG	Sustainable Developmental Goal

TERI	The Energy and Resources Institute
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCHE	United Nations Conference on Human Environment
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention for the Law of Sea
UNCTC	United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee
UNEA	United Nations Environment Assembly
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UPA	United Progressive Alliance
US	United States
WHO	World Health Organization
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction
WRI	World Resources Institute

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ABSTRACT

Multilateralism in International Relations (IR) has different connotations. However, the generally accepted notion is that it enhances cooperation among states and encourages them to work for good global governance. Multilateralism is not a new phenomenon in IR. Nevertheless, it was institutionalized for the first time in 1919 when the League of Nations was formed, following the World War I, to establish peace and stability in the world. It succeeded partially but ultimately failed when the World War II happened. Therefore, nations came together and tried to modify it to a more exclusive multilateral body. The resultant organization or the updated version of the league was the United Nations (UN) that was established in 1945.

The UN till today is the largest multilateral institution with 193 member nations. So, it has succeeded in thwarting the third World War. Besides international security it also deals with other issues like international law, terrorism, climate change, poverty eradication, education, navigational freedom, sustainable development and so on to establish a better world for mankind. India's strong relations with multilateralism started with the UN. Indian delegates invested their huge time and energy in establishing the UN. Since then India has always maintained close ties with the UN and its all specialized organs and agencies. Therefore, multilateralism in India's context is an approximately century old phenomenon rather being a modern phenomenon.

With the advent of the twenty first century, India has made a strategic shift in its multilateral foreign policy approach at the UN. India's engagement with the UN has increased considerably in recent times. From a "rule taker", India has slowly become a "rule maker" at the multilateral institutions particularly the UN. India has started taking the lead at the UN on various issues that are directly or indirectly related to international stability and sustainability. Counter-terrorism and climate change have the two major issues where India has emerged as a champion in the 21st century. Counter-terrorism has become a global threat that can only be dealt through collective efforts. India, for a long time, tried to manage it alone but ultimately realized that the global threats need global solutions. Therefore, Indian delegates presented innumerable draft resolutions at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on countering terrorism. Eventually, India's efforts resulted into positive outcomes and international community unite under multilateral framework at the UN to tackle terrorism.

Similarly, in case of climate change, India has emerged as a global champion. Climate change has also emerged as a global phenomenon that demands immediate actions. At a time when the Western world or developed nations pulled out from multilateral climate change framework, India came at the forefront and played a leadership role in finalising historic agreements like the Paris Agreement where the major powers especially the United States (US) pulled out to safeguard their national interests. Therefore, at present, multilateralism is in a chaotic situation where all the major powers are looking more inwardly and not bothered about their global responsibilities. Many scholars even argue that multilateralism is in a very weak state as national interests have dominated the overall global interests. In this challenging times, India has emerged as a saviour of multilateralism and trying to convince all major, middle and small powers in the international system to strengthen multilateralism for effective global governance. India's efforts in reviving multilateralism are gaining global recognition that will benefit India in both the short-term and the long-term.

Undoubtedly, India's renewed interest in multilateralism has been fuelled by its geopolitical aspirations. Nevertheless, the leadership void in multilateralism is a serious concern for international community. India has recognised this concern very earlier and did not hesitate to play the leading role in reviving multilateralism. In this context, the research study has made an attempt to understand and analyze India's multilateral approach towards the UN in case of counter-terrorism and climate change that would help in understanding the strategic rationales and geopolitical drivers behind India's multilateral strategies at the UN. Moreover, the research study has also made an effort to understand multilateralism in India's context from theoretical perspective such as the neo-realism, neo-liberalism and social constructivism. An attempt has been made in the subsequent chapter to understand the basic pillars and role of two major regimes i.e. the Manmohan Singh's regime and the Narendra Modi's regime to understand the multilateral foreign policy of India at the UN. The research study concluded with the assessment of prospects and challenges for India at the multilateral institutions particularly at the UN. Therefore, the research study has made an attempt in presenting a holistic view of India's engagements with the multilateralism in the contemporary geopolitical scenario.

