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### **Abstract**

As a sovereign state (declared as one on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947 after independence from the British regime), India shares many social and political similarities with the United States of America. Both countries have a receptive, plural and culturally diverse society and political structure and a non-monolithic government. Moreover, they share a common commitment to the rule of law; basic freedom; and common concern for the protection, preservation and furtherance of human rights. Above all, the two countries are the largest and the strongest democracies in the world, sharing a common democratic wavelength. In addition, the US Constitution inspired the framers of the Indian Constitution and provided the ground for Indian federalism and the system of judicial review.

But, in spite of these natural affinities, the relationship between the two countries cannot be described as cordial. It has actually gone through a roller coaster ride ever since its inception. They were often described as ‘estranged democracies’ (a term coined by Dennis Kux to describe the Indo-US relations) during the cold war period. Subsequently, the post cold war period saw them emerging as ‘engaged democracies’. Their transformation from ‘estranged democracies’ to ‘engaged democracies’ rests on a number of variables. These are: India subscribing to the non aligned policy after independence; the emergence of Pakistan as a frontline state with respect to India and the United States; the unresolved Kashmir issue between India and Pakistan, India’s nuclear ambitions, and globalisation and the advent of market economy on the international scene.

As mentioned in the preceding section, thus, the end of cold war and the subsequent changes not only transformed the nature of global politics, but also dramatically altered the basic parameters within which various relationships operated. In this context, the US stepped up to review its

policy with regard to South Asia in general and India in particular. India, too, adjusted its bilateral relations with the US accordingly. Both the countries shared similar views on numerous questions dealing with the dynamics of the world. These questions include the changed economic scenario, global peace, democratic principles, countering terrorism, etc.

The present study uses the historical analysis method. In short, the historical analysis method can be defined as the description of events by the use of documents, records, and authorities.

Through this method, the researcher seeks to make sense of the past through the disciplined and systematic analysis of written documents, whether of public or private origin. The present research considers historical analysis as a pervasive and necessary technique in its own right, without which no account of phenomena in the present may be properly understood<sup>1</sup>. Here, the goal is to document a relationship or discover an association between two or more variables in the targeted set of cases, without establishing causality, and develop a narrative about a specific topic based on the evidence at hand.

The end of the Cold War and subsequent changes not only transformed the nature of global politics, but also dramatically altered the basic parameters within which various relationships operated. In this context, the US stepped up to review its policy with regard to South Asia in general and India in particular. India, too, adjusted its bilateral relations with the US accordingly. Both the countries shared similar views on numerous questions dealing with the dynamics of the world. These questions include the changed economic scenario, global peace, democratic principles, countering terrorism, etc.

The content of the post Cold-War Indo-US relations are indications of a productive and vigorous bilateral relationship. It is potentially focused to partnership-building based on increasingly overlapping national interests. The priority shift from non-proliferation, which shaped the US policy towards India, changed into overall sectors. These sectors were trade and commerce, terrorism, energy security, regional security and stability, and promoting democracy, which helped in bridging the gap between the world's largest and oldest democracies.

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