Summary: A host of attributes should make India a staunch supporter of a global, liberal order. Yet since the days of its first prime minister, the country has been ambivalent about support for liberal/democratic principles and institutions abroad. This paper will briefly review well-known features of India's post-independence historical record on the liberal order. It will examine the underlying reasons that explain the positions the country adopted, focus on the incremental policy shifts at the Cold War's end, and then discuss the country's likely support for such issues in the future.

India in the Liberal Order

by Sumit Ganguly

Introduction

A host of attributes should make India a staunch supporter of a global, liberal order. Despite seemingly insurmountable odds, it made a swift transition to democracy from the detritus of the British colonial empire in South Asia.[1] India was also an early supporter of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[2] At home, it adopted a largely liberal/democratic constitution in 1950 and, aside from a brief interregnum of authoritarian rule (1976-1977), it has not only managed to sustain democracy, it has also deepened and broadened its scope, though its record is hardly unblemished.[3] Yet since the days of its first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, the country has been ambivalent about support for liberal/democratic principles and institutions abroad.

After the Cold War, India's policymakers have confronted a fundamental tension: on one hand, they find themselves saddled with a colonial legacy that still calls for a robust defense of the principle of sovereignty. On the other, as a constitutionally liberal democratic state, some within its political leadership believe that they can ill-afford to remain oblivious to repression and the rampant violation of human rights abroad.[4] Accordingly, as India's material capabilities grow and its leadership becomes more confident about its domestic circumstances, it may well shed its long-held reservations about any possible diminution of the principle of sovereignty.[5]

This paper will briefly review well-known features of India's post-independence historical record. It will examine the underlying reasons that explain the positions the country adopted, focus on the incremental policy shifts at the Cold War's end, and then discuss the country's likely support for such issues in the future.

India in the Post-Colonial Era

In the immediate aftermath of independence, Nehru emerged *primus inter pares* when it came to matters of India's foreign and defense policies. Few

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[1] On the sources of India's successful transition to democracy, see Maya Tudor, *The Promise of Power* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[2] Mark Mazower, *No Enchanted Palace: The End of Empire and the Ideological origins of the United Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

[3] For various assessments, see Sumit Ganguly, Larry Diamond, and Marc Plattner, eds. *The State of India's Democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007).

[4] I am indebted to my student, Jason Grant Stone, for highlighting this tension.

[5] For a useful discussion, see C. Raja Mohan, "Balancing Interests and Values: India's Struggle with Democracy Promotion," *The Washington Quarterly*, Summer 2007, 30:3, pp.99-115.

within the nationalist movement had had much exposure to international affairs and so his dominance of the foreign policy process was all but inevitable. As is well known, he was one of the principal architects of the non-aligned movement (NAM). Since the vast majority of the leadership of the NAM and its membership had emerged from the shadow of colonial rule, they quickly enshrined the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of states in its charter. Their motivations were entirely understandable; as states that had just shed the yoke of colonial rule, they were keen to jealously guard their nascent sovereignty. More to the point, given that both the United States and the Soviet Union were not reticent about intervening abroad to bolster and secure their interests, the adoption of this unyielding stance on the issue of sovereignty was quite understandable.

Yet, it needs to be underscored that India's opposition to foreign intervention in the domestic affairs of states was far from consistent. It was an early critic of the U.S. involvement in Vietnam but had chosen to exercise considerable restraint when the Soviet Union ruthlessly suppressed the Hungarian uprising in 1956. In considerable part, this inconsistency could be traced to Nehru's own political beliefs. As his voluminous writings both before and after India's independence reveal, despite his unwavering commitment to liberal democracy at home, he had distinctly socialist leanings, which led him to exculpate the shortcomings of the Soviet bloc.

That said, Nehru was also passionately committed to the development of multilateral institutions and their possible role in the preservation of world peace. To that end, India became an early advocate and supporter of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Indeed, it was one of the principal contributors to the United Nations peacekeeping operations in the Congo[6] and subsequently in the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) in the Gaza Strip.[7] Its policymakers felt at ease with UN peacekeeping endeavors because these required the explicit consent of member states.[8] This Indian tradition of involvement with and support for peacekeeping continues today. However, Indian policymakers remain adamantly opposed to transforming a peacekeeping operation into a peace enforcement effort without suitable UN authorization.[9]

Though India continued to uphold the principle of sovereignty when its vital interests were at stake or when deep historical legacies were implicated, it did not hesitate to deviate from its adherence to this norm. Three episodes clearly illustrate the country's willingness to depart from the professed commitment to the standard.

The first, of course, was India's decision to intervene in the civil war that engulfed East Pakistan in 1971, leading to the flight of nearly 10 million refugees into India. Though India's policymakers couched the intervention in the language of humanitarian intervention, for all practical purposes, it resorted to force to break up Pakistan — its long-standing adversary. In effect, the ideational language notwithstanding, straightforward realist concerns animated India's choices and actions.[10]

The second involved India's decision to support the Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia to unseat the genocidal Pol Pot regime in January 1979. Not only did India refuse the join the chorus of global condemnation but actually went on to recognize the new regime of Heng Samrin. Once again, India's decision to ignore the expectations of sovereignty stemmed from straightforward strategic concerns. It was politically close to the Soviet Union, it has excellent relations with Vietnam, and had few ties worth the name with the Association of South East Asian States.[11] Consequently, it was unlikely to pay substantial costs for adopting a favorable stance toward Vietnam. Furthermore, since it did lead to the ouster of an utterly squalid and brutal regime, it could again cast its decision in the light of upholding fundamental humanitarian concerns.

The third occasion occurred in 1987 and involved its relations with Sri Lanka. Faced with growing domestic discontent in its southern state of Tamil Nadu about the maltreatment of the Tamil minority in Sri Lanka

6 Rajeshwar Dayal, *Mission for Hammarskjold: The Congo Crisis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976).

7 Major-General Indar Jit Rikhye, *Trumpets and Tumults: The Memoirs of a Peacekeeper* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2002).

8 Rohan Mukherjee and David M Malone, "Global Responsibilities: India's Approach," *Jindal Journal of International Affairs*, 1:1, October 2011, 182-203.

9 For a discussion of the evolution of the India's views on UN peacekeeping, see Richard Gowan and Sushant K. Singh, "India and UN Peacekeeping: The Weight of History and the Lack of a Strategy," in Waheguru Pal Singh Sidhu, Pratap Bhanu Mehta, and Bruce Jones, eds. *Shaping the Emerging World: India and the Multilateral Order* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2013).

10 For a detailed discussion, see Sumit Ganguly, *Conflict Unending: India-Pakistan Tensions Since 1947* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001).

11 Mohammed Ayoob, *India and Southeast Asia: Indian Perceptions and Policies* (London: Routledge, 1990).

and the dire conditions of beleaguered Tamils in the Sri Lankan province of Jaffna, Indian Air Force (IAF) aircraft airdropped humanitarian assistance in key areas in Sri Lanka. These actions, though justifiable on humanitarian grounds, clearly violated Sri Lanka's sovereignty. Once again, the imperatives of domestic politics coupled with India's dominant position in the region led it to undertake a mission that showed scant regard for the professed commitment to the preservation of absolute state sovereignty.[12]

In addition to these three episodes, throughout the Cold War, India was an early and consistent critic of the apartheid regime in South Africa and had not evinced any qualms about its efforts to bring about its end. Two factors explain India's unremitting hostility toward the regime, its willingness to impose multilateral sanctions, and also work in concert with the African National Congress (ANC), thereby intervening in the internal affairs of a sovereign state. First, one of key the members of Indian nationalist pantheon, Mohandas Gandhi, had opposed all forms of racial discrimination in South Africa as his career as a lawyer had evolved. Second, its policymakers had also seen the dismantling of the apartheid regime in the country as an integral part of the anti-colonial enterprise.[13]

Indeed Indian policymakers and public intellectuals could reasonably argue that the United States and the Western world, despite a professed commitment to the spread of democracy, were comfortable in their support for the scrofulous apartheid regime, thereby demonstrating the limits of their adherence to the principle of democracy promotion. Furthermore, the U.S. role in the overthrow of the elected, democratic regime of Salvador Allende in Chile in 1973, also gave Indian policymakers considerable pause about the stated U.S. commitment to global democracy.

The Cold War's End and the Demands of a New Era
The Cold War's end came as a substantial shock to India's policymakers and required a dramatic re-appraisal of India's foreign policy nostrums.[14] In the aftermath of Nehru's

death, his successors, most notably Indira Gandhi, while maintaining the ideational rhetoric that had characterized India's foreign policy, increasingly adopted a more pragmatic approach. The ideational rhetoric highlighted India's concerns about the lack of progress toward universal global disarmament, toward addressing North-South inequities in the international order, and on the appropriate responsibilities of the industrialized and non-industrialized world on matters pertaining to environmental degradation.

With the Cold War's end and the concomitant collapse of the Soviet Union, India's policymakers were not slow to recognize that the principal successor state, Russia, was either unwilling or unable to play a similar strategic role in India's security calculus. With this bulwark gone, India had to recalibrate its ties with the sole surviving superpower, the United States, and also find ways to fashion a working relationship with its principal long-term adversary, the People's Republic of China (PRC). Simultaneously, they also recognized that key global norms were likely to shift, and that India would have to find ways to fashion appropriate responses to these developments.

India confronted a number of emergent issues that effectively discredited its hitherto ideological vision of global order. With the United States now in a transcendent position in the global arena, no longer confronting the weight of Soviet power, it could act with impunity and also propagate values consonant with its interests. The first such conundrum that India confronted emerged during Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. India's reaction to the invasion was muddled. On one hand, it had had good relations with Hussein's Iraq for two compelling reasons. First, it was a secular if highly repressive regime. For India's policymakers, especially after the steady erosion of the idealism that had characterized the Nehru era, a secular Arab regime, however authoritarian, was preferable to one that was religiously oriented. Second, India also relied on Iraq for a significant portion of its energy needs and had substantial guest workers within the country.[15] Under these circumstances, the country could ill-afford to take a particularly robust stand against Hussein's invasion of Kuwait. Accordingly, despite vigorous internal debate in the country, India's minister of external affairs, Inder Kumar Gujral,

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[12] For a detailed discussion of this episode, see Sankaran Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka and the Question of Nationhood* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

[13] David Black, "The Long and Winding Road: International Norms and Domestic Political Change in South Africa," in Thomas Risse-Kappen, Stephen C. Ropp, and Kathryn Sikkink, eds. *The Power of Human Rights; International Norms and Domestic Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

[14] Sumit Ganguly, "India's Foreign Policy Grows Up," *World Policy Journal*, Volume XX, No 4, Winter 2003/04

[15] Mukund Narvenkar, "Looking West: 1: Iran and the Gulf," in David Scott ed. *The Routledge handbook of India's International Relations* (London: Routledge, 2011), pp.167-178.

went to Baghdad as a representative of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) to seek a possible diplomatic resolution of the crisis. His efforts, as is well known, accomplished little.[16]

However, with a change of regime later in the year, the weak coalition regime of Prime Minister Chandra Sekhar quietly allowed the refueling of U.S. military aircraft in Bombay, thereby tacitly signaling India's willingness to endorse the Western view of the invasion. But once the refueling became public knowledge, it became simply untenable for the government to allow it to continue. The inability of the government to cope with hostile, left-wing domestic pressures revealed that the country had yet to forge a consensus about how it intended to fashion a new grand strategy in a vastly altered global landscape.[17]

Dealing with Emergent Global Norms

In the aftermath of the first Gulf War, India's policymakers concluded that they could ill-afford to simply fall back on the nostrums that had guided India's foreign policy during the Cold War. As a consequence, a vigorous domestic debate ensued. Some within the policymaking establishment insisted that India should not abandon its historic commitment to non-alignment and but should infuse it with new meaning.[18] Others, however, suggested a more pragmatic approach to the global order and also made clear that non-alignment was now bereft of meaning.[19]

Even as this debate was under way, policymakers confronted a key issue, namely the willingness of the international community, and particularly the United States, now freed from the constraints of dealing with Soviet expansionism, to forthrightly upbraid states on questions of human rights violations. In this context, despite constitutionally robust guarantees for safeguarding human rights, India's record was far from exemplary. Its record was especially at question as an indigenous, secessionist insurgency erupted in 1989 in the portion of the disputed state of Kashmir that it

controlled. [20] Not surprisingly, India reacted quite strongly to any U.S. or other international criticisms of its human rights record in Kashmir, underscored the capacity of its own domestic judicial institutions to deal with such allegations, and expressed strong reservations about any attempt to diminish its privileges as a sovereign state.[21]

The human rights situation in Kashmir, which coincided with the renewed global emphasis on their protection, revealed a fundamental tension in India's foreign and security policies. Though India's political leadership continued to emphasize their unwavering commitment to human rights, they nevertheless took an unyielding position on any form of external pressure to address perceived shortcomings in this arena.

Nevertheless, it needs to be highlighted that the national government was not oblivious to international criticism. Faced with a barrage of external admonitions, the Congress Party government of Prime Minister Narasimha Rao created the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in 1993 under the aegis of the Protection of Human Rights Act. Even though some critics initially dismissed the NHRC as a sop to Cerberus, it quickly became evident that the organization, regardless of its provenance, had acquired a degree of institutional autonomy and efficacy.[22]

The Responsibility To Protect

As the notion of protecting populations from widespread state repression gained ground in the wake of Yugoslavia's collapse in the early 1990s, India's response further illustrated the tension between its desire to safeguard state sovereignty and its long-standing valuation of liberal norms. Fearing the setting of a possible global precedent that could adversely affect India in the future, its policymakers expressed grave reservations about the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) decision in 1999 to militarily intervene in the conflict.[23] In the wake of the Kosovo intervention, Secretary-General Kofi Annan initiated a debate

[16] Barbara Crossette, "Confrontation in the Gulf; India, Shaken by Iraqi Move, Seeks a Role for the Nonaligned," *The New York Times*, September 10, 1990.

[17] J.K. Baral and J.N. Mahanty, "India and the Gulf Crisis: The Response of a Minority Government," *Pacific Affairs*, Autumn 1992, 65:3, 368-384.

[18] See for example, S.D. Muni, *"India and the Post-Cold War World: Opportunities and Challenges," (1991) 31 (9) Asian Survey 872.*

[19] Sumit Ganguly, "South Asia After the Cold War," *The Washington Quarterly*, Autumn 1992 (15:4, 173-84)

[20] For a discussion of the origins of the insurgency as well as the problems associated with the initial phases of India's counter-insurgency strategy, see Sumit Ganguly, *The Crisis in Kashmir: Portents of War, Hopes of Peace* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

[21] Jason Burke, "Indian Officers Names in Report on Kashmir Abuses," *The Guardian*, December 6, 2012.

[22] Vijayshri Sripati, "India's National Human Rights Commission: A Shackled Commission?" *Boston University International Law Journal*, 118: 1, 2000, pp.1-47.

[23] Gaurav Kampani, "India's Kosovo Conundrum," *Rediff on the Net*, April 24, 1999, http://www.rediff.com/news/1999/apr/24nato.htm

about the legality and legitimacy of humanitarian intervention. Soon thereafter, the United Nations Security Council took up the matter and embarked upon a series of debates on the question.

From the outset, India expressed its reservations about granting the Security Council the requisite authority to permit humanitarian intervention. It asserted that not only would such authority undermine state sovereignty under the expectations of the UN Charter but would render the rest of the UN membership powerless to disagree. Furthermore, in the same vein, they argued that the proper authority lay with the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).[24]

Yet as the idea of humanitarian intervention gained ground in the wake of the report from the International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS), which developed the concept of the "responsibility to protect" (R2P), Indian interlocutors started to shift ground when faced with a very substantial international consensus. However, Indian negotiators ensured that the norm's promoters make significant concessions limiting the application of the principle to four specific crimes (war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, and ethnic cleansing), an omission of criteria for the use of force and an insistence on UN authorization.[25] Nevertheless, after the World Summit of 2005, as discussions continued on the application of R2P principles, prominent Indian diplomats argued that they shared the view that mass atrocities should be prevented. However, they also reminded the UN community that any response to such a crisis should be peaceful, and that resort to Chapter VII sanctions should be a last resort.[26] Furthermore, they argued (and continue to hold the view) that the way to avoid conditions that would prompt a resort action under R2P principles was to help states develop the requisite capabilities to avoid rampant human rights violations. [27]

India and the International Criminal Court

Notions of the constriction of state sovereignty have also animated India's approach to the creation of an International Criminal Court (ICC). When the entity was created in 1998, India chose to abstain rather than actually vote against its formation. Since an opt-in provision was not included in the statute that created the court and granted it inherent jurisdiction, India felt compelled to abstain. Its decision apparently stemmed from three related concerns. The first had to do with the capacity of the Indian judicial system to respond or mete out condign punishment in a prompt and speedy fashion. The second arose from its awareness of the inability of its prosecutorial and judicial systems to bring to task egregious violators of human rights, especially in the face of evidence of state complicity. For example, as one commentator has written in the aftermath of what is widely seen as a pogrom in the western state of Gujarat in February 2002, " … it is only the proximate and direct perpetrators who, in a few cases that survive are being tried; the chain of command, complicity and connivance remain beyond the pale."[28] Finally, the Indian state also feared that the ICC could be subject to political bias and thereby place India and other vulnerable states in the dock while overlooking the malfeasances of others.

All of these concerns suggest a certain lack of faith in the robustness of its own judicial institutions and their capacity to respond to blatant violations of human rights within the country. Given that regimes of every ideological stripe within the past three decades have been implicated in substantial human rights violations during their terms in office and that the judiciary has been unable to bring those responsible to account for their actions, it is most unlikely that India will show any particular willingness to shift its position on the ICC. It is possible to make this argument even though India, with some reservations, had voted in support of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1970. This resolution, which had won unanimous consent, had referred the Gaddafi regime in Libya to the ICC in the wake of the brutal crackdown on demonstrators in early 2011.

Democracy Promotion

Despite a commitment to the preservation of democracy at home, India's policymakers have been mostly loath to

[24] Kudrat Virk, "India and the responsibility to Protect: A Tale of Ambiguity," *Global Responsibility to Protect*, 2013, pp.56-83.

[25] Virk, 2013, p.79.

[26] Ian Hall, "Tilting at Windmills? The Indian debate over the Responsibility to Protect after UNSC Resolution 1973," *Global Responsibility to Protect* 5, 2013, 84-108.

[27] Hall, 2013, p.96. Also, personal interview with senior Indian Foreign Service Officer, New Delhi, December 18, 2012.

[28] Usha Ramanathan, "India and the ICC," *Journal of International Criminal Justice,* 3, 2005, 627-634.

promote democracy abroad. Three factors explain India's unwillingness to take up the cudgel of democracy promotion. In considerable part, once again, its aversion to serve as a democracy monger stems from a deeply rooted aversion to both colonialism and imperialism. Even 60 years after the end of British colonial rule, the memories of colonial and post-colonial rationalizations for foreign interventions remain alive. Of course, in a related vein, they also remain acutely cognizant of the infirmities of their own domestic democratic institutions and want to fend off possible external pressures and inordinate scrutiny of the various shortcomings. Finally, its hesitation also stems from its location in a deeply troubled neighborhood, which is host to a number of authoritarian regimes capable of deploying varying levels of repression and brutality.

As the noted Indian political theorist and public intellectual Pratap Bhanu Mehta has argued, quite cogently, India is in no position given the asymmetries of power, to promote democracy in its behemoth northern neighbor, the PRC. More to the point, he argues that India, which is host to the largest Tibetan diaspora in the world, has followed a deft policy of both leveraging the Tibetan issue with the PRC without directly inflaming tensions. This careful policy, he argues, demonstrates India's commitment to the protection of human rights without engaging in grandstanding or making the issue a global cause.[29] Despite India's adroit balancing act, on occasion, it has attracted the public ire of the PRC.[30]

India's efforts at democracy promotion in the rest of its neighborhood have generated mixed results. The hardest case, of course, has involved its dealings with Burma/Myanmar. Initially, because of historic ties between the Indian nationalist movement and Aung San, the father of the long incarcerated democracy activist and current member of Parliament, Aung San Suu Kyi, India had shunned the military junta in the country. In the early 1990s however, faced with the growing influence of the PRC within the country, at the insistence of the then Foreign Secretary, Jyotindra Nath Dixit, India started to make overtures toward the military regime despite foreign disapprobation. Apart from the question of the increasing involvement

with the PRC in the country, India also wanted to seek the cooperation of the military regime to end the sanctuaries of various northeastern insurgent groups in Burma/Myanmar.

Indian interlocutors claim that despite their engagement of the junta, that various governments in New Delhi did not abandon their quite diplomatic efforts to foster democratic change within Burma.[31] Other specialists on Burma, however, take a different view, claiming that India's efforts to promote change have been too meager and anemic primarily on the grounds that its developmental projects are limited and its engagement with Burma's civil society inadequate. Nevertheless, even the critics of India's policies grudgingly concede that in the future, India may be in a position to accomplish more both in terms of democracy and development while simultaneously addressing its more parochial interests.[32] If the current trends toward democratization in Burma/Myanmar continue, India's past policies of engagement while gently nudging the rulers to restore democracy may well be vindicated.

Historically, since Sri Lanka was a robust democracy despite its periodic problems with its Tamil population, India had no role in the preservation of its democracy barring the provision of assistance to suppress a left-wing rebellion in the 1970s. However, in the aftermath of the highly successful if utterly brutal and sanguinary end to the Sri Lankan civil war in 2009, India has faced a dilemma with the country's growing turn toward authoritarianism. India's dilemma is rooted both in its domestic and regional politics. At the level of domestic politics, no government, especially one that rests on a fractious coalition, can afford to ignore the sentiments of a vocal Tamil population in southern India, particularly in the state of Tamil Nadu. Even if leaders in New Delhi lack a normative commitment to the protection of human rights in Sri Lanka, they cannot remain oblivious to the cacophonous demands of the Tamil electorate in the state about the plight of their ethnic kin in Sri Lanka. Yet this need to address a powerful domestic constituency must also be balanced with an external concern, namely the expanding role of the PRC in Sri Lanka.

Accordingly, India's policymakers have again sought to resort to a delicate balancing act. Faced with steady

[29] Pratap Bhanu Mehta, "Reluctant India," *Journal of Democracy*, 22:4, October 2011, pp.97-109.

[30] Dean Nelson, "China Angry over Dalai Lama Visit to Disputed Tibetan Border," *The Telegraph*, November 6, 2009.

[31] Mehta, 2011, p.103.

[32] Renaud Egreteau, "A Passage to Burma? India, development, and democratization in Myanmar," *Contemporary Politics*, December 2011, 17:4, pp.467-486.

domestic pressure, they chose in March 2013 to reprimand Sri Lanka at the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in Geneva for its failure to address legitimate concerns about post-conflict reconciliation. Yet, shortly before this adverse UNHRC vote, India chose to increase its share of foreign assistance to Sri Lanka. There is little question that this decision was made to both soften the blow of the upcoming vote while simultaneously attempting to ensure that the PRC's looming presence did not wholly eclipse its influence in the country.

However, even India's costly vote did not appease one of the constituents of the ruling coalition, the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), which chose to withdraw from the national government accusing it of having voted for a diluted resolution.[33] The Sri Lankan case, as much as that of Burma/Myanmar, illustrates some of the dilemmas that any government in New Delhi confronts as it seeks to balance competing interests and ideals.

When not faced with similar domestic and external constraints, India's willingness to participate in efforts at democracy promotion has been somewhat more forthright.[34] In considerable part, such a strategy has been evident in India's attempts at democracy promotion in Nepal. When King Gyanendra seized power in Nepal in February 2005, India cut off all arms supplies to the country despite the presence of a significant Maoist insurgency with possible ties to an Indian insurgent group in the northeastern state of Assam. Subsequently, when democracy was restored in April 2006, India tripled its foreign assistance to the country. One analyst has argued that India may have been keen on supporting the democratic peace process in Nepal largely as a signal to its domestic Maoist insurgents that a return to the democratic political fold could lead to a reconciliation with the Indian state. This argument, though superficially appealing, is flawed.[35]As long as rebels have abandoned their secessionist agenda and have eschewed the resort to force, the Indian state has long evinced a willingness to discuss and accommodate the demands of various insurgent groups.

What about India's willingness to participate in efforts at democracy promotion beyond the region? Here again, the country has demonstrated caution and reticence but in recent years has taken some fitful, limited steps. The efforts that India has made in the realm of democracy promotion, for the most part, have been at U.S. prodding. The initial initiative came during the second Clinton administration when during his maiden (and only presidential) visit to India, his administration proposed the creation of a center for Asian Democracy. Apparently, this was viewed with some skepticism in New Delhi because it smacked of anti-PRC overtones.[36] Nevertheless, India's policymakers were unwilling to completely dismiss the notion of democracy promotion in the wake of an emerging rapprochement with the United States. To that end, India became one of the founding members of the Community of Democracies Initiative in 1999. However, despite its initial commitment, India has not devoted significant diplomatic energy to give the nascent body much impetus. India's reluctance to expend much effort may stem from its long-standing advocacy for states in the global South, many of whom are not democratic states. Despite this hesitation, in 2005 India committed itself, at the urging of President George W. Bush, to support the United Nations Democracy Fund. Despite India's willingness to endorse these initiatives it appears reluctant to grant these endeavors pride of place in the conduct of its foreign policy thereby suggesting that democracy promotion still lacks a substantial constituency within its foreign policy establishment.

Conclusions

The foregoing analysis shows that India's role in two, key emergent pillars of the liberal global order are limited and tentative. The limitations stem in considerable part from its colonial legacies, its institutional weaknesses, the exigencies of its domestic politics, and the constraints of its existing material capabilities. The central question that arises from this analysis is whether or not India might prove willing to act differently and assume a greater responsibility to provide various global public goods if it manages to bolster its material capabilities, steadily sheds it colonial hangover, and succeeds in addressing its domestic institutional constraints. Thus far, India, unlike during the Nehruvian era, has failed to spell out alternative global norms and institutional

[33] Express News Service, "India Votes Against Sri Lanka at UNHRC in Tamils Case, DMK hits out at UPA," *The Indian Express*, March 21, 2013.

[34] For the details pertaining to the evolution of India's policies see Sandra Destradi, "India as a democracy promoter? New Delhi's involvement in Nepal's return to democracy," *Democratization*, 19:2, 2012, pp,286-311.

[35] Jan Cartwright, "India Regional and International Support for Democracy: Rhetoric or Reality?" *Asian Survey*, 49:3, May/June 2009, pp. 403-428.

[36] Mohan, 2007, p.104.

arrangements even as it has proven to be critical of key, emergent liberal principles.

During Nehru's tenure in office, even though the country lacked material power, it had actually attempted to set alternative global agendas especially in the realm of nuclear disarmament.[37] Unfortunately, its lack of material capabilities made these efforts at agenda setting, for the most part, largely chimerical. Subsequent governments in India made token gestures to his earlier efforts but they lacked both conviction and commitment.

Might an economically resurgent India that also manages to improve the efficacy of its domestic institutions, sheds its post-colonial anxieties, and thereby finds itself on a more secure footing act differently in the international arena? Despite its present economic difficulties, much of which can be traced to poor policy choices and the shortcomings of its institutional capacities, there is no reason to wholly write off India's possible rise.[38] Whether or not renewed economic growth and improved institutional performance will make India's policymakers change their stances and assume the requisite burdens to help provide key public goods that could contribute to the creation of a more liberal global order remains an open question.[39]

[37] Sumit Ganguly, "India's Nuclear Free Dream," *The Diplomat*, April 29, 2010, http://thediplomat.com/2010/04/22/india%E2%80%99s-nuclear-free-dream/

[38] Ruchir Sharma, "India's Economic Superstars," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 2013, 92:5, pp.75-85.

[39] For an excellent discussion of India's unwillingness to assume suitable responsibilities in a series of extant and emergent global regimes, see Amrita Narlikar, "Is India a Responsible Great Power?" *Third World Quarterly*, 32:9, 2011, pp.1607-1621; for a more optimistic view, see Waheguru Pal Singh Sudhu, Pratal Bhanu Mehta, and Bruce Jones, *Shaping the Emerging World: India and the Multilateral Order* (Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution, 2013).