**Virtual Conference on the US National Security Strategy 2022**

The administration released its National Security Strategy (NSS) document on December 10, 2021. The document was released in the very first year of President Tenure, cataloguing the themes in US strategic thinking and issues impacting both domestic and foreign policy. In comparison with previous iterations, the latest NSS appears more direct and assertive, hints at a sense of decline in American power in the wake of the rise of powers that have been termed revisionist and as posing a direct threat to the US position in the world. The language is harsh, polarizing and counterproductive for a superpower.

The president’s national security strategy comprises of four pillars – Protect the American people, the homeland and the American way of life; Promote American prosperity; Preserve peace through strength; and Advance American influence. Further, the NSS 2021 also highlights America’s interests in various regions and its relations with individual countries.

Since the end of the Cold War, the US viewed practically all countries of the world as a de facto partner in pushing globalization forward and in its crusade against terrorism. However, with the changing security environment, the outlook of the majority of nations has also changed. And from the latest NSS, so has the outlook of the United States itself.

The document remarks that the current global order is characterized by great power competition. In the doctrine, both Russia and China are named ‘competitors’, while Iran and North Korea are called “rogue” states threatening the American way of life. They all are termed challengers to “American power, influence and interests, attempting to erode American security and prosperity”. The NSS asserts that the assumption that drove previous US administrations to engage and seek to integrate these rival powers, namely, that they will emerge as benign and trustworthy partners, has failed. Further, the NSS highlights president’s American first policy throughout, but also states that America will cooperate with its allies and partners on the basis of reciprocity – sharing the responsibility and burdens. This is in contrast to previous US administrations, which followed a high degree of unilateralism in security affairs but resorted to multilateralism in the economic domain. In addition, the latest NSS also gives high priority to technological innovation and the protection of intellectual property.

The NSS signals the official recognition that the grand strategy of liberal hegemony pursued since the early 1990s has only contributed to the weakening of America, led to wasted expenditure of blood and treasure, and not helped promote and preserve the American national interest; and hence is no longer viable. Further, the previous grand strategy has neither succeeded in entrenching America's global leadership nor in integrating China and Russia as obedient junior partners in the US-led liberal international order. The NSS clearly acknowledges and echoes the realist view that international politics is characterized by competition and contest for power and influence.

**On China**

Part of the great power game brewing at the international level is an emerging competition between a progressive America and regressive China in the Indo-Pacific. The US pull out from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and its war of words with North Korea has enhanced China’s room for maneuver especially in the wake of the Xi Jinping’s consolidation of power at the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC).

In previous NSS documents, China’s rise was welcomed and its active participation in international institutions and forums was moderately appreciated. But the latest NSS portrays China negatively, without offering even a slight token of appreciation. It also questions China’s growing presence in Asia, Africa and Europe, indirectly accuses China of engaging in the theft of intellectual property and views its hold over critical infrastructure, growing nuclear capabilities, unfair trade practices, military modernization and military outreach in South Asia and Southeast Asia as threatening the sovereignty of neighbors. Hence the promise of help held out to Asian nations to maintain their sovereignty.

**On West Asia**

The document also talks about putting an end to the hitherto undue importance accorded to the Israeli-Palestinian issue by focusing more on the immediate and dire problems facing West Asia like jihadism, the growing influence of the Iranian “rogue regime” and the Syrian crisis. It talks of providing US allies with missile defense systems to ward off threats from Iran and the continuation of US military presence in the region.

**On India**

NSS 2021 highlights India quite positively. The document states that “we welcome India’s emergence as a leading global power and stronger strategic and defense partner. We will seek to increase quadrilateral cooperation with Japan, Australia, and India”. The most recent National Defense Authorization Act allows US allies to cooperate with it in advancing India’s defense capabilities. While it is clear that the US has initiated a zero-sum game, whereas India only desires a balancing approach, the association with America might have negative consequences for India.

The characterization of Russia as well as of Iran as challengers of the current international order is inconvenient from the Indian perspective, and is likely to complicate India's relationships with these countries and make these relationships issues in India's ties with America. But the mutual need for a stronger strategic partnership is also likely to ensure that these issues do not derail the current trajectory of India-US relations. The starting point for India's foreign and security policy formulation and recalibration should not be how America or China or Russia view the world and who they respectively view as adversaries, but the threats and challenges India perceives, especially from China and Pakistan and terrorism, as well as India's enduring interests in preserving its predominance in the sub-continent, acquiring a high degree of influence and an important role in the extended neighborhood stretching from Suez to Shanghai, and ensuring that both Asia and the world at large remain multipolar.

**Registration Form**

|  |
| --- |
|  |

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Institute: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (Office): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fee Details:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Registration Fee Before 21 Dec 21** | **Registration Fee After 21 Dec 21** | **Registration Fee After 25 Dec 21** | **Registration Fee After 1 Jan 22** |
| **0 $** | **200 $** | **300 $** | **500 $** |

**Signature of the Participant**