

BIDEN'S SECURITY STRATEGY FOCUSES ON CHINA, RUSSIA

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

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The Biden administration has said that maintaining a competitive edge over China and constraining Russia are priorities for the U.S. strategy, as it released the administration's first National Security Strategy on Wednesday.

The document — which every administration is required to release, by law — was delayed due to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It lists great power competition and transnational challenges as the two premises on which the strategy is built. The strategy is based on “building strength at home” as well as building coalitions abroad to deal with the challenges.

China and Russia are increasingly aligned with each other, the document notes, but the challenges they pose are different. “We will prioritize maintaining an enduring competitive edge over the PRC while constraining a still profoundly dangerous Russia,” it says.

However, the U.S. did not want to see the world just through the prism of strategic competition, nor have that competition become a Cold War or confrontation with others, such as China, which remains America's “most consequential geopolitical challenge”, U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan told reporters, during a Wednesday morning briefing call.

Mr. Sullivan said the U.S. had entered a “decisive decade” with respect to the “two fundamental strategic challenges” as he highlighted major power competition and issues like climate change, food insecurity, communicable diseases, terrorism, the energy transition and inflation.

These challenges are “not secondary to geopolitics, but they operate on a plane alongside the competition, the geopolitical competition with major powers,” Mr. Sullivan said.

Indo Pacific

On the Indo-Pacific, the document says as India is the world's largest democracy and a Major Defense Partner (of the U.S.), the two countries “will work together, bilaterally and multilaterally, to support our shared vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific.”

With its allies and partners, the U.S. is, as per the document, assisting in making Russia's war on Ukraine a “strategic failure”. It cites the example of NATO, as well as Finland and Sweden (which have applied to become members of the alliance). It says that “Putin's war” has “profoundly diminished” Russia's status with Asian powers like India, China and Japan – with Moscow's soft power and diplomatic influence waning.

On U.S. alliances, the strategy says they have played a critical role and calls for a deepening and modernisation of these associations, a range of which are listed, including the Quad. It says the “revitalised Quad” which includes the U.S., India, Australia and Japan, had addressed regional challenges and “demonstrated its ability to deliver” for the Indo Pacific on fighting COVID-19, cybersecurity and “promoting high standards for infrastructure and health security”.

It says the Quad and AUKUS — a security relationship between Australia, the U.K. and the U.S. — will be crucial in addressing global challenges as well as encouraging tighter linkages between America's Asian and European allies.

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