

## BOOK REVIEW

Hardeep Singh Puri, *Delusional Politics*, (New Delhi, Penguin Viking, 2019), Pages: 304, Price: Rs. 360.00

'Delusional Politics' is an authoritative and insider account of the national and global impact of the rise of populism and an era of 'alternative facts' and 'alternative narratives' which exploits popular angst to capture political power. It is based on three case studies: the Brexit Referendum, the Trump Presidency, and the India Story. Its clinical analysis of delusional politics and decision making on global governance within the UN, based on the author's personal experience of a wide range of multilateral negotiations, be it nuclear security, climate change, terrorism, and international trade, makes for fascinating reading.

Historian, diplomat (with 40 years in the Foreign Service including as India's Permanent Representative in Geneva and New York), and now Minister for Urban Affairs, the author explains how the globalisation narrative changed radically with the economic slowdown in the West, resulting on the one hand in the Trump Presidency and, on the other, in the disastrous Brexit referendum. The post-Westphalia, liberal democratic order, with its focus on individual rights and the scrutiny of the State changed sharply with the shrinking markets of the West and the rise of international terrorism.

Both for Brexit and the Trump phenomenon, the assumption is clear: "We are in the dawn of a credibility crisis". Data is distorted or manipulated to change a political narrative. It marks the rise of "post-truth politics" which for Brexit and Trump fed on the toxicity of a contrived and false narrative. It is further hyped by 'polarised consumption' led by mainstream media and social media, with a total disdain for empirically verifiable data.

The background to Brexit, meticulously researched by the author, seems the stuff of fairy tales. Buoyed by his success in the Scottish Referendum and facing a difficult re-election, David Cameron, a committed Europhile, decided (while eating pizza with Foreign Secretary William Hague at Chicago's O'Hare airport) that to 'smoke out' the Euro-sceptics within the Conservative Party, a pledge on a referendum on EU membership would be given by him before the General Election. On that basis, the election would be won and, later, so would the referendum! As a perfect example of

delusional thinking, Cameron won the election, but lost the referendum and his Premiership.

The 'Leave campaign' blatantly used false data to bolster pre-conceived prejudices and biases. One example given was the claim that UK sends the EU £ 350 million a week. This misleading figure disregarded the weekly monetary flows from Brussels to the UK; but it had a significant effect in influencing the outcome of the referendum.

While the UK has not yet descended, as predicted by the author, to FUKIEW (the Former United Kingdom of England and Wales), the present polarisation, confusion and conflict bordering on chaos, does reflect the unfortunate result of delusional policy making. It is hard to disagree with the author that "the impression one gets, even as the UK unravels, is that the internal dynamics do not seem to be getting any less delusional, at least in the foreseeable future."

The key to understanding the message in the book lies in the Introduction. "At the centre of delusional politics invariably is the delusional politician." Not just Adolf Hitler or Pol Pot but also some democratically elected leaders of the 21<sup>st</sup> century display "streaks of recklessness, megalomania and bizarre self obsession" and, therefore, delusional political views. Is this linked with mental illness? What impact does it have on shaping the global narrative?

The message becomes clear in Chapter 3 on "Trump and the Global Delusional Order". Trump is the symptom of a malaise and not the virus itself. The American Right, with no stakes in a liberal internationalist America became, as Arlie Hochschild said, "victims without a language of victimhood".

The author asserts that Trump, throughout his populist presidential campaign, showed signs of a "delusion-ridden military obsession". This became clear by his unsuccessful efforts to build the Mexican border wall, his unilateral withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal, and his embarrassing failure to denuclearise the Korean Peninsula. The author concludes this section by noting that the nature of Trump's pseudo-populism has proven to be most antagonistic towards the shifting sands of the world order. Trump's polarised leadership has misdirected the American Right's existential angst towards isolation. That angst is bound to return, and would sharpen the inequalities within the USA. A certain re-ordering and re-setting of the world order would be inevitable through the US retreat from the centre of global politics under Trump.

The global governance crises emanates from “delusional decision making at the multilateral level”. The author terms Trump’s withdrawal from the Iran deal on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2018 as “an act of the highest form of delusional thinking.” It impacted North Korean thinking before and during the Summit between Trump and Kim Jong-Un. They were convinced that if Trump could renege on such a comprehensive Iran deal, the best hope was to continue to retain a formidable nuclear arsenal capable of reaching the USA, rather than to denuclearise the Korean Peninsula. With these developments, and the removal of American military presence from the Korean Peninsula - defined as ‘cognitive dissonance’ on Trump’s part - the post-World War II order was changed forever. ‘America First’ was the new mantra.

“When Paris was Lost” is the author’s definition of Trump’s withdrawal from the Paris Accord on June 02 2017. By this one act, Trump displayed his contempt for climate action, global governance, and multilateral diplomacy - former pillars of the liberal world order. The inability of other developed countries to unite behind the Paris Accord suggests that the developed world, led by the USA, has decided to constrain the developmental efforts of the developing world as the main measure to control climate change. This line of thinking, the author notes, “is delusional at best and dangerous at worst.”

In the section on the “Demise of Multilateralism”, there is a realistic appraisal of the efficacy of the UN System, and a reality check on whether it is possible to rebuild confidence in the United Nations. The UN’s Charter, cast in a post-Westphalian state-centric model, has as its main pillar the maintenance of international peace and security. Faced with multiple and major crises, the problems confronting the UN are also the creation of some of its Member States. A main driver of mismanagement is the conflict of interests between three UNs: The first UN, comprised of Member States; the second UN, made up of employees of the UN Secretariat; and the third UN, comprised of organisations on its periphery who work independently, but who try to influence decision making. The inability to reform the status quo within the UN is due to the refusal of the P5 to change the status quo to their disadvantage. The author notes: “It is fundamentally delusional” to expect them to do so!

The “Politics of Terror” begins with President George W. Bush’s speech to the Joint Session of Congress on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2001: “Either you are with us, or you are with the terrorist.” This injunction has largely shaped the post-9/11 narrative on global terror. The author notes: “Nowhere is the delusional streak in policymaking more evident than in the manner in which Governments

deal with the issue of terrorism.” Having represented India on the Security Council in 2011-12, presiding over the Council on August 11 and November 12, and chairing the Security Council’s Counter Terrorism Committee in 2011-12, the author expresses alarm at the inability of the international community to come to terms with the basics of international terrorism, and to reject some of its myths. These include the notion that it is linked to abject poverty that it is largely anchored in a particular religion or that education alone can de-radicalise the youth.

The inability of the UN to agree on a definition of terrorism is a fundamental stumbling block towards building an international coalition to fight this scourge. Much of the global counter terrorism efforts are “delusional politics at its best.” These include earlier policies such as the disregard of international law in the American led invasion of Iraq, based on the false claim that Saddam Hussain had WMD’s (Weapons of Mass Destruction), or of arming terror outfits which has been a spectacular failure. It is hard to disagree with the author’s assertion that the war on global terror can be won through international acceptance that terrorism is a threat to the delicately balanced peace and security architecture post World War II. This would include naming states which support cross-border terror attacks. Name and shame is, in the words of Victor Hugo, an idea whose time has come.

In the ‘India Story’, the author underlines: “The story of Partition itself fits the title of this book”. A 5000 year civilisation torn asunder by the whims of the colonisers in 40 days, “the post-Partition trajectory of the two nations (India and Pakistan) too falls under the delusional category.” The fundamental differences between Gandhi, who had a ‘connect’ with the masses and emphasised that the village should be the basic unit of development, and Nehru, who believed that the village was backward (both intellectually and culturally), were papered over by the Congress pre-Partition. This resulted in 70 years of a pseudo-secular, liberal, left-wing ‘do-gooders’ rule by the Indian National Congress who came to symbolise the dominant Western narrative of the time.

It was only with the rise of Prime Minister Modi that India returned to the Western perceived ‘Conservative Right’, an ideology championed by Swami Vivekananda, Annie Besant, and Mahatma Gandhi who always spoke of *Ram Rajya*. The author explains that these leaders “represent the genius of India which is rooted in its religio-social institutions like state, family, caste, guru, and festival.” These very ideals, notes the author, are now being implemented by Prime Minister Modi. This is what distinguishes PM Modi from the Congress Party.

In the middle of a tumultuous General Election, the author's take on the secularism debate is both relevant and pointed. The argument that Hindus are out to get Muslims is "pure delusional politics which uses victimisation for votes". On lynching, the author underlines that the 'culture of impunity' prevalent in large parts of the Hindi heartland has been allowed to go unpunished for seven decades by the same so-called secular and socialist parties, notably the Congress.

The conclusion on the India story is sombre. India is the most successful story of post-colonial reconstruction after 190 years of colonial rule. At the same time, India is plagued by social fault-lines, particularly along the lines of caste. India has more poor people today than all the least developed countries put together. After five years of 'minimum government and maximum governance' under Prime Minister Modi, this election is India's last chance to fulfil the aspirations of its people, with a strong central government and a visionary leader at its helm. A return to a coalition government would be a return to delusional politics at its worst.

The message of the book resonates with the politics of the time. It is not just the practitioners of diplomacy or academics who would benefit by its lucid and persuasive presentation of what ails the politics of this millennium. It is also a must read for politicians and policymakers, not just because of its sobering perspective of the impact of alternative narratives and post-truth scenarios on the politics of vibrant democracies, be it the UK or USA or India. The book also explains the remedies to fix the ailing global order. Hegel had written: "The owl of Minerva takes its flight when the shadows of evening have fallen." This book is a timely reminder for international action before we move inexorably to the shadows of dusk when history can no longer be rewritten.

Ambassador Bhaswati Mukherjee  
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Sumit Ganguly, **Indian Foreign Policy (Oxford India Short Introductions Series)**, (New Delhi, Oxford India, 2019), Pages: 206, Price: Rs. 325.00

Indian Foreign Policy can come across as challenging to those who are unfamiliar with its ideological as well as pragmatic underlining. Owing to centuries of suppression, Indian foreign policy began on a cautious note under the guidance of the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru. The leadership of newly independent India chose to nurture the policy with the incorporation of the legacy of the freedom struggle and Indian culture - where the emphasis was laid on non-alignment, decolonisation, domestic development, peaceful co-existence, and cooperation with the other countries of the world. However, with the changing geopolitics, the perspectives of Indian foreign policy have changed. India now aspires to play a larger role not only in its immediate neighbourhood but also at the global level. India has become increasingly proactive and vocal in demonstrating its opinions and promoting its interests. Although Indian Foreign Policy still traces its roots to its basic ethos, it has become more pragmatic in the contemporary period.

Professor Ganguly, in his compact work, offers a glimpse into this vast labyrinth that makes up Indian foreign policy. This book provides a comprehensive account of the evolution of India's foreign policy from 1947 to the present day. All the chapters in this book use the theoretical structure developed by Kenneth Waltz in *Man, the State and War*. They follow a common conceptual framework using the analysis approach. This framework looks at the evolution of India's foreign policy from the standpoints of systemic/global, national/domestic, and decision-making perspectives.

The book is divided into five chapters. In the first chapter, Prof. Ganguly elaborates the organisation and structure wherein he discusses the current debates that are underway in Indian foreign policy. For him, the central question that has remained unresolved in the evolution of India's Foreign Policy is of "the precise role that India hopes to play in global politics" (p.13). He argues that although Indian policymakers aspire to become a greater voice in multilateral institutions and seek decision-making roles, how exactly they hope to shape the emerging global order remains largely unclear. The second chapter provides an overview of the evolution of India's foreign policy from 1947 till the India-China war in 1962. The author highlights the core ideas that shaped foreign policy during this period: decolonisation, non-alignment, seeking to forge a new world order, and nuclear disarmament. Although there is an

underlying admiration of Nehru's acumen in formulating Indian foreign policy and laying the foundations of modern India, the author castigates Nehru for overlooking the warning by Home Minister Patel that "the PRC could well pose a significant security threat to India ... Nehru, however, failed to undertake any measures to bolster the security of India's northern borders ..." (p. 34). He also adds that the war shattered some of the key assumptions of Nehru: "his attempt to limit defence expenditure and reliance on diplomacy to deal with PRC had been found completely wanting ... [the] policy of appeasing and accommodating PRC had, for all practical purposes, ended in a complete military debacle" (p. 41). An interesting factor that the author highlights in this chapter is Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri's marked departure from the idealism that had characterised the Nehru years, wherein the former gave the nod for the onset of a Subterranean Peaceful Nuclear Explosion Project in 1964, which eventually became the basis for India's nuclear weapons programme.

The third chapter focuses on an amalgamation of ideational arguments and choices, along with the recognition of the significance and the quest for material power. The author cites two reasons that put constraints on India's ability to bring any change in global politics: the moral authority that Nehru had sought to summon was mostly lost, and that India's lack of material capabilities at the domestic level also limited its ability to forge any significant alteration in the global arena. The author tacitly highlights the constraints the Indian policy makers and leadership faced during this period: US involvement in Afghanistan limited India's room for manoeuvre; there was no diminution in PRC's hostility; Pakistan was bolstered as a consequence of US arms transfer; India remained strategically dependent on USSR (pp.72-73).

A reappraisal of India's foreign policy goals and options in the post-Cold War period is the theme of the fourth chapter. This was the period of the realisation that, with the collapse of the USSR, the "the very attractive arms transfer arrangement that the country had enjoyed would no longer be sustained ... and the tacit security guarantee that India had enjoyed against PRC in the event of future conflict also ended" (p. 92). This was the period of the re-examination of long-held beliefs (from the state-led economic order to economic liberalisation) and the adoption of new and pragmatic policies (nuclear tests; looking to South East Asia; establishing diplomatic relations with Israel; Iran; enhancing relations with USA, etc.) to further India's standing in the emerging global order. The author has not minced words while discussing India's strategy of coercive diplomacy designed to end Pakistan's continuing involvement with terror. For him, "despite much discussion of the possibility

of fighting a limited war under the nuclear overhang, India's politico-military establishment had not managed to develop suitable strategies" (p.119).

The final chapter of the book discusses current trends and capabilities as well as the limitations of Indian foreign policy in meeting its stated objectives. The author argues that India's pragmatic foreign policy and steady economic growth have led the world to recognise it as a major player in global politics; but these have also given rise to certain unanswered questions regarding its willingness and ability to shoulder key global responsibilities.

The author brings forth several shortcomings in the Indian approach - for example, he highlights that although it is in India's interest to develop sufficient capabilities to both deter and defend a possible PRC threat, it has yet to develop a coherent strategy to deal with PRC. The steps taken have been mostly ad hoc and reactive (p.139). He is also critical of the small size of India's diplomatic corps, causing in large part its inability to meet the challenges of a fast moving world: "In 2017, the Indian Foreign Service had a mere 770 odd officers, with 150 missions across the world" (p. 17). He also highlights that though there is no dearth of policy-relevant think-tanks, "the vast majority of them lack a sufficient corpus of individuals who have adequate professional training in international affairs and strategic studies" (p. 16).

Indian foreign policy has under gone major re-orientation in the past few decades, and this book tries to explain the changing contours of the policy. The focus of the book is on the evolution of Indian foreign policy from an ideational platform to the realisation of material capabilities at the end of Cold War, and to the current period where India is trying to emerge as a key global player. In the emerging world order, Indian foreign policy makers face the challenge of ensuring constructive engagements with various countries with conflicting objectives in various forums, thus evolving a multi-polar world order. This book provides a comprehensive and a concise introduction for anyone who seeks to develop a profound understanding of Indian foreign policy.

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Bhaswati Mukherjee, *India and EU: An Insider's View*, (New Delhi, ICWA/ VIJ Books (India), 2018), Pages: 358 pages, Price: Rs. 746.00

No professional diplomat has so far written a book on India-EU relations. Bhaswati Mukherjee's book *India and the EU: An Insider's View* is the first of its kind. She is eminently qualified to write on the subject as she has headed the West Europe desk in the Ministry of External Affairs for many years, during which she was involved in organising India-EU summits. Her stint as India's ambassador to UNESCO, and to the Netherlands, has kept her in the European circuit, and familiarised her further with the various currents in play in Europe and deepened her reflections on EU's relations with India.

The book looks at India-EU relations very clinically, focusing on the many divergences between the two protagonists, the differences in their world view, and the difficulties in giving substance to their strategic partnership. There is no effort to paper over the many gaps in the relationship that have endured despite the many summits and the objective needs of the two sides to cooperate constructively in a world going through phases of globalisation as well as the growth of anti-globalisation sentiments; the world-wide ripple effect of the financial crisis of 2008 originating in the USA; the fall-out of the Eurozone crisis; the slowdown in European economies juxtaposed with high growth rates in India; concerns in Europe and in India about US unilateralism; and the support of both for multipolarity and multilateralism; and so on.

India and the EU have other shared concerns; but from India's point of view, the EU has not addressed those concerns in ways that are supportive of India. The EU has been slow in extending support to India on Pakistan's sponsorship of terrorism directed at it - a gap in positions that largely wrecked the 2nd India-EU summit at Copenhagen in 2002. Even the Mumbai terrorist attacks did not move the EU to shed its reservation on pinpointing the source of terror against India. It is only after Europe itself experienced terrible terrorist attacks by Islamist radicals, largely by its own Muslim or converted citizens, that the EU has shown a better understanding of India's concerns, leading to a separate joint statement on cooperation in combating terrorism at the 14th summit in 2017.

The author criticises the EU of paying much greater attention to China than to India, overlooking the glaring gap in European and Chinese values, and for its silence on the Tibetan/Dalai Lama issues even when the EU has insisted on including human rights issues on its agenda with India. More recently, however, the EU's perception of China, as the book notes, has evolved

with a clearer view of the geopolitical implications of the Belt and Road Initiative, reflected again at the 14th summit.

If India and the EU have floundered in forging ties commensurate with the potential of the relationship, the book clarifies the reasons. In India, as the author rightly points out, the EU structures based on a balance between the powers of sovereign governments and the powers they have ceded to Brussels are not properly understood. On the trade side, India understands the centrality of Brussels; but on foreign policy and security issues, it prefers dealing with national governments, especially the big European powers such as France, Germany, and the UK. The EU has not been able to forge a common foreign and security policy despite steps in that direction by the creation of a High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy supported by a European External Action Service. The EU Ambassador is not the focal point of European diplomacy towards India. He plays a supplementary role, with bilateral cooperation between India and the large EU states continuing to be the dominant element in India-Europe ties.

India has also seen in practice that, unlike in the case of the principal European powers supporting India on foreign policy issues such as permanent membership of the UNSC, non-proliferation, NSG membership, terrorism, and so on, Brussels has to take positions on the basis of consensus amongst the 28 member states. Countries like Italy will not allow the EU to support India's permanent membership of the UNSC, and smaller countries whose stakes in India are limited, are prone to take "principled" positions on non-proliferation and related issues, as well as those on human rights. The author rightly criticises the EU's insistence on bringing social issues in India on the bilateral agenda. The European Parliament is also problematic on these issues because Euro MPs can take positions at variance with the positions taken by national parliaments, with their posturing coming without "national" cost.

The EU lays great stress on European values, seeing itself increasingly as a normative power in international relations. The Lisbon Treaty states that, in international affairs, the EU would be guided by, and would seek to promote, the values on which the Union is founded, including democracy, human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law. This is an approach, as the author notes, quite different from how democratic India engages with the world. This might explain the petering out of the "soft power" elements of the partnership represented by the India-EU Round Table, cultural exchanges, and think tank interactions. By 2018, these have become marginal or non-

existent. In any case, developments in the EU, with the electoral success of right wing nationalists in some countries, the anti-immigrant sentiments spreading across Europe, especially in Poland and Hungary, the treatment of minorities, and the failure to assimilate them, and so on, the vocation of the EU to spread its values is being eroded.

If India and the EU have an underperforming strategic partnership, it is because the two sides look at their international role differently. India has serious reservations about humanitarian intervention that major EU countries, like France, support. The EU, moreover, is not seen as a credible security partner when it comes to the threats India faces on its northern and western borders, and in the Indian Ocean. The EU lacks the means and the instruments to be India's partner in meeting these challenges other than politically — but that too, in a limited way. According to the author, the respective views of India and the EU on multipolarity and the new rule-based multilateralism differ, with Europe looking at it in balance of power terms vis-à-vis the USA, unlike India. This view can be questioned, as India has joined Russia bilaterally and, within BRICS, over several years, in support of multipolarity because of concerns about US unilateralism after the end of the Cold War. Even if India-US ties have improved remarkably, India's quest for UNSC permanent membership and the reform of international financial institutions and its declared ambition to be a "leading power" represent its own form of the pursuit of multipolarity, with India playing a role commensurate with its contribution to human civilisation, its demographic and territorial size, its human potential, its growing economy, its scientific achievements, and its possession of deterrent capabilities.

To build a stronger strategic partnership, the EU's strategic perceptions should coincide with those of India, according to the author. The China bias of the EU should change; the economic and business partnership should be deepened; the perception in India that the EU is protectionist and seeks to open India's markets without concessions in return, should be addressed; incidents like the Mittal-Arcelor affair that had racial overtones should not be repeated; the civil society dialogue should be revived; educational ties should be given a boost; Europe should take a less critical approach to India; and the negative portrayal of India should be corrected through sustained media campaigns.

Brussels' weakness in dealing with India was exposed by Italy's ability to prevent the holding of India-EU summits because of the Italian marine's case, particularly the postponement of the 13th summit in 2015 meant to coincide with Prime Minister Modi's bilateral visits to France and Germany. In fact,

the 12th summit was held in 2012, and the 13th after a considerable gap in 2016. The author's detailed account of all the summits held so far helps to understand the issues at play, and the progress, or lack of it, registered over the years.

The book devotes many pages to Brexit, and its implications for India. The author believes that India would need to learn to manage its relations with the EU without the UK, and that Brexit could be a challenge to the India-EU strategic partnership. Other than the fact that Brexit could have very negative political and economic consequences for the UK, and would also adversely affect the concept of European unity as well as the EU's international profile, it is not clear what will be the degree of the adverse impact on India. India-UK trade and investment ties will continue, irrespective of Brexit. Defence related cooperation would continue too. The UK will, in fact, have a weaker hand to play in negotiations with India, post Brexit. As the author rightly notes, outside the EU, the UK economy will be roughly India's size; the UK's bargaining power will become weaker, and it will have to make concessions to India in negotiating a FTA.

A particularly rewarding chapter in the book deals with the stalemate in negotiating a Bilateral Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) between India and the EU, launched in 2007, despite 16 rounds of negotiations, and the reasons for this. Not too much is known to the general public about the concrete issues that stand in the way and, to that extent, the chapter is very informative. Amongst the outstanding issues are concerns that lower tariffs will benefit Europe, and India will continue to face non-tariff and technical barriers. India would require strong binding promises from the EU on liberalising trade in services, particularly in Modes 1 and 4. However, given the rising anti-immigrant and anti-globalisation sentiments in the EU, this seems unlikely. India is seeking 50,000 work visas a year. It is believed that, with Brexit, the sticking point of the mobility of Indians may be resolved as the UK was opposed to it. The other areas of discord are IP protection standards which, if accepted, would go beyond WTO specified standards; issues such as social, environment and labour standards; and human rights. India has asked for data secure status. The EU is seeking the liberalisation of legal, accounting, banking, insurance, and retail services, issues on which there is no consensus in India. The automobile and automotive parts is another problem area, as are the "Singapore issues" which focus on government procurement, investment and competition policy - issues that the EU wanted to be included in the WTO negotiations which India and developing countries resisted. EU's double standards on trade issues vis-à-vis

Pakistan irk India. India's new model "Bilateral Investment Treaty" remains a major contentious issue. India's views on FTAs have evolved, with officials and business leaders believing that they neither create jobs nor are good for trade, which seems a contentious view. Why then is there strong support for RCEP in many circles in India? In any case, the Indian side believes that it would be better to resume talks on BTIA after Brexit. At the 14th India-EU summit in 2017, no progress was registered on the resumption of BTIA negotiations, despite massive trade and investment ties with the EU, with trade in goods standing at US\$ 88 billion in 2016, and 24 percent of FDI flowing into India from the EU. In fact, the EU leaders said at the summit that negotiations will resume when "the circumstances are right", which suggests that some core differences that remain unresolved.

Bhaswati Mukherjee's book is a valuable and informative addition to material available to scholars and the general public on India's relationship with the EU. It is a timely book as it draws attention to the reasons why India and the EU have so far failed to fully exploit the potential of the relationship. It will, hopefully, contribute to inducing both sides to do some stock-taking of why this is so, and what steps are needed to remedy a situation from which neither side gains.

Ambassador Kanwal Sibal  
Former Foreign Secretary of India  
Former Ambassador to France and to Russia

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