



*Manipal Centre for European Studies and  
Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies, Department of Geopolitics and International Relations  
in association with  
Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) India*

## **International Conference on India and EU in the Indo-Pacific: Strategies, Opportunities and Challenges**

3-4 November 2023

Sharada Hall, MCHP, MAHE, Manipal

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*International Conference on*

**India and EU in the Indo-Pacific: Strategies, Opportunities, and Challenges  
Friday-Saturday, November 3-4, 2023, | 0930-1700 HRS (IST), Manipal**

## PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

The Indo-Pacific region has solidified its presence in the global political discourse through multilateral and minilateral initiatives, security arrangements, and strategic partnerships. It has simultaneously emerged as a zone for— contestations, conflicts, and cooperation.

In this regard, the Manipal Centre for European Studies, Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence and Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies, Department of Geopolitics, and International Relations, MAHE, Manipal in association with Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) India, held the conference on India and EU in the Indo-Pacific: Strategies, Opportunities and Challenges. The aim of the conference was intended to raise, discuss, and deliberate upon India and the EU's strategic vision, opportunities, and challenges for improving regional cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. The conference witnessed the active participation from a diverse array of experts, including diplomats, academicians, policy makers and researchers and students from India and Europe.

## GLIMPSES



## **KEY TAKEAWAYS**

### **Inaugural and Keynote Address**

- The Indo-Pacific Region has witnessed a seismic shift in the global economic and political landscape, with the centre of gravity steadily moving toward this dynamic and diverse region.
- The expansion of economic and technological cooperation between the EU and India is mutually beneficial. However, Europe needs to explain its ambivalence in its policy towards China.
- In a way that benefits all people, India and the EU need to figure out a framework that creates successful collaborative networks.
- The role of universities to nurture and engage young minds to develop international relations and strategies.
- The imperative to bolster India-EU ties on maritime security, counterterrorism, and crisis management. India has seen as a significant actor in building a "network of partnerships" in the Indian Ocean region.

### **Geopolitical and Geoeconomic Contours of India-EU Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific: Trade, Connectivity and Beyond**

- In geopolitical terms, the countries of the Indo-Pacific are home to four of the largest economies, and among the world's ten largest economies. The concept is much more complex and incrementally gaining importance and recognition in the world. India-EU must begin to think how they will deal with the challenges faced in this region.
- It is imperative to understand and address the differences in the European and Indian definition and perspective of the Indo-Pacific that has been determined by their relationship with China.
- Europe has huge capacities to develop international collaborations.
- The adoption of EU and its member states Indo-Pacific strategy as both ways to deal with China and a way for Europe to take advantage of new economic and other opportunities.

### **Towards Green Transition: India-EU on Climate Change in the Indo-Pacific**

- For a green transition from a futuristic strategy lens, it is critical to ensure that critical materials or rarer materials do not undergo resource colonialism.
- To enable practical green transition, India-EU need to show the policymakers that there are advantages to green transition economically.
- The Indo-Pacific is a hotbed of non-traditional, and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) with a low economic status are the most vulnerable to climate change.

- The EU is worried about the regulatory framework for the green energy transition, but what is more important for on-the-ground impact is a financial commitment for the conversion of energy, addressing issues surrounding non-nuclear and nuclear energy, and a practical commitment to the larger goal of green energy transition.

### **Healthcare Infrastructure, Pandemic and Emerging Health threats: India-EU Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific**

- The need for an accountability mechanism among nations is increasing, as in an international health crisis, if one side loses, so does the other.
- During COVID-19, considering the novelty of the virus, maintaining a system, and running isolation centres on the ground meant considering the larger disease prevention frameworks in India and promoting indigenous health systems is an effective way to utilize India's soft power.
- COVID-19 made it abundantly clear that there is a need for a pandemic treaty. In order to achieve this goal, the gap between developed and developing countries must be narrowed as it has implications on how health exchange will take place.
- It is believed that health and diseases are not environmentally related, however, India-EU relations needs to be pointed out and recognized.

### **Emerging Technologies in the Indo-Pacific: India-EU Cooperation for Innovation and Growth**

- India and the EU should come together and multiply efforts in solar energy, in hydro energy, and harness innovative practices in this field.
- The problem between India and the EU at the end of the day is how to come up with a standardized and indicative framework for human-centric technologies and how to reconcile the differences in their approach.
- The key is that it is not just about technology, but it is a domain where all major powers are trying to expand their strengths, and outer space particularly is becoming a competitive space to explore. It is also therefore the space where most collaborations between India and the EU take place through technology sharing.

### **Securing the Indo-Pacific: Strengthening EU-India Cooperation in Maritime Security**

- Cooperation and confrontation take place in maritime issues, but the aspect of competition and contestation must also be considered in global commons.
- India can enhance its Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance operations and focus on how it can harness this burden-sharing in the Indo-Pacific with the EU.
- The EU brings in a tested model of maritime governance and security. In any case, India needs to optimize resources and avoid duplication.
- The Indo-Pacific is a geoeconomic construct and in context of security that must look at India

and the EU's strategies. In addition to military power, political power and soft power must be harmonised for increased maritime cooperation.

### **India-EU People-to-people Connect: Education and Cultural Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific**

- Fostering people-to-people connections, building relationships between organizations, and leader-to-leader understanding. These three levels complement each other, supplement each other, and at times, contradict each other.
- Considering the recent developments in Europe and the changing orientation towards China, it is time for India and the EU to get together and utilize the soft power they have and build on it. It would make a larger difference to the world.
- In a state of crisis, countries really need strong, sustainable ties across countries, and India-EU relations could lead towards this foundation.
- Creating a South Asian higher education region will facilitate better collaboration across these countries.

### **Closing Session**

- The Indo-Pacific countries must resolve their disputes through peaceful dialogue and not coercion or conquest; this region's security or prosperity cannot be taken for granted, it needs the concerted efforts of the Indo-Pacific nations as well as its associated partners to mould and expand it through dialogue and ever closer cooperation.
- The Indo-Pacific has become an extraordinary example of human progress, peaceful cooperation, growing openness, and prosperity show the importance of coming together and building on the larger vision with joint ventures.

### **WELCOME ADDRESS**

**Prof Neeta Inamdar, Head, Manipal Centre for European Studies, Manipal**

**Ms Simran Dhingra, Head of International Cooperation, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), India**

**Prof Neeta Inamdar** welcomed the dignitaries and set the stage by highlighting that strengthening India and EU cooperation in the Indo-Pacific is the intent of this two-day international conference. She mentioned that India and the EU need to figure out a framework that creates successful collaborative networks, which will also benefit the people. Finally, their strategies, opportunities and challenges will be discussed to look forward to what we can change to make the world a better place. In her welcoming remarks, **Ms Simran Dhingra** at the outset underscored that the Indo-Pacific region has undergone remarkable transformations in the recent years. We have witnessed a seismic shift in the global economic and political landscape with the center of gravity steadily moving toward this dynamic and diverse region. It is home to 60% of the world's population, encompasses 20 of the world's 33 megacities, and generates 60% of global GDP, with more than 50% of global trade passing through its sea lanes. It is no exaggeration to say that the Indo-Pacific is at the heart of the world's economic and strategic interests. As China's influence in trade, military power and technology is

expanding, the Indo-Pacific region increases in significance, also considering that the world's three largest economies, China, Japan and the United States, all have coastlines along the Pacific. As the center of gravity is gradually moving to the Indo-Pacific, India as a central regional player is expected to assume more responsibility particularly in the Indian Ocean Region.

Further she highlighted that in the 21st century, often referred to as the 'Asian Century', Europe's economic future and geopolitical relevance are intrinsically linked to developments in Asia. The presentation of the *"EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific"* in September 2021 marked a remarkable shift in perspective. This strategy represents a consensus in Europe towards a more robust engagement with the Indo-Pacific region. India has demonstrated strong support for this strategy, recognizing Europe's stake in the stability of the Indo-Pacific. The EU's approach covers a wide spectrum of areas, from trade and investment to green partnerships, digital partnerships and strengthening ocean governance, as well as defense and security. This two-day international conference has been meticulously curated to ensure that all these topics are comprehensively represented in the sessions and thus embodies a testament to the increasing cooperation in this region.”

### **INAUGURAL ADDRESS**

**Prof M D Nalapat, UNESCO Peace Chair, Department of Geopolitics and International Relations (DGIR), MAHE**

Taking it forward, **Prof M D Nalapat** during his inaugural address underlined the importance of the India-EU partnership and stated that despite India sharing cordial relations with the EU member countries on an individual basis, the EU as a whole stands as a significant partner for India and highlighted that over the years the EU has become a role model to many regional institutions in the international system. The underlying principle of international partnerships needs to be an attempt to create a win-win situation wherein both the sides win and prosper. He inferred that *“Indo-Pacific is the centre point of geopolitical gravity”* where the EU remains as a significant partner to India.

### **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

**Ambassador Rajiv Bhatia, Distinguished Fellow, Gateway House, Mumbai**

Precisely, **Ambassador Bhatia** concentrated on four important dimensions of the conference theme, namely the Indo-Pacific, India, the European Union, and the overarching question raised: what are the challenges and opportunities for the two principal actors, and what strategies they could adopt to secure their interests against the backdrop of changing power equations in the region?

Firstly, Is the Indo-Pacific a new geographic region, a geopolitical concept, a strategy, or a policy? Perhaps it is a mixture of it all. In his view, it is a relatively new geopolitical doctrine based on the late Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s definition of the region as the confluence of the Pacific and Indian Oceans and the lands washed by their waters. It is a prudent substitute for the older and limited term – ‘Asia-Pacific’. This doctrine argues that the twin issues of security and development are deeply intertwined in this region, a fact that demands an integrated rather than a compartmentalized approach of the past.

The Indo-Pacific is a connected and seamless space that hosts 64% of the global population, contributes over 60% of the world's GDP, and about half of the global trade passes through the maritime trade routes in this region. As External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar aptly explained in his famous address at the Chulalongkorn University, Thailand in August 2022, the emergence of the Indo-Pacific has resulted from the diversification of power distribution in the past two decades. To quote him, *“The re-positioning of the US, the rise of China as also of India, the greater external engagement of Japan and Australia, the wider interests of South Korea and indeed, the broader outlook of the ASEAN itself have all contributed to this transformation.”*

Over a decade back, the term ‘Indo-Pacific’ began to become fashionable. Ambassador Bhatia, vividly recalled that the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) where he served as its Director General at the time, played a seminal role in its development by hosting one of the earliest international conferences on this subject in March 2013. Over a decade, we are assembled today here in Manipal, an important center of learning, to re-examine the subject, especially taking into consideration the EU perspective.

The next two components of the conference theme, the roles of India and the EU in the Indo-Pacific, are certain to be of considerable interest to us all.

Second, the government of India defines the Indo-Pacific as stretching from the eastern shores of Africa to the western shores of America. It strives for a “free, open, inclusive, peaceful, and prosperous region, one which is built on a rules-based international order sustainable and transparent infrastructure investment, freedom of navigation and over-flight, unimpeded lawful commerce, mutual respect for sovereignty, peaceful resolution of disputes, as well as equality of all nations.”

India's Indo-Pacific strategy stems from the Look and Act East Policy, the vision of SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and is instrumentalized by the Indo-Pacific Oceans’ Initiative (IPOI) pursued since November 2019.

A critical stage was reached following the bloody clash between the Indian and Chinese troops in the Galwan Valley in June 2020. The continuing military standoff and the diplomatic impasse in resolving the border issues, both immediate and long-term, have ensured that India's hard-nosed realism on China backed by military preparedness will remain unchanged. This drives New Delhi’s endeavour to strengthen the Quad comprising the US, India, Japan, and Australia in all relevant domains: maritime security, critical and emerging technologies, trade and economic cooperation and people-to-people ties. This is set to continue, along with serious endeavours to deepen mutual understanding and cooperation with ASEAN and other regional players who too have suffered from China's heavy-handed approach towards them.

Third, the EU’s strategic thinking, policy formulation, and actions have been in the process of gradual evolution in the past five years. Both the strategies of individual nations – France, Germany, Netherlands – and of the EU need to be studied carefully. Should we prefer a wider approach of examination, then we may also consider the policy pronouncements of the UK and NATO regarding this region. Viewed from the Indian perspective, Europe’s growing interest in the region is most welcome. The expansion of economic and technological cooperation between the EU and India is mutually beneficial.

However, European experts are invited to explain the ambivalence in the EU’s China policy. The ambiguity in policy, the desire of most European states to stay neutral in the US-China

rivalry, and the inclination to prioritize trade over security and strategy may not work in the long term. The way out for the EU is to raise the profile of its relations in the region and to take a clear position on the China question.

Finally, through an in-depth dialogue on the three sub-themes identified above, the conference will attempt to find answers to the question of what challenges and opportunities exist for all relevant players. This question is especially important at present as the two regions – Europe and West Asia – grapple with military conflicts. And here is a teaser question: have the Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Hamas wars reduced the salience of the Indo-Pacific in global geopolitics?

## **PRESIDENTIAL REMARKS**

**Lt Gen (Dr) M D Venkatesh, Vice Chancellor, Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE)**

In his presidential address **Lt Gen (Dr) MD Venkatesh** highlighted that working together to build a consensus is our common goal as universities to nurture and engage young minds to further develop international relations and strategies.

## **VOTE OF THANKS**

**Dr K P Vijayalakshmi, Professor and Head, Department of Geopolitics and International Relations (DGIR), MAHE**

The inaugural address ended with the **Dr K P Vijayalakshmi**, who proposed the vote of thanks to the distinguished delegates, students attending this international conference. She expressed gratitude to the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), India Office for supporting this event. She also stressed the need to hold more such discourses that promote collaboration and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

## **SESSION REMARKS**

**Session 2: Geopolitics and Geoeconomics Contours of India-EU Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific: Trade, Connectivity and Beyond**

**Dr Gulshan Sachdeva, Professor, Centre for European Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University**

**Dr Jagannath Panda, Head, Stockholm Centre for South-Asian and Indo-Pacific Affairs (SCSA-IPA)**

**Dr Nicola Casarini, Senior Associate Fellow, Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI), Italy**

**Dr K P Vijayalakshmi, Professor and Head, Department of Geopolitics and International Relations (DGIR), MAHE, Manipal**

**Moderator: Ms Priya Vijayakumar Poojary, Lecturer, Manipal Centre for European Studies (MCES), MAHE, Manipal**

This session was moderated by **Ms. Priya Vijaykumar Poojary**. The discussion revolved around understanding the strategies of the countries in the Indo-Pacific, focussing specifically on the EU member countries and India, exploring some of the convergences and divergences among the countries, assessing the geopolitical pushes and pulls in the geopolitical realm of the Indo-Pacific and analysing the possibility of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) between India



and the EU and its implications on the region. The discussion tried to assess how de-risking and decoupling would create opportunities for the India-EU cooperation.

**Prof K P Vijayalakshmi** began with the significance of the Indo-Pacific region, importantly related to two factors namely geography and demography. This region has the ten largest armies and most of them are nuclear powers as well. In the region, the triangular relations between India, EU and the US form a complex of intertwined and integrated ideas. Besides, the EU as a relevant player in the region can broaden the scope of the rules-based multilateral order. However, after the Cold War, especially revisionist powers started posing geopolitical challenges to the world as well as to the Indo-Pacific region. Thus, a dialogue-based approach is important, and which has been incorporated by some countries in the Indo-Pacific.

Further she added, the region becomes prominent for all countries involved to advance their capabilities in all spheres namely sea, air, land and space to enhance their combined power to challenge the revisionist powers in the region. India and the EU have also aligned on these ideas, and each will bring something unique to the region and further ensure cooperation and security. In order to control the revisionist forces that exist in the Indo-Pacific, strengthening the alliance between India and the EU is crucial. This region is important for India and the EU to unite geographically and politically. Therefore, it makes strategic sense to study the strategies of India and the EU towards the Indo-Pacific.

In his remarks, **Dr Jagannath Panda** highlighted the Indo-Pacific in the context of the regional security architecture. He mentioned that the security architecture in the region is dominated by China's presence. Thus, within this environment, it is important to think about the possible areas of collaboration between India and the EU about which there is already strategic clarity from both ends. India needs to consider the EU even more as a relevant partner in the region, hence only then the structural engagement between India and the EU can be enhanced further. Also, opined that both sides need to concentrate on connectivity, infrastructure and sustainability—will ensure to make engagement rewarding and add a win-win for both sides. At the moment, China is called a new revisionist power, which is growing slowly through the BRI and its maritime footprints, a mercantilist power through its investments in projects under the BRI. The China's challenge could also bring India and the EU closer. Significantly, he further led the discussion to the intensification of minilateral frameworks, particularly he mentioned the possibility of strengthening ties between India, the EU and Japan in the Indo-Pacific. India's relations with Europe can be understood through five different phases, namely: the precolonial, colonial, linkages during the Cold War, post-Cold War links and the post-Covid phase.

**Prof Gulshan Sachdeva** explained all these five phrases in detail in his introductory remarks. He mentioned that trade and connectivity were key factors throughout all the phases which in turn benefitted both India and Europe. Largely with Western powers gradually losing strategic relevance, and with the rise of China India's relations with Europe are also affected, but Europe still has huge capacity to influence global institutions by means of strong institutional leverages in trade, connectivity, and maritime security. He also highlighted that the geopolitical dynamics in the world have changed, as exemplified by the growing India-US relations, the rise of an assertive China, the rift between the EU and the US during the Trump administration, Brexit, EU's changing relations with Russia following the Russia-Ukraine War. The EU is hence looking for like-minded countries and for India particularly, economic cooperation with Europe becomes important.

He opined that over the years, Europe has changed its strategy towards India. Technical and financial cooperation is dependent on the strength of economic cooperation, which is promised to have a transformative scope. On the conceptualization of the Indo-Pacific, he pointed out that the region is still evolving and so far, has been only one narrative but a powerful narrative. In India's case, the Indo-Pacific is a key policy concept for two reasons namely, the importance of the Indian Ocean for India and India's entry into platforms in the security framework of the Indian Ocean. However, there is a difference in the understanding of the concept of the Indo-Pacific between India and the EU, because of their relations with China.

**Dr Nicola Casarini**, added the European perspective to the discussion further highlighting the EU's strategy for the Indo-Pacific creating an open, free, inclusive and rules-based multilateral order. While speaking on China, the speaker added perspectives to it from the EU member countries. As from their perspective, some of them are considering/taking a tough approach towards China. He pointed out that both India and the EU need to strategize their cooperation in multiple sectors, with the Defence and Space cooperation being one of the most promising. Finally, the speaker suggested that India-EU cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region should be intensified through regional organisations, particularly, with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) as an additional tool to counter China.

### **Discussion**

- Countering China's imperialism in the region would be a common factor for both India and the EU, the importance of economics, China's support to Russia and India's engagement with Russia which also creates problems for the Indo-EU cooperation. India was never keen to take up China even in discussions with the Quad, and the US is also committed to find different partners and allies in the world to engage in the Indo-Pacific. Thus, no time should be lost, and the two countries should come together.
- The deliberations were also about the possibility of the EU, India and ASEAN cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. There is a scope of a trilateral cooperation, between India, the EU and an ASEAN country respectively.
- It becomes pivotal to identify the key countries in the supply chains with whom India and the EU can have a tripartite cooperation. The role of Indian Ocean littoral countries holds significance, for instance, the Middle East and South Asian littoral countries.
- A possible area of cooperation between India and the EU is in the domain of space. Italy could play a crucial role in enhancing the cooperation in this domain.
- There also needs to be a more real understanding between India and the EU to chalk out the possible areas of cooperation, predominantly in the areas of trade and connectivity.

### **Session 3: Towards Green Transition: India-EU on Climate Change in the Indo-Pacific**

**Dr. Aswani Dravid, Assistant Professor, School of Liberal Studies, UPES**

**Ms. Kim Thy Tong, Co-Founder Klima Union**

**Dr Swati Prabhu, Associate Fellow, Observer Research Foundation (ORF)**

**Dr. Seshadri Chari, Chairman, China Studies Centre, DGIR, MAHE**

**Moderator: Dr. Dhanasree Jayaram, Assistant Professor, DGIR, MAHE**

It is required to attain resilience in climate and ecology in the Indo-Pacific region. In addition, both energy and climate justice need to be taken into consideration. Several regional and multilateral platforms are also trying to resolve the issue of climate change. In the session moderated by **Dr Dhanasree Jayaram**, she talked about the importance of green transition and

its linkage with geoeconomics and geopolitics. The discussion eventually revolved around the advantages and the challenges faced by countries in the Indo-Pacific towards green transition.

**Dr Aswani Dravid** started the discussion by bringing in the topic of the geopolitics of energy transition between India and the EU in the Indo-Pacific. In the region, the dependency on fossil fuels remains high and hence a focus on renewable energy is needed. In addition, to expand the use of renewable energy, regional stability is important in the Indo-Pacific. The speaker opined that the journey to energy transition is based on critical minerals and highlighted the importance of rare earth minerals and its refining. Refining of minerals is important, however its environmental implications needs to be taken into consideration. It becomes important to understand the source of rare earth minerals, wherein China is one of the crucial sources of rare earth minerals and hence also controls the respective supply chains. China's dominance in the supply of rare earth minerals therefore needs to be taken into consideration to reduce the overall dependency on China. To enable green transition in the region, the refinement of these rare earth materials is the need of the hour. Two issues are of concern namely access to and competition for these critical minerals, which are prone to shift from an economic concern to a political concern. The focus should be not just on energy transition but also on energy substitution. The speaker suggested that while looking at the green transition from a futuristic strategy, it is critical to ensure that critical minerals do not undergo "resource colonialism". A suggestion was made to introduce legal and institutional frameworks in the Indo-Pacific. For the same, India can play a leading role in the region and both India and the EU can work towards technological and financial cooperation.

**Ms Kim Thy Tong** stressed the need to consider the loss of jobs in industries while talking about green transition. A community-led approach is important to ensure green transition. Hence, a broadened understanding is required when talking about green transition. In addition, the security environment is also creating problems, especially the ongoing Russian-Ukraine conflict and the Hamas-Israel conflict has only added to the woes faced by the world with its multifarious implications, and at the same time has made the transition to green energy more difficult. Further she pointed out that the resilience of supply chains is the need of the hour when talking about green transition. It has to be ensured to prevent a crisis-like situation. While the EU has taken several initiatives to achieve a green transition, to further tread the path of green transition, its social consequences and security threats also need to be taken into consideration. The speaker also highlighted the importance of political willingness to ensure a smooth transition to green energy. In addition, she pointed out that to act on the vision of green transition policymakers need to be made aware of the economic advantages as a result of green transition.

**Dr Swathi Prabhu** highlighted the importance of development cooperation between India and the EU in the Indo-Pacific. She mentioned that the Indo-Pacific region has become a hotbed of security threats and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) with low economic status are the worst sufferers of climate change but have contributed the least to its creation. Especially for the smaller states the threat, is not only an environmental threat but also an existential threat. In the case of India's development model in the Indo-Pacific concerning the Pacific Island countries and other small island countries has been present. In that case, a transition from India's image has been witnessed from being an aid receiver to now being an aid giver, which it calls assistance inclined towards sustainable development. However, the progress on assistance has been at a slow pace and India needs to do more to engage with these countries to ensure a seamless transition towards green energy in the region. Further added, the India-EU joint development partnership in the Indo-Pacific has immense scope and a combined effort

towards achieving green energy transition is pivotal. The rapid changes in the geopolitical environment will create more problems in all domains.

**Dr Seshadri Chari** brought in very important points for discussion related to green transition as the EU has started transitioning towards renewable energy which opens a window of opportunity for India to collaborate with the EU. For instance, in June of this year, the India-EU Connectivity Conference took place, which highlighted the tremendous opportunities for India-EU Development Cooperation in South Asia and the Indo-Pacific. At the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow (COP26), India has set ambitious targets to reduce carbon emissions by 2030. The EU, on the other hand, has set a target to eliminate carbon emissions by 2050. However, the journey towards achieving the desired energy targets will not be easy with regard to the current Israel-Hamas conflict and Russia-Ukraine conflict creating hurdles. Despite there being geopolitical challenges, one promising area of cooperation between India and the EU lies in clean and green hydrogen. At the same time, the EU is also concerned about the regulatory framework for the green transition, but what is more important for on-the-ground impact is a financial commitment to the conversions of energy, addressing issues surrounding non-nuclear and nuclear energy, and a practical commitment to the larger goal of green transition. The way forward is that the EU should involve itself greatly in the Indo-Pacific, especially in the domain of research.

## **Discussion**

- EU-India FTA negotiations are expected to take a longer period. It becomes important to frame new agreements and formulate environmentally friendly regulations.
- A Triangular cooperation model can be adopted by India and the EU in the Indo-Pacific.
- Challenges are being faced by SIDS concerning climate finance as well as social and political impediments. Since the SIDS are geographically remote, it is difficult to provide them with resources. The financing in most cases is directed towards climate mitigation rather than climate adaptation.
- The role of Development Financial Institutions (DFI's) in providing finance to SIDS needs to be assessed. On the other hand, India and the EU can also jointly work to provide climate finance to the SIDS (viewed as a possible area of collaboration).
- The way forward for India: India can take up a leadership role in the Indo-Pacific region. However, it is a tough challenge for India, especially with regard to energy security.
- In addition, energy transition to lithium and Electric Vehicles (EVs) poses different challenges.
- Another factor that requires attention is to decide to what extent the resources can be exploited and what are the cost involved concerning energy security.
- Countries also need to look at the use of rare earth minerals and seek ways to importing from China.
- In India's case, the focus needs to be directed towards the availability of funds in areas like hydrogen, hydro-electric energy and solar energy. India will not shift towards renewable energy completely and instead opt for an energy mix.
- While new investments are being made in India, in the case of Europe, its energy demands have been saturated and shifting towards renewables. Hence, it becomes important to navigate how the two countries should approach this issue despite the two countries having divergences concerning negotiations on reducing dependence on fossil fuels.
- All in all, global solutions are required to address the issues related to the energy crisis and the geopolitical problem arising with it.

- Second, lifestyle changes also need to be included and a critical question that needs to be addressed is concerning cost incurred because of carbon emissions, more by the industrialized countries than the emerging economies.
- Lastly, in the absence of a universal definition of climate finance, it will become difficult for developing countries to opt for a green transition. Therefore, a common understanding of a just transition is required.

#### **Session 4: Healthcare Infrastructure, Pandemic and Emerging Health Threats: India-EU Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific**

**Dr Helmut Brand, Founding Director, Prasanna School of Public Health (PSPH), MAHE  
Dr Rekha, KMC, Medicine College, Mangalore**

**Mr Tom Zeising Doctoral Scholar, University of Heidelberg, Germany**

**Moderator: Dr Sanjay Pattanshetty Head, Department of Global Health Governance, PSPH**

This session was moderated by **Dr Sanjay Pattanshetty** MAHE. He began with stating that there is a change in national policies in the post-COVID world. However, in the post-COVID world order, there is a visible presence of statist policies, where states have become more inward-looking and exercise greater border control.

This session began with **Dr Helmut Brand** where he introduced the European health policies in comparison with global health policies and stressed upon the fact that health only got momentum in the post-COVID world. The EU, being a political entity, faces difficulty in achieving consensus among its members when it comes to certain health-related issues. Speaking on India and EU ties, he inferred that there exist a lack of knowledge and misconceptions about India among Europeans. For a common man in Europe, India is perceived merely as a developing country. Besides, Europeans tend to focus on the scandalised news, neglecting the other positive stories about India.

**Dr Rekha Thapar** from an Indian perspective elaborated on the fact that India had been unprepared for the pandemic. There was an influx of patients and lack of equipment. This was despite the country having witnessed other viral diseases like SARS, MERS, Zika and Nipa beforehand. However, there were certain positive sides of the pandemic. For instance, the number of hospitals and ICUs in the hospital increased drastically. Many oxygen plants were set up. There have been improvements in diagnosis and treatments of diseases. But besides building adequate infrastructure, the right approach is required. Further, she also brought to the forefront that climate change brings about newer pathogens. There is a need to focus on research to aid the healthcare sector. Government policies on health shall also be based on the findings of such research.

**Mr Tom Zeising** highlighted both Indian as well as European health related perspectives pre-Covid and post-Covid. He stressed that diseases are highly connected to the environment in which we live and that there is a need to acknowledge this complexity. India and the EU had connections even before COVID in areas like research and development and agreements on capacity-building. However, there exist difficulties in data sharing. There is a need for an improved sharing of data and solutions based on such data in case of future health emergencies. The Pandemic Treaty also fails to recognize the connection between health and the environment. Further he added there is no mechanism to ensure accountability in the treaty.

## Discussion

- India has learned lessons from the pandemic, which can be learnt by the EU: Digitalization, vaccination, and community mobilization.
- Rise of non-communicable diseases and mental health concerns during the pandemic-mental health of health professionals in focus
- Neglect of the Global South during the pandemic and the need for better crisis management among countries.

## Session 5: Emerging Technologies in the Indo-Pacific: India-EU Cooperation for Innovation and Growth

**Prof M D Nalapat UNESCO Peace Chair, DGIR, MAHE**

**Dr Ankita Dutta Assistant Prof, Centre for European Studies, JNU**

**Dr Anand V Assistant Professor, DGIR, MAHE**

**Moderator: Dr Amrita Jash, Assistant Professor, DGIR, MAHE**

**Dr Amrita Jash, Assistant Professor, DGIR, MAHE** moderated this session and started with contextualizing the India-EU relation in critical and emerging technologies and innovations which play an important role along with other collaborative fields. Technological advancement is causing a sea change in how we conceive the Indo-Pacific today, transforming it from a mere geopolitical construct. These shifts are causing the countries to relook the way they perceive threats as well as the defence. However, this competition is not confined to the emerged powers. The actors other than the emerged powers, when empowered by technology, have the potential to disrupt the existing system and compete the great powers.

**Prof M D Nalapat**, has set the context for discussion by making his initial remarks on technology. He mentioned that technology can be viewed in two ways: As a threat or as an opportunity. For instance, there are apprehensions that Artificial Intelligence (AI) would take away jobs from humans. However, there are several advantages of technology, which holds the potential to improve human life in unprecedented ways. We live in a disruptive world, wherein some disruptions are caused by humans while others are caused by nature. In this world, the focus lies on technology which provides immediate returns. Investments are made in short-term technologies from those that provide returns in the long-run. Besides, the health sector is bound to benefit from newer and more effective treatments and medicines. To develop this kind of technology, India and the EU should collaborate and cooperate in the Indo-Pacific region. There is a need to have a co-operative mind-set for such a technological relationship to flourish.

The first India-EU Technological Council was formed in May 2023, one of the major area of focus was the interoperability in defence systems. **Dr Ankita Dutta** stated that technology is not new to the India-EU co-operation. The first working groups on ICTs started in 2011 and the discussion on 5G technology was initiated in 2017. The India-EU Strategic Partnership: A Roadmap to 2025—introduced the idea of a human-centric, economic and inclusive technology. With the roadmap, the idea of collaboration in AI was first put forth. Besides, in 2021, the India-EU Connectivity Partnership was adopted.

She further suggested that there are four important areas where India and the EU need to work more closely together on: a comprehensive conversation on reconciling differences in the domains of data storage, data transfer and standardisation; the EU has signed concrete agreements with countries like Japan and Singapore. A process to streamline such arrangements with India should be initiated; the EU has a strong financial capability whereas India possesses expertise in the region. These strengths should be harnessed in order to gain positive outcomes; Digital identities can play a vital role. India has been pushing for strengthening its digital identity through its Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI). It has signed agreements on UPI with France and Singapore. EU also has its digital identity. This could be leveraged as it already exists, and further desirable results could be delivered.

**Dr Anand V** highlighted that Critical and Emerging technologies constitute a mix of old and new technologies. There are certain overlaps and dependencies between old and new technologies; They are expected to converge at a time when the major power rivalries are intensifying. The rivalry has already reached outer space, bypassing terrestrial domain. This establishes the link between technology and larger geopolitics. Also, he mentioned that states can send small satellites on a regular basis with the help of reusable launch vehicles. Such a proliferation of satellite coverage has provided a major push for obtaining information and data. Quantum technology is another major booster. The quantum revolution has enabled major countries to attempt to develop quantum communications, which is able to fend off cyberattacks. China has pioneered in the field in 2016 whereas other powers are trying to catch up. In such circumstances, the western world shall face difficulty in tracking Chinese communications, giving rise to collective counter measures and technological race.

India and the EU have been co-operating since the 1960s. However, the bulk of co-operation took place in France, where India launched 25/125 of its geostationary satellites from the French space launch facility. On the other hand, India also launched 15 European satellites from its facility. Co-operation with France was largely seen in earth-observation satellites. The Copernicus programme between India and the EU is a great achievement and countries such as United States, Australia, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ukraine, Serbia and the African Union have shown interest to in data exchange with the Copernicus programme. Under this, India has access to data from the Copernicus Sentinel family of satellites. Such arrangements of data exchange are reflective of a wider scheme of co-operation in the current geopolitical order. There is a greater drift towards the US and the EU on India's side due to the geopolitical compulsions faced by India, in the form of rising Chinese capabilities.

## **Discussion**

- Preparedness for Artificial Intelligence (AI)-led future opportunities and challenges.
- Both need to work towards bridging the digital skills gap and promote exchange on digital talent.
- Importance of critical and emerging technologies in Quad.
- Cooperation on AI and coordination of policies with regards to the strategic semiconductor sectors.

## **Session 6: Securing the Indo-Pacific: Strengthening EU-India Cooperation in Maritime Security**

**Captain Dr Gurpreet Singh Khurana, Former Directing Staff and Professor, Naval War College (NWC), Goa**

**Dr Ravindranathan P, Assistant Professor, Department of Geopolitics and International Relations, MAHE**

**Ms Shruti Pandalai, Associate Fellow, Manohar Parrikar Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA)**

**Moderator: Dr Manoj Babu Buraga, Assistant Professor, MCES, MAHE**

**Dr. Manoj Babu Buraga** moderated this session and the discussion revolved around understanding the construct of the Indo-Pacific region and maritime security focusing particularly on India and the European Union's (EU) strategic cooperation in the maritime sphere. Dr Manoj has set the context by posing important questions to the panel to highlight them in understanding the construct of the Indo-Pacific region, which has been viewed and understood much differently. Most significantly, the session also highlighted the significance of the rules-based multilateral order and the importance of the Indian version of a free, open Indo-Pacific region, which is embodied by the IPOI (Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative) —the discussion on IPOI pointed out the involvement of the EU too. India's national policy is premised on strategic autonomous, multi-vectorised partnerships and plurilateralism. Owing to the geographic configuration of the Indo-Pacific, the maritime domain is likely the scene of heightened economic activity and also contestation in coming years, so, maritime security is critically important in India's engagements.

**Captain Gurpreet Singh Khurana** began his initial remarks referring to former Prime Minister of Japan, Shinzo Abe's talk in the Indian Parliament in August 2007 on the sea lanes of maritime security cooperation between India and Japan, which brought the Indian Ocean Region into the Asia-Pacific and later turned it into the Indo-Pacific. Further, he dwelled on the India-EU joint naval exercises, and further mentioned that India must not limit its maritime security cooperation only to the individual European countries. Significantly, he also highlighted the overlap of India's and the EU's geostrategic frontiers in the Indo-Pacific region; the thematic commonality of their interests in region; their compatibility and advantageous differences in capacities, policies and perspectives; functional areas of India-EU Mar-Sec cooperation. Captain Khurana has identified thematic convergences in the domains of geopolitical relevance/influence, trade and economic connectivity, energy security, upholding a maritime rules-based order and as a joint defence against China's revisionist behaviour.

Further he suggested and highlighted the four important areas of concern for India-EU maritime security cooperation in the region. First, he emphasized the "geostrategic frontiers" in which a country must be able to protect and preserve its maritime and overseas interests, whereas if it fails to do so it will impact its national interests. Therefore, a country must use all the soft and hard power tools at its disposal to preserve its national interests. Particularly, the military is the mechanism of assurance that acts as an instrument of foreign policy and shapes the environment to preserve national interests. This gives India and the EU strategic depths to cooperate in the maritime sphere. Second, trade and economic activities are the common thematic interests between India and the EU, which enhance trade and investment between the two countries. Third, joint naval operations needs to be enhanced further. Importantly, the rules-based international order represents a concrete interest of all countries. However, all states in international politics aim for the status quo. Influence gives countries leverage and leverages



power and the ability to preserve their national interests, which leads to a rules-based international order. But from a realist point of view, no country practices philanthropy in international politics.

**Dr Ravindranathan P** initiated his opening remarks by defining the fundamentals of security cooperation from an International Relations perspective on terms like cooperation and confrontation, along with the importance of competition and contestation between the Indo-Pacific countries. Further, he stressed on the scope of International Law and the importance of global commons such as the high seas, the atmosphere, Antarctica and outer space. He also pointed out the rebalancing strategy of the Obama administration— the pivot shift from Eurasia to the Pacific region. Also, he laid emphasis on the maritime sphere, the rules-based order and the importance of Exclusive Economic Zones. Finally, he expressed on the UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea). Dr Ravindranathan explained the relevance of UNLCOS and highlighted China on this regard that although China was the first country to ratify it but finding ways not to follow UNCLOS regulations. The advances in emerging technologies are an added advantage for China. This can be evident from its use of nuclear submarines for anti-piracy operations, the development of artificial islands in the South China Sea, the extension of EEZs, and the increasing presence through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) with investments and technological advances. In this regard, the strategic cooperation between India-EU is necessary and must leverage in countering China's expanding involvement in the Indo-Pacific region. Countries need to move beyond confrontation and move towards cooperation. This can be ensured through collective maritime security engagement such as capacity-building measures, securing the Sea Lanes of Communications(SLOCs), and installing security systems in the region.

**Ms Shruti Pandalai** too added new insights to the discussion and started her scholarly remarks elaborating on the idea of the region and its relevance. She emphasized the role of Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) of India and the EU in the Indo-Pacific region. It is an effective in understanding anything associated with the maritime domain that could impact security, safety, the economy, or the marine environment, according to the International Maritime Organization (IMO). For example, Forty-two radar stations are installed across the territories of the Indian Ocean Region, which resulted in internally built India's capacities to play a greater role within the QUAD. She also mentioned that the cooperation between India and the EU in areas of both Maritime Domain Awareness as well as Underwater Domain Awareness (UDA) to secure undersea cables. However, India and the EU have a lot to work on when it comes to coordination in maritime security. Adding to the discussion, she mentioned that with China being a major disruptor in the region, India and the EU could work on collective maritime competence to counter the increasing presence of China in the region, as China brings other extra-regional actors such as Russia, Iran, and South Africa into the context. Thus, the ghost of China lingers in the India-the EU cooperation on the one hand. There is also a red line in India and the EU cooperation on the other side, which is the Russian factor, which puts a barrier to the strategic level cooperation. Her final remarks ended on the note that India and the EU need to assess their strategic priorities in the maritime sphere to ensure the enhancement and strengthening of their maritime security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

## **Discussion**

- The panel started the discussion on the acceptance and interpretation of UNCLOS by the states in international politics because some states have not accepted UNCLOS and also the interpretation of the UNCLOS differs from country to country in the system.
- China through the BRI project follows an investment pattern – buying and investing in ports.
- China is grabbing land and increasing its port infrastructure through the BRI initiative. Thus, the scope of the challenge of the China factor in the region is very large.
- The Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) towards a sustainable and prosperous Indo-Pacific region is a significant initiative proposed by India. It is similar to the EU's Indo-Pacific strategy.
- Ocean governance and high sea freedom are the two important elements that have to be looked after for an inclusive Indo-Pacific region.
- Overfishing and Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing pose the biggest threats to the sustainability of maritime fisheries. Thus, the India and EU cooperation could address these underexplored issues and bolster a joint exploration of potentials of the blue economy in the region.

## **Session 7: India-EU People-to-People Connect: Education and Cultural Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific**

**Ambassador A R Ghanashyam, Former Indian Ambassador to Angola and Nigeria**

**Dr Dhananjay Tripathi, Associate Professor, South Asian University**

**Mr Fynn Schymek, Doctoral Candidate, Ruhr University Bochum, Germany**

**Dr Neeta Inamdar, Professor and Head, Manipal Centre of European Studies, MAHE**

**Dr Vignesh Ram, Assistant Professor, DGIR, MAHE**

**Moderator: Dr Sankalp Gurjar, Assistant Professor, DGIR, MAHE**

The session was moderated by **Dr Sankalp Gurjar**. The discussion evolved around people-to-people connections, including educational exchanges, the Indian diaspora, and cultural cooperation between India and the EU.

**Ambassador A R Ghanashyam** explained three important components states must follow in their bilateral interactions besides political, economic and security related issues. Starting from People-to-people connect—improving communication exchange with other people (where language becomes the most important factor), easing of visa processes, and conducting business with other countries. This will enhance the ties between the people in different countries; building a relationship—involves a gamut of organizations that should interact in person including government-to-government, youth organizations-to-youth organizations, and universities-to-universities; finally, Leader-to-leader—high-level visits abroad hold a great significance creating goodwill for the country. India and the EU have already engaged on all these elements, and they must take them to the next level. Ambassador Ghanashyam ended his remarks with factual data on the Indian diaspora as the bridging component between India and the EU. There are records explicitly stating that the Indian diaspora is very large with a share of about 5-8 percent of the total population of Europe.

**Dr Dhananjay Tripathy** has begun his presentation from a theoretical International Relations perspective. From a realist point of view, in foreign policy people are given less priority. Referring to Henry Kissinger that “no foreign policy has any chance of success if it is born in the minds of few and carried in the hearts of none.” Dr. Tripathi mentioned that people constitute a very essential part of foreign policy and that International relations could be more effective if the people-centric approach is added in the future not just involving government-to-government interactions.

Bringing the Indo-Pacific into the picture, he highlighted that there is a presence of ambiguity in the construct of the concept of Indo-Pacific. India and the EU have a separate understanding of the region along with the US, whereas China vehemently opposes the concept. According to China, the concept of the Indo-Pacific is seen as a countermeasure and containment to China’s rising power. While speaking on India and EU relations in light of recent developments in Europe and the changing orientation towards China, it is time for India and the EU to build concrete relationships to encounter China’s imperialisms. Finally, he pointed out that India and the EU have soft power privileges; therefore, their privileges will enhance their cooperation in terms of people-to-people ties, educational, and cultural exchanges.

Adding a European perspective to the discussion **Mr Fynn Schymek** advocated for stronger India-EU relations in the future and specifically mentioned that during crises actors are asked to behave responsibly and connect with one another to assist each other. He has specified that at the time of Covid crisis where the perceptions of the countries has changed to eventually support one another, this approach should continue further, too. While highlighting that both India and the EU being the largest democratic entities are engaged on multiple sector of issues which are beneficial to both of them. They also need to strategize more on their potential towards the people-to-people connect particularly focusing on youth mobility.

**Prof Neeta Inamdar** introduced the concept of the “battle of narratives” and how it shapes culture and society. She stated that “Narratives and the public sphere emerge from art, literature, language, cinema, culture and education”. She put forward the fact that however important culture and people-to-people are in shaping foreign policy, it is still given less attention. Further, she highlighted education as the only area that facilitates the importance of the government. Similar to the regional initiatives taken by the ASEAN and the African Union in the education field, India and the European Union can facilitate more educational exchanges. This enhances and strengthens the India-EU partnership in the fields of education and capacity building. This led the panel to the observation of the lack of harmonization at the regional level and the need for greater cooperation between India and Europe in higher education. Culture is an important tool of cooperation, and the diaspora of the country looks at connecting with the culture of the host nations. Two important aspects of this are heritage and tools of cultural values for society.

**Dr Vignesh Ram** emphasized on the value of cultural diplomacy and highlighted how culture forms the bedrock for international diplomacy. In terms of cultural diplomacy, the diaspora plays an essential role between people across the countries. Adding to this he mentioned the need for soft connectivity for facilitating cultural diplomacy. Soft connectivity can be exercised by non-state actors, non-governmental organizations, and states. Therein, he highlighted the relevance of building institutional level cooperation that would enable the movement of people on the one hand and provide legitimacy to the states on the other. These institutions were stated as the “building blocks of the people-to-people ties”. To enhance people-to-people collaboration he brought up three types of public diplomacy models: the American model, the

China model, and finally the universal. He advocated for the last model and stated it as the most suitable model for the India and EU ties while addressing the areas of people-to-people cooperation. The building of soft infrastructure and capital is vital as this model relies on common values and norms. He concluded his part on an optimistic note concerning potential cooperation between both countries in the field of cultural diplomacy.

### **Discussion**

- In the contemporary world, language plays an important role in international education. English was given significant importance in terms of higher education in earlier days. But there is a change in trend, which heightens the importance of European languages such as Spanish, French and German in India. The necessity of learning and the significance of linguistics in international education displays an enhancement in educational and cultural exchanges.
- Both India and the EU can be located at the beneficiary ends. It is not just one country on the giving and the other on the receiving end. India and the EU's educational and cultural exchanges explicitly benefit both the countries at the receiving ends.
- Levels of interest of states matter fundamentally to promote the interest of states in the form of interaction through media and social media. This raises the issue of track-two-level engagement having decreased for the last four years between India and the EU.

### **Closing Session**

**Prof Neeta Inamdar, Head, Manipal Centre of European Studies, MAHE**  
**Ms. Alicia Pommer, Research Officer, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) India**

The two-day International Conference on *India and EU in the Indo-Pacific: Strategies, Opportunities, and Challenges*, came to an end after the closing remarks delivered by **Prof Neeta Inamdar** and **Ms. Alicia Pommer**. **Prof. Inamdar** in her concluding remarks mentioned that all in all, the conference covered wide ranging aspects of India and the EU cooperation in the Indo-Pacific ranging from trade, connectivity, climate change, health infrastructure, emerging technologies, maritime security, education, and cultural cooperation. Finally, she expressed her gratitude to students, faculty members and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS), India Office for supporting this conference. In her concluding remarks, **Ms. Pommer** mentioned that the Indo-Pacific countries must resolve their disputes through peaceful dialogue and not coercion or conquest; this region's security or prosperity cannot be taken for granted, it needs the concerted efforts of the Indo-Pacific nations as well as its associated partners to mold and expand it through dialogue and ever closer cooperation. Finally, she ended by highlighting that the Indo-Pacific has become an extraordinary example of human progress, peaceful cooperation, growing openness, and prosperity indicating the importance of coming together and building on the larger vision with joint ventures.

## Social Media Coverage

**Manipal Centre for European Studies** @mces\_mahe · Nov 3  
 The International Conference of India and EU in the Indo-Pacific: Strategies, Opportunities and Challenges begins with the Welcome address by Dr Neeta Inamdar who sets the stage by saying: "I hope cooperation becomes the intent of this conference, and we can all look forward to..."

**Manipal Centre for European Studies** @mces\_mahe · Nov 3  
 "The centre of gravity is moving to the Indo-Pacific. India is seen as a key actor in the Indian Ocean. This conference is a testament to the increasing cooperation in this region," - says Me Simran Dhingra in her welcome remarks for the Indo-Pacific conference

**Manipal Centre for European Studies** @mces\_mahe · Nov 3  
 The Inaugural Address for the Indo-Pacific conference was given by Prof M. D Nalapat who said: "This conference is to discuss the cooperation between the EU and Indo-Pacific. MAHE has been a believer in that since the beginning, and we have had cordial partnerships across Europe..."

**Manipal Centre for European Studies** @mces\_mahe · Nov 3  
 Vice-Chancellor of MAHE, U. Gan (D. M. D. Venkatesh) delivered the Presidential Address for the Indo-Pacific Conference and highlighted that: "Working together to build a consensus is our common goal as universities, to nurture and engage young minds to further develop..."

**Manipal Centre for European Studies** @mces\_mahe · Nov 3  
 Ambassador Raju Bharati delivered the Keynote address during the Indo-Pacific conference and stated: "The policies of France, Germany, and the Netherlands have to be studied carefully in the Indo-Pacific..."

**Manipal Centre for European Studies** @mces\_mahe · Nov 3  
 The role of India for the inaugural session of the Indo-Pacific conference was delivered by Dr. N.P. Vijayalakshmi who thanked the distinguished delegates and the students attending the conference. She also emphasized the need for more such initiatives that promote collaboration...

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Session 6: India-EU People-to-people Connect: Education and Cultural Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific

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**Manipal Centre for European Studies** @mces\_mhahe - Nov 4  
 To conclude the two-day International Conference on India and EU in the Indo-Pacific: Strategies, Opportunities and Challenges, the closing remarks were delivered by Ms Alicia Pommer and Dr Neeta Inamdar.

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## Alicia Pommer



Ms Alicia Pommer is currently working as a Research Officer at the India Office of the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS). Ms Pommer, a former scholarship holder of KAS, holds a Master's degree in Political Science from the University of Bonn, Germany in which her areas of focus comprised Global Power Shifts, Soft Power, Indian Politics and Global South Perspectives in International Relations. Besides her studies, she worked for more than two years with the Bonn-based NGO, Andheri Hilfe e.V., which supports about 80 projects that aim to strengthen the social and economic development in India and Bangladesh in line with the Agenda 2030. Ms. Pommer has also served as a chairwoman of the Young European Federalists Bonn and Hannover, a political youth NGO advocating for the creation of a democratic European federation as a guarantee for peace, the rule of law and human rights for more than four years.

## Amrita Jash

Dr Amrita Jash is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Geopolitics and International Relations and Co-ordinator of the Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies, at MAHE, Manipal, India. She holds a PhD in Chinese Studies from Jawaharlal Nehru University. She was a Pavate Fellow at the University of Cambridge. Prior to joining MAHE, she was a Research Fellow at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (New Delhi). Dr Jash has been a visiting fellow at the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Cambridge (2019), a UGC graduate fellow (2012-2017), a researcher under the Harvard-Yenching-Nanching Programme (2015), a researcher under China's Ministry of Commerce (2014), and a US-India-China Initiative fellow at SAIS, Johns Hopkins University (2013). In 2019, she received a commendation by the Chief of the Army Staff General Bipin Rawat for her contribution to the field of Chinese Studies at the Centre for Land Warfare Studies. Dr Jash has authored *The Concept of Active Defence in China: Military Strategy* (Pentagon Press, 2021). Her research interests are China's foreign policy, the PLA, security and strategic issues related to India-China, China- Japan relations and the Indo-Pacific.



## Anand V

Dr Anand V is an Assistant Professor (Senior Scale) at the Department of Geopolitics and International Relations, MAHE, Manipal from where he has completed both his PhD and Masters in Geopolitics and International Relations. He is also the Coordinator for the Department's China Study Centre and the Northeast Studies Centre. He teaches subjects related to the theoretical and as well as science and technological dimensions of geopolitics; among others, at the master's level. His research interests include China's geostrategy and its domestic determinants, with a focus on its impact on Eurasia, Indo-Pacific, Arctic, as well as the on outer space. Dr Anand's doctoral thesis was on China's Strategic Culture. He is the author of 'China's Space Capabilities' and has published several book chapters and research articles in Scopus indexed journals. He writes regularly for national dailies, magazines and online forums.



## Ankita Dutta



Dr Ankita Dutta is an Assistant Professor at the Centre for European Studies, School of International Studies, JNU. Ankita Dutta was a Fellow with ORF's Strategic Studies Programme. Her research interests include European affairs and politics, European Union and affairs, Indian foreign policy and Europe. Dr Dutta has done her PhD in European Studies from Centre for European Studies, School of International Relations, JNU, New Delhi. In the past, she has also been a Research Fellow at Indian Council of World Affairs. She has also been the Assistant Editor at the Foundation for National Security Research.



## Dhananjay Tripathi



Dr Dhananjay Tripathi is an Associate Professor at the Department of International Relations, South Asian University (SAU), India. His research interests include Regional Integration Process (Europe & South Asia), Border Studies, and International Political Economy. His recent publications include being the editor of 'Re-imagining Border Studies in South Asia (2020), Co-editor of 'Afghanistan Post- 2014: Power Configurations and Evolving Trajectories' (2016) and author of the book 'Development Role of the European Union in South Asia' (2011). He has contributed in edited volumes and published in peer-reviewed journals, including - Journal of Borderlands Studies, Economic and Political Weekly, International Studies, Alternatives, Eurasia Border Review, Quarterly of International Sociology, USI Journal, etc. He is also the co-editor of a special issue of the Journal of Borderlands Studies on 'South Asia: Boundaries, Borders and Beyond'. He is also an editorial board member of prestigious international journals – Journal of Borderlands Studies, Alternatives: Global, Local, Political, Estudios Fronterizos (REF) and BIG Review and coordinator of SAU-BIG Border Studies Scholarship.

## Dhanasree Jayaram

Dr Dhanasree Jayaram is an Assistant Professor, Department of Geopolitics and International Relations, and Co-coordinator, Centre for Climate, MAHE, Manipal, India. She is also a Research Fellow, Earth System Governance (also member of the Scientific Steering Committee); member, Climate Security Expert Network; Non-Resident Fellow, Finnish Institute of International Affairs; Research Fellow, Centre for Public Policy Research; and Member, Planet Politics Institute. She holds a PhD in Geopolitics and International Relations from MAHE. She was a Research Fellow at Centre Marc Bloch (CMB) and Guest Researcher at Freie Universität Berlin –under the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation's International Climate Protection Fellowship during March 2022- August 2023. She also pursued a visiting fellowship (Erasmus Mundus – short-term PhD) at Leiden University, the Netherlands during 2014-15; and a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Lausanne, Switzerland, under the Swiss Government Excellence Scholarship during 2018-19. Her primary fields of interest include environmental and climate security, climate diplomacy of emerging economies, regional environmental policy in South Asia, gender and climate governance, and environmental peacebuilding.



## Ambassador Ajjampur Rangaiah Ghanashyam

Ambassador Ajjampur Rangaiah Ghanashyam is a retired Indian diplomat who has served ambassador of India to Angola and High Commissioner of India to Nigeria. He has gathered a broad variety of experience as a diplomat -- from sharing of natural resources between India and its neighboring countries to negotiating with hijackers of an Indian plane to Afghanistan, from organizing partnerships between European Union and India to being a standby Arabic interpreter for the Prime Minister of India. Post retirement, Ambassador A R Ghanashyam is diving the social impact project NacFun to fight the screen time menace particularly among children by helping children stay active and healthy. As the chairman of National Active Championship, his effort is to make children attain holistic growth - mentally, physically, emotionally and academically.



## Aswani Dravid



Dr Aswani Dravid is an expert in the field of Indian Ocean Politics and has been teaching and conducting research in the fields of geopolitics, climate politics and energy politics. She is an Assistant Professor at the School of Liberal Studies, University of Petroleum and Energy Studies and has also previously served as the Assistant Professor at the School of Life in UPES. Her past engagements have been connected with teaching public policy, Indian political systems, India's foreign policy. She has also spent a prominent part of her life as a freelance journalist and copywriter.

## Fynn Schymek



Mr Fynn Schymek is a fourth-year medical student at the Ruhr-University Bochum. As an elected member of the 55th Student Parliament, as well as the treasurer of the "Ring Christlich Demokratischer Studenten Bochum" (an organization of Germany's biggest democratic party), he has been working to further the interests of his fellow students. This includes ensuring proper representation of university students; interests in local and national politics. Through his participation in conferences of the European Youth Parliament, he is striving for more international cooperation by fostering cultural exchange of international medical students coming to Germany through the BVMD (German Medical Students Association Working Group).

## Gulshan Sachdeva

Dr Gulshan Sachdeva teaches European studies and serves as the centre's chair at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi's School of International Studies. The European Commission bestowed upon him the Jean Monnet Chair in European Economic Integration and Energy Security. He oversees the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence for European Union Studies in India, which is supported by the EU. He also serves as the magazine Sage India's chief editor. At the Afghanistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kabul, he oversaw projects for the Asian Development Bank and the Asia Foundation. He has also served as the Director of the JNU Energy Studies Program and the Director of the UGC Europe Area Studies Program. The European Union, Russia, Central Asia, Eurasian integration, Afghanistan, development cooperation, and energy security are some of his areas of interest. He holds a PhD in Economics from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest.





## Captain (Dr) Gurpreet S Khurana

Captain (Dr) Gurpreet S Khurana is an accomplished Indian Navy officer with nearly 30 years of service. He has held various key positions, including commanding two warships, and played a pivotal role in the commissioning of INS Tarmugli. Dr Khurana is a prolific researcher, authoring over 50 papers on topics like China's maritime strategy, naval affairs, geopolitics, maritime law, and history. He has crafted influential naval doctrine and strategy documents, earning recognition from the naval chief. Notably, Dr Khurana is credited with introducing the term 'Indo-Pacific' to contemporary geopolitics. He has authored three books and co-edited 11 others. From 2014 to 2019, he served as the Executive Director of NMF and represented India in international forums. He is an accomplished educator, delivering lectures to military and university students. Currently, Dr Khurana leads the Navy's Centre on China Maritime Studies in Visakhapatnam and serves as a visiting Professor at the Naval War College in Goa. His career reflects substantial contributions to naval strategy, geopolitics, and maritime research.



## Helmut Brand

Dr Helmut Brand is the Jean Monnet Professor of European Public Health and the head of the department of international health at Maastricht University in the Netherlands. He is the Director of the Department of Public Health in PSPH, MAHE. After studying medicine in Düsseldorf and Zürich, he obtained his Master's degree in Community Medicine from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the London School of Economics. Public health medicine is Professor Brand's area of expertise. He received honours from Sofia Medical University upon graduating. After holding positions in several Ministries of Health and Health Authorities, he was the director of the Public Health Institute of North Rhine Westphalia, Germany. Since then, he has concentrated on the topic of European Integration in Health. He served as president of the European Health Forum Gastein (EHFG) and the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER) in the past. He is a policy advisor for WHO Europe's European Advisory Committee on Health Research (EACHR) and a member of the European Commission's Expert Panel on "Investing in Health" (EXPH). He serves as the founding director of the Prasanna School of Public Health at MAHE, India.



## Jagannath Panda



Dr Jagannath Panda is the head of the Stockholm Centre for South Asian and Indo-Pacific Affairs (SCSA-IPA). He oversees Institute for Security Development and Policy (ISDP) as its Editor. Apart from his principal role at ISDP, Dr Panda holds the positions of Senior Fellow at The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies (HCSS), The Netherlands, and Director for Europe-Asia Research Cooperation at the Yokosuka Council on Asia-Pacific Studies (YCAPS). Additionally, Dr Panda is affiliated with several think tanks and institutions throughout Asia and the Indo-Pacific region as an adjunct. He is a Senior Research Fellow at the Japan Forum for Strategic Studies (JFSS), Tokyo; the East Asian Security Center at Bond University, Australia; an International Research Fellow at the Cannon Institute for Global Studies (CIGS) in Japan; and a Senior Fellow at the United Services Institution (USI) of India, New Delhi. For one and a half decades [2006–2022], he was a fellow at India's top think tank, the Institute for Defence Studies, and Analyses (now Manohar Parrikar–IDSA).

## K. P. Vijayalakshmi

Dr K P Vijayalakshmi is Professor and Head at the Department of Geopolitics and International Relations, MAHE, Manipal. She is also an Executive Council Member at Manohar Parrikar Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA), New Delhi and an Adjunct faculty at ISSP, NIAS, Bengaluru. She was formerly Professor of US Studies, Centre for Canadian, US & Latin American Studies, School of International Studies, JNU, New Delhi. She is a well-regarded expert on India's National Security, US Government and Politics, US Foreign policy formulation, patterns and process, Indo-US Relations and Prospects for Scientific Cooperation, US strategies and policies in South Asia, Indian Diaspora, Comprehensive and Non-traditional security. She is a key resource person for the Academic Staff Colleges at various universities, the Army War College, Foreign Service Institute, and Indian Institute of Public Administration (New Delhi) and domain expert to both the print and broadcast media. She has been awarded the prestigious Ford Foundation Faculty Fellowship, Senior Fulbright Post-Doctoral Fellowship, Salzburg Seminar Fellow, Olive J. Reddick Award, Gilmour Award of the Indian Association of American Studies.



## Kim Thy Tong

Ms Kim Thy Tong works as a legislative policy advisor for a German Bundestag member. With an emphasis on the economic ties to Australia, New Zealand, South and Southeast Asia, and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, she has worked for the department responsible for international trade policy. She went to the IGYLY (Indo-German Young Leaders Forum) - 2018 in Delhi at that time. Kim Thy Tong graduated from the WWU in Münster with a double major in public administration and European studies as an undergraduate, and the Hertie School in Berlin awarded her a master's degree in international affairs. She also serves as the Junge CDA's (Young Group of Christian Democratic Workers' Association) deputy federal chairwoman.



## M. D. Venkatesh

Lt. Gen. (Dr.) M. D. Venkatesh is MAHE Manipal's seventh vice chancellor. With an outstanding academic record, he earned his medical degree from Mysore Medical College in 1978, and in 1979, he was commissioned into the Armed Medical Corps. He is an excellent ENT surgeon and received his MS (ENT) from Mumbai University in 1986. In India and abroad, he received training in neurotology and cochlear implantation. He has made important contributions to the field of medical education. He served in the military for 38 years, during which time, in addition to his academic work, he held many administrative positions and is recognized for a number of accomplishments. On July 1, 2017, Dr. Venkatesh began serving as the Vice Chancellor of Sikkim Manipal University. He will successfully complete his three-year term on June 30, 2020. He has made a significant contribution to SMU's infrastructure, academic procedures, and IT infrastructure during his tenure.





## Manoj Babu Buraga



Dr Manoj Babu Buraga is Assistant Professor at Manipal Centre for European Studies, MAHE, Manipal and Adjunct Fellow, National Maritime Foundation (NMF), New Delhi. Prior to joining MAHE, Manipal he was an Associate Fellow at the NMF. Manoj holds a PhD in Politics and International Relations with specialisation in European Studies, Pondicherry Central University and participated in the MHRD-sponsored Scheme for Academic Research and Collaboration (SPARC) with the University of Lausanne and the University of Paris 13. He is a recipient of Indian Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR), International Travel Grant and G20 Research Fellowship, funded by Centre for Financial and Accountability, New Delhi. His research interest includes International Relations of the EU, Maritime Geostrategies of Indo-Pacific — India-EU and India-France, Ocean Governance — Sustainable Development, Sea-bed Resources, Marine Biological Diversity, and Fisheries, and India's Foreign Policy.

## Neeta Inamdar



Prof Neeta Inamdar is the Head of the Manipal Centre for European Studies (MCES). She leads a team of young scholars in European Studies with a multidisciplinary approach and focuses on research in education policies, practices and harmonisation efforts in Europe and other parts of the world. Her research interests are focused on people-to-people connect enabled by education (at both school and tertiary levels). She held a Jean Monnet Chair in EU Economic Integration and European Identity awarded by the European Union (2017 - 2020) She was the Principal Coordinator of an Erasmus+ Capacity Building project in Higher Education (CBHE) on Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) with three European and three Indian partners. She also led the Jean Monnet Project on EU Higher Education Policy - The Bologna Process and Internationalisation of Indian Universities. She offered a Jean Monnet module on Cultural Analysis and European Identity (2014 - 2017). She also oversees the activities of Manipal Universal Press (MUP) as the Chief Editor.

## Nicola Casarini

Dr Nicola Casarini is Senior Fellow Asia at the Istituto Affari Internazionali in Rome. Prior to this, he was employed as a Senior Analyst at the EU Institute for Security Studies in Paris, a Visiting Professor at the Graduate Institute in Geneva, a Public Policy Scholar at the Wilson Centre in Washington, DC, and a Marie Curie Research Fellow and Jean Monnet Fellow at the European University Institute in Florence. In international relations, the London School of Economics and Political Science awarded him a doctorate. He has written several books, a great deal of articles, and papers about the transatlantic alliance and relations between Europe and China. *Remaking Global Order* is the monograph written by Nicola. *The Development of US-China Relations and Its Consequences for East Asia* (Oxford University Press). His writing has received recognition, and he has had opinion pieces published in a number of publications, including *Foreign Affairs*, *Project Syndicate*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *The Diplomat*, and *Reuters*.





## Priya Vijaykumar Poojary

Ms Priya Vijaykumar Poojary is a Lecturer and Department Coordinator at Manipal Centre for European Studies and also coordinator of the MA European Studies program. Her teaching and research interests include European politics, policy-making in the European Union, EU's foreign policy, India-EU relations, migration governance, and Higher Education Regionalism. She has been a visiting fellow at Bremen International Graduate School of Social Sciences (BIGSSS) and a beneficiary of Erasmus+ mobility. She is also the coordinator of the Association of European Studies in India (AESI).



## Madhav Das Nalapat

Prof Madhav Das Nalapat (born 1950) is India's first Professor of Geopolitics and the UNESCO Peace Chair at Manipal University, where he is vice-chair of Manipal Advanced Research Group and Director of the Department of Geopolitics & International Relations. A journalist and a former Editor of The Times of India and of Mathrubhumi, he is currently the editorial director of ITV Network & The Sunday Guardian-India. Since 2020, he is a member of the executive committee of the Editors Guild of India. Nalapat writes extensively on security, policy and international affairs. Apart from his Sunday Guardian column, his writings have been published in a very wide range of publications, including the Pakistan Observer, Gateway House: Indian Council on Global Relations, United Press International, China Daily, The Diplomat, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Economic and Political Weekly, Rediff and CNN Global Public Square.



## Ambassador Rajiv Bhatia



Ambassador Rajiv Bhatia is Distinguished Fellow, Gateway House, and a former Ambassador of India. As Director General of the Indian Council of World Affairs, he helped strengthen India's Track-II research and outreach activities. During a 37-year tenure in the Indian Foreign Service, he served as Ambassador to Myanmar and Mexico and as High Commissioner to Kenya, South Africa and Lesotho. South Asia is a region of special interest to him. A prolific columnist, he is also a regular speaker on foreign policy and diplomacy in India and abroad. He was Senior Visiting Research Fellow from 2011 to 2013 at the Institute of South East Asian Studies (ISEAS), Singapore. He holds a Master's degree in political science from Allahabad University. His three books – India in Global Affairs: Perspectives from Sapru House (KW Publishers, 2015), India-Myanmar Relations: Changing contours (Routledge 2016) and India-Africa Relations: Changing Horizons (Routledge 2022) have received critical acclaim.

## Ravindranathan P.

Dr Ravindranathan P. completed his post-graduation from Mahatma Gandhi University and moved to Jawaharlal Nehru University for higher studies. He earned his M.Phil. and Ph.D. degrees from the Latin American Studies division of Centre for Canadian, US & Latin American Studies at the School of International Relations, Jawaharlal Nehru University. He did his M.Phil. on the Chiapas Rebellion in Mexico and PhD on the Democratisation process of Mexico. He started his career at Encyclopaedia Britannica as copy editor and worked as a Research Associate at the International Collaboration division of ICSSR. He also had a stint at the Academic Staff College of JNU as the Academic Coordinator of Orientation and Refresher programmes. He joined as an Assistant Professor at the Department of Geopolitics and International Relations (DGIR) at Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE). At DGIR, Manipal, he teaches courses on Arms Control, Nuclear Disarmament and Nuclear Futures, Research Methodology, International and Regional Organisations and India and Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean. Presently he is an Assistant Professor (Sr. Grade) at the Department of Geopolitics and International Relations, MAHE. He is also the coordinator of the Centre for Indo-Pacific Studies, which comes under the DGIR, MAHE.



## Sanjay Pattanshetty



Dr Sanjay Pattanshetty is the coordinator of the Center for Health Diplomacy and the head of the department of global health governance at the Prasanna School of Public Health, MAHE, Manipal. He received his Doctor of Medicine in Community Medicine (MD) from Manipal Academy of Higher Education and his Double master's in public policy and human development from Maastricht University in the Netherlands and the United Nations University, with a focus on Foreign Policy and Development. He has developed, implemented, and conducted field research for public health education programs for more than ten years. His areas of interest in research are leadership, policy discourse, situational analysis, implementation science, and health in foreign policy governance. More than 40 of his articles have appeared in domestic and international journals.

## Sankalp Gurjar

Dr Sankalp Gurjar is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Geopolitics and International Relations, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Udipi, India. Prior to that, he worked as a Research Fellow at the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi. His research interests include International Relations of the Indo-Pacific, Great Power Politics, Maritime Security and the Geopolitics of the Indian Ocean Region. He regularly contributes op-eds and research articles for national and international research platforms, newspapers and magazines. At Manipal, he teaches courses related to India's national security, foreign policy, South Asia and strategy and negotiations. He was trained at the Department of International Relations, South Asian University (a university established by SAARC nations) and Fergusson College, Pune. He is the author of "The Superpowers' Playground: Djibouti and Geopolitics in the Indo-Pacific in the 21st Century" (Routledge: 2023).





## Seshadri Ramanujan Chari



Dr Seshadri Ramanujan Chari is a multifaceted Indian figure known for his roles as a politician, journalist, author, and strategic foreign policy analyst. He is associated with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and currently holds a position on the National Executive Committee of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). In the past, Chari served as the head of the Foreign Affairs Cell at BJP headquarters and worked as a consultant on governance with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in South Sudan.

He is currently engaged as Director (International Affairs), Institute for National Security Studies (INSS), Director, Forum for Strategic & Security Studies (FSSS), Secretary-General, Forum for Integrated National Security (FINS), Non-officio member, Research and Information Systems for developing countries, and is also the Director of Chronicle Society of India for Education & Academic Research (CSIEAR), a high –profile NGO actively engaged in promoting educational activities and conducting significant research in areas like Pluralism and Democracy, Conflict Resolution, Role of religion in fostering communal harmony. He is also the Vice-President for the Society for Consumers' and Investors' Protection.

Dr Chari has also authored books, including "A New Era in the Indian Polity" and "Reservation for Christians: What Next?".

## Shruti Pandalai

Ms Shruti Pandalai is a Fellow at IDSA, primarily working on India's strategic thought and practice. Great power politics, neighborhood relations, developments in military affairs and new emerging threats to national security are her areas of research interest. She also specialises on the issue of strategic communication in defence and diplomacy. Shruti has been a part of task force projects with the National Security Council Secretariat, Ministry of External Affairs and Home Affairs, Government of India and frequently presents her research at conferences in international think tanks and military institutions. She has published widely in edited volumes, academic journals and the media and is currently focusing her research on the dynamics of the Sino-Indian relationship. She is part of many global emerging leaders' fora including the The Asian Forum of Global Governance, The Munich Young Leaders Programme and is also a 2017 Raisina Fellow. Previously, Shruti was a broadcast journalist, a News Anchor and Senior Correspondent with a leading national English news network specialising in international affairs.



## Simran Dhingra

Ms Simran Dhingra is currently the Head of International Cooperation at the India Office of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung. Her work focuses on geo-strategic and geo-economics issues, wherein she has contributed to curating many programmes and research projects. Having pursued her post-graduation in German language and literature from University of Delhi, she has worked in various capacities with the German Embassy School in New Delhi, Giesecke & Devrient in Munich, Humboldt University in Berlin and Goethe Institut, in the past. She has been a Research Officer at Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, and a DAAD Young Ambassador. She has also been a Managing Global Governance (MGG) Academy Scholar at the German Institute of Development and Sustainability (IDOS). Her passionate love for the German language and her vision for a world with better global governance and sustainability has been a constant thread throughout her experiences.



## Swati Prabhu

Dr Swati Prabhu works for the Centre for New Economic Diplomacy (CNED) as an Associate Fellow. Her study examines the connections between the Sustainable Development Agenda and India's development partnerships. Her wider areas of interest in research include development cooperation, sustainability, and India-EU relations. Her doctorate focuses on the SDGs' challenges and addresses the environment and development cooperation of the European Union. She worked as a Junior Fellow at the Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies in Kolkata before joining ORF. In 2018, she paid a visit to the Department of Political Science at Universidad Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, Spain, while serving as an Erasmus+ Mobility Fellow. "Enhancing EU-India Multilateral Cooperation at the United Nations High Table" is the title of a policy paper she wrote. The paper was chosen by the EU-India Think Tanks Twinning Initiative as one of the top 11.



## Tom Zeising



Mr Tom Zeising is pursuing a PhD in economics as of May 2022. His studies centre on the triangle interactions that exist between development, health, and environmental deterioration. Using a combination of remotely sensed data and behavioural economic approaches, his goal is to uncover underlying structures in this interaction. His areas of interest in research are health economics, behavioural and experimental economics, and environmental and development economics. He has been attending Heidelberg University to pursue his PhD in Economics since 2022. Heidelberg University is where he earned his M.Sc. in Economics.

## Vignesh Ram

Dr Vignesh Ram is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Geopolitics and International Relations at MAHE, Manipal. He has multi-disciplinary experience in the field of research cutting across areas of government policy research, think tanks and academics, science and technology research, political consulting, geopolitics, and corporate global risk analysis. Prior to joining MAHE he worked closely in setting up a division on political risk for a defence start up in Bengaluru. His areas of research interest include the geopolitics of Southeast Asia and the dynamics of the ASEAN organization, Indo-Pacific strategies of major powers, terrorism and asymmetric conflicts, soft power, media and public diplomacy.



## About the Partners

**Manipal Centre for European Studies (MCES)** was the first in the country to be recognized as a Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence by the European Union in 2018 - [coemces.manipal.edu](http://coemces.manipal.edu). It has evolved as a hub of European Studies in the country in the last decade offering the only MA in European Studies program in the country. It is an active participant in the Association of European Studies in India and works with many universities in Europe and within India while focusing on research in European economic, business, culture, literature, education and society.

### Vision

Centre of excellence to foster India-EU educational connect by enhancing understanding based on knowledge sharing across disciplines and geographical borders.

### Mission

Be a preferred choice of students and academicians with specific interests in Europe with multidisciplinary approach.

### Objectives

- To establish closer links with Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and other organisations in Europe (Internationalisation)
- To provide study and research opportunities in India-Europe relations with multidisciplinary approach (programs and courses)
- To encourage interdisciplinary collaborative research and generate common knowledge on India and Europe (projects and publications)
- To engage with civil society, other HEIs and different stakeholders about India-Europe relations and disseminate knowledge generated within (outreach program, conference, workshops, and printed materials)

**The Department of Geopolitics and International Relations** offers two-year MA Program in Geopolitics and International Relations largely to orient the younger minds towards strategic issues. The main thrust of the program is to evolve the Indian perspective on the contemporary world geopolitical environment. The course combines the elements of geopolitics, foreign policy, counter-terrorism issues, public diplomacy, maritime security, India's national security, defense management, the strategy used in negotiations, intelligence information gathering mechanism, science and technology, the political system of major powers, Indian political system and major discourse on nuclear futures.

The department also offers a PhD program, which helps in capacity building in strategic studies and emphasizes quality research on pertinent important themes impacting International Relations. The Department of Geopolitics and International Relations engages in building the critical mass of young strategic analysts.

The MA program in Geopolitics and International Relations has a comprehensive curriculum mainly dealing with the major Geopolitical regions of the world and how India makes

responses through its foreign policy choices. The curriculum also combines and compliments technology with strategy.

**The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS)** is a political foundation. Established in 1955 as “Society for Christian-Democratic Civic Education”, in 1964 the Foundation proudly took on the name of Konrad Adenauer, the first Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

With 16 regional offices in Germany and over 120 offices abroad, the Konrad Adenauer Foundation is committed to achieving and maintaining peace, freedom and justice through political education. We promote and preserve free democracy, social market economy, and the development and consolidation of the value consensus. We focus on consolidating democracy, the unification of Europe and the strengthening of transatlantic relations, as well as on development cooperation.

The leitmotif of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation "Germany. The next chapter" is supported by a thematic focus. With the three main topics Innovation, Security and Representation and Participation, it is quite clear which topics the Konrad Adenauer Foundation will focus on in the coming years.

We cooperate with governmental institutions, political parties and civil society organizations, building strong partnerships along the way. In particular, we seek to intensify political cooperation in the area of development cooperation on the foundations of our objectives and values. Together with our partners, we make a significant contribution to the creation of a global order that empowers every country to determine its own developmental priorities and destiny in an internationally responsible manner. The Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung has organized its program priorities in India into five working areas:

1. Foreign and Security Policy
2. Economic, Climate and Energy Policy
3. Rule of Law
4. Political Dialogue focussed on Social and Political Change
5. Media and Youth

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