

India rising: responsible to whom?

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Among the three rising powers with remarkable growth trajectories, India is distinguished from Brazil and China by at least three positive factors as a potential negotiating partner for the West. The first is that its political system is broadly similar to that of many developed countries, and it is often lauded as the world's largest democracy (population-wise). One does not have to buy wholeheartedly into the 'democratic peace' hypothesis to acknowledge that democracy is a key element in 'like-mindedness'. This affinity of political system had a good deal to do with the US embrace of India, under the George W. Bush administration, as a strategic partner. The second, reinforcing the like-mindedness associated with democracy, is the advantage of the English language. Admittedly, low literacy levels mean that this advantage does not permeate all echelons of society. But at least among India's ruling elite, we see a great familiarity with not just the English language but also English culture, in contrast to the other rising powers. The third—a point emphasized by many economists—is a demographic advantage. Not only does India's population match China's in sheer numbers, with all the market potential that this entails, it trumps China's ageing population in its productivity potential.

Focusing on these three advantages, plus the intrinsic advantage of actual and potential growth that is associated with the B(R)IC phenomenon,¹ several analyses anticipate the following: (a) India would be a relatively 'easy' negotiating partner for the established powers, in terms of both initial affinities and scope for socialization; and (b) the pay-offs of engaging with India are likely to be high, that is, the benefits would easily outweigh the costs. A good proportion of both scholarship and policy seems to be driven by these assumptions. Others have, on the other hand, pointed to the bottlenecks in India's development and its record in international negotiation, and tell a much more cautionary tale. The resulting debate is exciting but polarized, with one side focusing on the opportunities and the other side focusing on the challenges. This article argues that the evidence provides strong support for the cautionary side of the debate, and that this automatically renders the potential gains from engaging with India less straightforward. However, the article also emphasizes the important nuances and varia-

¹ The acronym coined to represent the group of rising powers comprising Brazil, Russia, India and China, later expanded to BRICS to include South Africa.

tions to be gleaned from investigating how India negotiates with different parties: these patterns of differentiation in India's negotiations are useful for highlighting ways in which outsiders might be able to trigger more cooperative behaviour from India. The article proposes some policy recommendations along these lines. The policy recommendations also highlight ways in which India might be able to present its own behaviour in a more positive light to the outside world, and also ways in which it may be able to serve its self-interest through change.

The article proceeds in four parts. First, I present a brief summary of the debate on rising India's potential as a negotiating partner. In the second section, I investigate the specifics of India's negotiating behaviour with the five sets of actors identified in the Introduction to this special issue of *International Affairs*: established powers, other rising powers, smaller players, non-state actors and international organizations. I conduct this analysis using the negotiation variables outlined in the Introduction, namely negotiation strategy, coalitions and framing. In the third section, I analyse the patterns of differentiation that emerge from this analysis. One important implication is that certain types of interests and parties are likely to face more hurdles than others when bargaining with India, limiting the potential benefits that might be expected to derive from assumed like-mindedness or economic growth. The fourth section discusses policy recommendations arising, both for outside parties seeking to bargain more effectively with India and also for a rising India that seeks to establish its place in the world.

A rising India negotiates: the debate

Scholars are broadly in agreement on India's negotiating behaviour through the second half of the twentieth century, when the country was a tough, inflexible and often prickly negotiator. The paragraph below by Stephen Cohen captures this nicely:

Western diplomats were for many years put off by India's flexible nonalignment, which for a time was a pretext for a close relationship with the Soviet Union. They were also irritated by the style of Indian diplomats. While professional and competent, they seemed compelled to lecture their British or American counterparts on the evils of the cold war, the moral superiority of India's policies, or the greatness of its civilization ... As for Beijing, the 1987 question of one Chinese official, asked half in jest, half seriously, 'Why are the Indians so inscrutable?' reflected his puzzlement with what is seen as an unrealistic combination of arrogance and poverty. Only Moscow seems to have gotten along well with New Delhi.²

But when analysts address themselves to India's negotiations as a *rising power*, the zone of academic agreement rapidly disappears. Some scholars of a rationalist bent argue that as India rises, its growing integration in the world economy will lead to a convergence of its interests with other players: greater stakes in the system will also produce a sense of ownership and willingness to invest in it. An implicit assumption usually underpinning this view is an economic one: the

² Stephen Cohen, *India: emerging power* (Washington DC: Brookings, 2001), p. 66.

Indian economy, despite short-term ups and downs, has strong foundations.³ The self-interest of India's liberalizing coalitions within this growing and liberalizing economy will drive foreign policy and negotiating behaviour in an increasingly cooperative direction. Constructivists point to a different driver—socialization—that is likely to produce greater norm convergence: as India acquires positions of greater prominence in international institutions, it will come to value the norms that underpin the system and emerge as their upholder and even potential enforcer. Both mechanisms lead to the same end: a rising India that is a more flexible, pragmatic and cooperative negotiating partner. C. Raja Mohan is a strong proponent of this optimistic view and portrays this transition in India's negotiation practice as well under way:

If a single image captured India's national strategic style, it was that of a porcupine—vegetarian, slow-footed and prickly. The famous defensiveness of the porcupine became the hallmark of India's approach to the world ... India's engagement with the world since the early 1990s posits a fundamental change in course and a reconstitution of its core premises. Whether it was the de-emphasis of non-alignment or the new embrace of the US, or the attempts to rethink regionalism in the subcontinent and its environs, a radically different foreign policy orientation emerged by the turn of the millennium.⁴

Mohan recognizes that India is constrained 'by an unresolved tension between the inertia of its policy positions framed during the early years of building the post-colonial state and the logic of its emerging major power status'.⁵ But his overall assessment, as expressed in a subsequent article, is still sanguine: 'Change might be on the way as India begins to adapt, even if incrementally, to its increased weight in the international system and the responsibilities that come with it.'⁶

Three results follow if one accepts the argument put forward by Mohan. First, in the divergent pulls of autonomy and responsibility, India is showing a 'nuanced' shift towards the latter. Second, India is moving towards 'selective coalitions' that lead it away from its allies in the Third World. And third, as it has had to adapt to the 'logic of major power status, India has been compelled to discard some of its past baggage about equity and justice in the construction of global regimes', switching from champion of global equity to champion of global order. But there is an alternative view, which represents the polar opposite to the one espoused by Mohan, and is perhaps best captured by Stephen Cohen's description of the country as 'the India that can't say yes'.⁷

Even in an account that is largely sympathetic towards India, David Malone makes the following observation, which suggests the persistence of at least strong remnants of India's 'prickly' diplomatic style even as its power rises:

³ An example can be found in Pratap Bhanu Mehta, 'How India stumbled', *Foreign Affairs* 91: 4, 2012, pp. 64–75. Analysing the recent slowing down of the Indian economy, Mehta points to real economic strengths and argues that 'just as in 2009, India is still fully capable of entering the ranks of world economic heavyweights. The problem, however, is that its politics are getting in the way.'

⁴ C. Raja Mohan, *Crossing the Rubicon: the shaping of India's foreign policy* (Delhi: Viking, 2003), pp. 261–4.

⁵ Mohan, *Crossing the Rubicon*, p. 139.

⁶ C. Raja Mohan, 'Rising India: partner in shaping the global commons?', *Washington Quarterly* 33: 3, 2010, p. 138.

⁷ Cohen, *India: emerging power*.

A noted denizen of India's Ministry of External Affairs, a keen bilateralist at that, when asked what India does best internationally replied without a moment's hesitation 'multilateral diplomacy'. And yet queries about Indian performance at the UN and elsewhere in the multilateral sphere hardly validate that judgement: 'arrogant', 'moralistic', and 'confrontational' are terms more invoked by developing and industrialized counterparts, despite recognition that Indian negotiators are rarely less than 'impressive' and often 'brilliant'.⁸

Malone's observation will not come as a surprise to those who recognize that rising India maintains a serious preoccupation with autonomy. It remains cautious on the agenda of democracy promotion, and strongly committed to the principle of sovereignty.⁹ The rhetoric of its commitment to Third World unity may have become more muted, but the occasions when it has abandoned developing country allies are few and far between.¹⁰ And, contrary to the claim made by Mohan, empirical examples of India's willingness to take on the responsibilities of upholding global order are rare.¹¹ Cases of continued Indian recalcitrance in international negotiations abound, across institutions and issue areas. George Perkovich's analysis provides several examples to support the view that India's rising power has not reformed its bargaining behaviour, and concludes: 'India's long position as a moralistic and contrarian loner in the international community has not excited others about working with India at the apex of the UN system.'¹²

While the view that a rising India is likely to be a more cooperative negotiator relies on the success story of India's growth, the view of its persistent toughness points to alternative economic data. India's slowing growth rates since 2009 are arguably only in part a reflection of the adverse international financial climate, and in fact derive more from deep-rooted and fundamental domestic problems. Corruption levels continue to soar, with India scoring a sorry ranking of 94th in the global corruption index of 2012 (lower than Brazil and China at 69 and 80 respectively, but higher than Russia at 133).¹³ On the 'ease of doing business' scale it stands 132nd, and does especially badly on some indicators, such as enforcing contracts (182nd of 183 countries!).¹⁴ The electricity blackouts in July 2012 attracted considerable media attention, especially as the nation's capital was affected; in fact, several hours of power cuts on a daily basis and water shortages are commonplace in the lives of the overwhelming majority of even urbanized Indians. Thus infrastructure weaknesses act as a grave deterrent to India's exploiting its growth potential; but cultural constraints are perhaps just as serious. Jim O'Neill observes: 'Among Indian elites, I often find a resentment of Western practices,

⁸ David Malone, *Does the elephant dance?* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 270.

⁹ Gareth Price, *For the global good: India's developing international role*, Chatham House Report (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, Chatham House, 2011).

¹⁰ Amrita Narlikar, 'Peculiar chauvinism or strategic calculation: explaining the negotiation strategy of a rising India', *International Affairs* 82: 1, Jan. 2006, pp. 59–76.

¹¹ Xenia Dormandy, 'Is India, or will it be, a responsible stakeholder?', *Washington Quarterly* 30: 3, 2007, pp. 117–30; Amrita Narlikar, 'Is India a responsible great power?', *Third World Quarterly* 32: 9, 2011, pp. 1607–21.

¹² George Perkovich, 'Is India a major power?', *Washington Quarterly* 27: 1, 2003, pp. 129–44.

¹³ <http://www.transparency.org/cpi2012/results>, accessed 25 March 2013.

¹⁴ World Bank, *Doing business 2012: doing business in a more transparent world* (Washington DC: IFC and World Bank, 2012), <http://www.doingbusiness.org/reports/global-reports/doing-business-2012/>, accessed 19 March 2013.

development among them.¹⁵ O'Neill's observation is supported by other studies, all of which point to the persistence of a strong sentiment against liberalization, as well as against essential second-generation reforms, emanating from both elite and popular levels.¹⁶ If this reading of the Indian economy is correct, it has several vital implications. Most immediately, for our purposes, it suggests that development bottlenecks at home will prevent any easy transition of India into an accommodating power whose interests are aligned with existing major players; further, if the cultural constraints are indeed as deep-rooted as several scholars suggest, then norm convergence and socialization also become less likely.

Between these two extremes, where does the reality of Indian negotiation lie? The next section offers an empirical analysis of India's negotiating behaviour by investigating similarities and variations in how it negotiates with different parties.

How India negotiates depends on whom it is negotiating with

With the aim of adjudicating between the two sides of the debate presented in the preceding section, we now investigate a rising India's negotiating behaviour with the five sets of actors identified in the Introduction to this special issue: established powers, rising powers, smaller players, non-state actors and international organizations.

India and the established powers

Understanding how India negotiates with the established powers is important because it provides us with a useful indication of the extent to which its rise represents a challenge to the system or might be easily accommodated.

Post-independence India and the established powers of the West did not have an easy relationship. India's explicit leadership of the Non-Aligned Movement, along with periods of great closeness to the Soviet Union, were frustrating irritants to the United States and its western allies in the context of the Cold War. Far from bandwagoning with other democracies that were also Great Powers, India's record in the Cold War era was predominantly one of balancing against them. In this section, rather than reviewing India's relations with a broad sweep of established powers, I focus particularly on its relationship with the United States.¹⁷

Bilateral relations between the US and India were chequered with frustrations and misunderstandings. Indeed, India and the US were—perhaps at best—what

¹⁵ Jim O'Neill, *The growth map: economic opportunity in the BRICs and beyond* (London: Penguin, 2011).

¹⁶ Andrew Hurrell and Amrita Narlikar, 'A new politics of confrontation: Brazil and India in multilateral trade negotiations', *Global Society* 20: 4, 2006, pp. 415–33; Shishir Priyadarshi, 'Decision-making processes in India: the case of the agricultural negotiations', in Peter Gallagher, Patrick Low and Andrew Stoler, eds, *Managing the challenges of WTO participation: 45 case studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

¹⁷ The reason for this, besides limitations of space that preclude an analysis of India's relations with all the established powers, concerns the high power asymmetry in the years after 1945 between the US, as the new hegemon, and the newly independent India, greatly weakened by the ravages of partition. This is when we might have expected to see the greatest occurrence of bandwagoning. The US–India relationship in the early years thus provides a hard test case of India's ability to stand up to the West. Further, as improvement in US–Indian relations is frequently cited by scholars such as Raja Mohan as evidence to support their argument that a rising India is also a reforming India, Indo-US relations deserve our special attention.

Stephen Cohen has described as ‘distanced powers’, the distance deriving at least in part from US support for Pakistan in the Cold War. But toxic regional issues were not the only cause of difficulty. Raymond Cohen has pointed to fundamental differences between Indian and American negotiating cultures. For instance, he writes: ‘Indian pride, I was told by diplomats, had long hobbled ties with the United States. Time and again Indian officials and leaders had taken umbrage at real or imagined insults to their national dignity.’¹⁸ Strobe Talbott, while offering us a few rare examples of improved relations between the US and India (for instance, Jacqueline Kennedy’s visit), admits that ‘moments of warmth in the US–Indian relationship were exceptions to the general chill’.¹⁹ But the last decade has brought about some important changes.

Rising India faces a much more amiable negotiating partner in the United States, in part owing to reforms within India and its increasing economic power, in part owing to a changed international context since 9/11 that has altered some of the strategic calculations for the US. Has India responded to these changes? Some scholars point to the Indo-US nuclear deal as clear evidence that India has come of age, displaying a mature and pragmatic diplomacy and finally acquiring due recognition from the US and other Great Powers. Recall, for instance, that the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) was created in the immediate aftermath of the Pokhran I nuclear test of 1974, placing severe constraints on the export of nuclear technology to states with ambitions of weaponization. What a transformation we see in the status of India—which has still signed neither the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) nor the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT)—today, with the India-specific safeguards agreement cleared by the International Atomic Energy Agency, and the NSG having even agreed the India-specific waiver that allows the transfer of non-weapon nuclear technology to India. These developments, moreover, have resulted in good measure from the legitimacy that India has acquired from its Civil Nuclear Agreement (the 123 Agreement) with the US, as well as American lobbying efforts in the relevant forums as a follow-on from the agreement. Several scholars see these changes not only as evidence that India has come of age and won the recognition that is due to it, but also as proof of the maturing of India’s diplomacy and its willingness to cautiously embrace new responsibilities. After all, the India that was wont to complain of the ‘nuclear apartheid’ represented by the established regime, and fought for the rights of non-nuclear weapon states, would have found it very difficult to enter into a special relationship with the US as rising India has done. Nevertheless, four caveats are in order; and these present the story of the new-found Indo-US cooperation in a different light.

First, even when faced with extreme pressures from the US after the Pokhran II tests of 1998, India stood firm in its refusal to sign the NPT or formally accept bilaterally or multilaterally agreed limits on the development or deployment

¹⁸ Raymond Cohen, *Negotiating across cultures: international communication in an interdependent world*, revised edn (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2004), p. 47.

¹⁹ Strobe Talbott, *Engaging India: diplomacy, democracy and the bomb* (Washington DC: Brookings, 2004), p. 11.

of its nuclear arsenal. Talbott sums up what was effectively a strict distributive strategy on India's part in the following terms: 'By weathering the storm of US disapproval—by outlasting and outtalking the Americans in the marathon of diplomacy spurred by the test, in short, by *not* compromising—the Indians would prove their resolve and resilience, thereby giving a boost to their national self-esteem and self-confidence.'²⁰

Second, the process of getting the deal approved in the Indian parliament was a fraught one. Writing about the process in 2006, Stephen Cohen noted: 'It seems that opposition is stronger, and deeper, on the Indian side, even though New Delhi has more to gain than the United States. It is curious that some elements of India's small but feisty strategic community cannot accept "yes" for an answer.'²¹ The deal was ultimately approved by the Indian parliament, but only after much horse-trading and a no confidence vote that the government survived with considerable difficulty (and a narrow majority: 275 in favour, 256 against). Politicians of different political persuasions found common ground in their suspicion of the US (and the West more generally) and their opposition to the deal, and carried a substantial body of popular opinion with them.

Third, it could be argued that India's signing up to the bilateral deal with the US was not a sign of an improving tendency towards conciliatory diplomacy at all, nor an example of India's willingness to assume greater international responsibility and leadership. India's successful attempts at agenda-setting, which have resulted in the creation of a host of India-specific exceptions, waivers and anomalies, are in fact quite disruptive to the regime. I will return to this point below.

Finally, no matter how enthusiastically India and the US declare each other to be 'natural allies' or 'strategic partners', the bilateral deal is not an alliance. Nor is it seen within India as an initial step towards building an alliance with the US or other established powers. A rising India may be less free with the moralizing language of non-alignment than it was during the Cold War era; but its actions suggest little evidence of bandwagoning with the established powers.

India and other rising powers

The rhetoric of cooperation among the four original BRIC countries, with the more recent addition of South Africa, is strong. It is evidenced in the annual summits of the BRICS, as well as the cooperative efforts of these countries in other forums. For example, the BRICS came up with their first joint statement at the WTO's ministerial conference in Geneva in December 2011. The statement went beyond (albeit not far beyond) the platitudinous and empty promise that all the established and rising powers seem to make in various forums (including the G20) as regards their completion of the Doha Round and fighting protectionism, and instead offered insights into the possible beginnings of the BRICS

²⁰ Talbott, *Engaging India*, p. 5.

²¹ Stephen Cohen, 'A deal too far?' (Washington DC: Brookings, Feb. 2006), www.brookings.edu/views/papers/cohens/20060228.pdf, accessed 19 March 2013.

vision of global order. For example, the BRICS used the statement to signal their commitment to the pursuit of the ‘single undertaking’²² (in contrast to the plurilateral approaches that some developed countries, particularly the US, have been floating), and stated:

We will remain fully engaged in negotiations with a view to concluding the single undertaking within the shortest possible timeframe. We emphasise that negotiations on any component of the DDA [Doha Development Agenda] must be based on the mandates multilaterally agreed since the launching of the Round in 2001 and on the delicate balance of trade-offs achieved over the last 10 years, which are also reflected in the draft modalities texts of December 2008.²³

Another example of an attempt by the BRICS to offer innovative ideas is to be found in the declaration of the fourth BRICS summit, which took place in Delhi in March 2012. The declaration announced the creation of a working group of the finance ministers of the BRICS countries to explore the ‘possibility of setting up a new Development Bank for mobilizing resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other emerging economies and developing countries, to supplement the existing efforts of multilateral and regional financial institutions for global growth and development’.²⁴

Again, however, several caveats are in order. First, the cooperation among the BRICS countries is somewhat artificial. Jim O’Neill—the inventor of the BRICS acronym—has reiterated: ‘I never suggested that they should operate alone as a political club, and other than highlighting the limitations of the current G7 etc., the purpose of such a club—especially now South Africa is included—is a bit limited.’²⁵ On the other hand, various cooperative combinations predate the hype that has come to surround the BRICS. For instance, in 2003 Brazil, China and India led the formation of the G20 coalition on agricultural negotiations at the Cancún ministerial meeting of the WTO. This coalition, despite the fact that it brings together strange bedfellows, is a serious one and survives to the present day.²⁶ In the same year, Brazil, South Africa and South Africa launched their cooperative initiative through IBSA, which emphasized their shared democratic credentials.²⁷ The BASIC group (Brazil, South Africa, India and China) came together in the climate change talks in Copenhagen in 2009. In fact, we can go further back in certain institutions—for instance, the GATT—to find evidence of

²² The ‘single undertaking’ means that countries cannot pick and choose the agreements that they will sign on to, and that the negotiations must take place as a package where ‘nothing is agreed until everything is agreed’.

²³ WTO, ‘Ministerial declaration: BRICS trade ministers’, WT/MIN (11) 18, 16 Dec. 2011.

²⁴ Delhi Declaration, fourth BRICS summit, 29 March 2012, <http://mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents.htm?dtl/19158/Fourth+BRICS+Summit++Delhi+Declaration>, accessed 23 March 2013. The latest BRICS summit reiterated this commitment, but fell short of launching the initiative or presenting details of structure and functioning (including the contributions of capital by different countries). See Statement by BRICS Leaders on the Establishment of the BRICS-Led Development Bank, Durban, South Africa, 27 March 2013, <http://www.brics.utoronto.ca/docs/130327-brics-bank.html>, accessed 9 April 2013.

²⁵ Jim O’Neill, ‘Some BRICs built but more needed’, *Viewpoints*, 27 Nov. 2011.

²⁶ On the politics of the G20 coalition, see Amrita Narlikar and Pieter van Houten, ‘Know the enemy: the South in trade negotiations’, in Amrita Narlikar, ed., *Deadlocks in multilateral negotiations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

²⁷ <http://www.ibsa-trilateral.org/>, accessed 19 March 2013.

similar cooperative endeavours. Brazil and India, for example, were the leading members of the coalition of the G10 in the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations. One cannot but wonder, then, whether BRICS summitry represents old wine in new bottles, especially as the emphasis that the BRICS continue to place on development concerns is reminiscent of old Third Worldist coalitions that some of these countries led at different points in the past.

Second, not all the BRICS are equally committed to each other; nor is this commitment consistent across issue areas. Both Brazil and India have aspirations to permanent membership of the UN Security Council, but also know that their candidature has not received the support of Russia and China, which are already members of the P5. Similarly, the BRICS have thus far been unable to coordinate on headships of international organizations. The relationship between India and China is undoubtedly the most difficult in the BRICS group, marked as it is by a history of one major war and persistent border disputes. India also competes with all the other BRICS in the scramble for resources in Africa.

What this cooperative–competitive interaction translates into is, in effect, a mixed strategy for India that varies with its interlocutor. Interestingly, though, overall the mix is perhaps closer to the distributive end of the spectrum, with few examples of integrative bargaining that go beyond ‘cheap talk’. For example, despite its long history of cooperation with Brazil in the GATT and the WTO, the July 2008 Doha negotiations resulted in the use of strictly distributive strategies by India against Brazil when the latter supported concessions to accept the deal that was on offer.

In terms of coalition behaviour, as already indicated, we do see a tendency on the part of these countries to ally with each other, although the actual memberships of such coalitions vary according to issue area. Almost all such collective initiatives have represented a form of balancing against the established powers. And despite the variation in the composition of partnerships according to issue areas, the appeal to development concerns and sometimes even the inclusion of other developing countries suggest at least some remnants of a bloc-type mentality. This is reflected strongly in certain areas, for instance trade and climate change, where different permutations of the BRICS countries, as leaders of coalitions, have advanced the cause of development and developing countries. Interestingly, Brazil, China, India and South Africa not only espouse the cause of developing countries, but are also vociferous in their assertions that they themselves belong to this group.

India and smaller players

The story of India’s negotiating behaviour with smaller players, such as the least developed countries (LDCs), shows some differences from its bargaining with the established and rising powers, and also a fair degree of consistency over time. Here, the use of integrative moves is higher, and there is greater willingness to share the burdens of international responsibility. Hence for instance, India

acquired a reputation of serving as 'the voice of the voiceless' in the WTO:²⁸ a responsibility it exercised by leading coalitions involving some of the poorest developing countries, and supporting their demands even when they did not directly benefit India or its middle-income allies. It could be argued that such leadership was driven by India's need to secure access to small-group consultations in the WTO via the route of representation. Interestingly, though, India has continued to play this role, emphasizing the concerns of the LDCs in many of its joint and individual statements, ensuring their demands are included in coalition agendas, sharing research and reporting back to these countries after small-group consultations in which India (and Brazil and China) are included but from which smaller countries are excluded. It has continued to do this, moreover, well after its place at the high table of international trade negotiations was firmly established by dint of its sheer market size and potential.

India's willingness to provide certain 'club goods' is most clearly illustrated in its role in Africa.²⁹ India's trade and investment in Africa are not limited to the resource- and energy-rich north and west of the continent but are also on the rise in eastern Africa. It has granted preferential treatment to LDCs (33 of which are in Africa, and 14 of these in East Africa). Indian officials are at pains to emphasize the long-standing continuities in India's African engagement, highlighting for instance the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme that goes back to 1964. They are also keen to avoid comparisons with China: one Indian official stated that 'while we also have energy considerations etc., our model is different. The Indian way is the softer way.'³⁰ Very importantly, Harry Broadman writes of Chinese firms in Africa as 'creating business entities that are vertically integrated, buying supplies from China rather than local markets, and selling in Africa mostly to government entities. They rarely facilitate the integration of their workers into the African socioeconomic fabric.' By contrast, he continues, Indian firms in Africa 'are less vertically integrated, prefer to procure supplies locally or from international markets (rather than Indian suppliers), engage in far more sales to private African entities, and encourage the local integration of their workers'.³¹

India's continued initiative and leadership on behalf of smaller developing countries is a close relative of its role in the Third World in the past. Speaking particularly of India's increased activism in Africa, and the extent to which this represents a change in India's policy, one interviewee stated to the author: 'We simply didn't have enough resources to do this in the 1960s. Now we can.'³² The strategy is predominantly integrative, typified by India's willingness to make concessions and allow free-riding, especially to the LDCs. Bloc-type coalitions

²⁸ Narlikar, 'Peculiar chauvinism or strategic calculation'.

²⁹ Harry Broadman, *Africa's Silk Road: China and India's new economic frontier* (Washington DC: World Bank, 2007); Amrita Narlikar, 'India's rise to power: where does East Africa fit in?', *Review of African Political Economy* 37: 126, 2010, pp. 141–56; Ian Taylor, 'India's rise in Africa', *International Affairs* 88: 4, July 2012, pp. 779–98.

³⁰ Cited in Narlikar, 'India's rise to power'.

³¹ Harry Broadman, 'China and India go to Africa: new deals in the developing world', *Foreign Affairs* 87: 2, 2008, pp. 95–109.

³² Cited in Narlikar, 'India's rise to power'.

involving India (and other rising powers) with LDCs and African economies continue to thrive in issue areas such as international trade. Sometimes, involvement in such coalitions comes at the cost of India's ability to make concessions (for example, it cannot make concessions on an issue such as special and differential treatment, even if major gains are to be had elsewhere, for fear of losing its LDC allies). And yet India willingly bears these costs. Even though India does not explicitly rely on the language of Third Worldism to justify its engagement with LDCs, a strong moralistic framing of global distributive justice permeates the demands for 'policy space' and 'development'. India may have a reputation of 'getting to no' with the established powers, but it seems to be enthusiastic in 'getting to yes' as far as poorer and weaker countries are concerned.

India's engagement with non-state actors

The argument that a rising India is a reformed (or at least reforming) India might seem to suggest that India's new-found pragmatism would extend to non-state actors. Interestingly, however, the 'ease of doing business' index provides a dramatic illustration of just how difficult a negotiating partner India is for multinational companies (MNCs) seeking to invest in the country. Jim O'Neill points out that of the BRIC countries, India attracts the least foreign investment, in part because of its 'mystifying bureaucracy'. The retail sector offers one example of the difficulties that foreign companies have encountered in securing access to Indian markets. O'Neill writes: 'If India were ever to allow Tesco or Walmart into the country, it would undoubtedly improve productivity in retail and reduce agricultural waste. But the politicians worry about the effect on Indian society, so they revert to protectionism and block foreign companies.'³³ The resulting Indian negotiation strategy towards investors is largely distributive, not least because the Best Alternative to Negotiated Agreement (BATNA), limited foreign investment, enjoys popular support.³⁴

India's negotiations with external NGOs have perhaps been more successful. A good example of successful engagement with civil society was the TRIPS (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights) and public health coalition, of which India was a part along with other developing countries. Effectively, India has been successful in harnessing the support of NGOs for certain types of causes, such as development. In these and other development-oriented efforts, it has been assisted by certain domestic NGOs too, such as CUTS (Consumer Unity and Trust Society). But it is important to bear in mind that such engagement with NGOs is largely state-driven and strategic, rather than bottom-up or straightforwardly oriented towards increasing inclusiveness and participation. As in several of its

³³ O'Neill, *The growth map*, p. 75.

³⁴ India's coalition government was finally able to secure a parliamentary vote in December 2012 to allow foreign investment of up to 51% in the retail sector, but in the face of much public outcry and demonstrations, and after at least two years in gridlock. It remains to be seen to what extent foreign investors will actually be able to make use of this recent market opening, especially as it is still up to state governments to decide whether they will implement the legislation or not.

counterparts in Asia, the state in India remains a powerful gatekeeper, allowing selective and strategic access to private actors.

India in international organizations and other mechanisms of global governance

India's behaviour in international organizations is especially interesting and important, given that the country has a long history of activism in such institutional forums. In the days of the Cold War, India's position was one of Third Worldist solidarity and revisionism. Recall, for example, its role in UNCTAD in advancing the call for a 'new international economic order', or indeed its role in promoting the cause of development in the GATT. Today, although the Third Worldist rhetoric is diminished, we still do not see India embracing international regimes (old or new) as an upholder of the system.

The WTO is a particularly important case in point. In contrast to the IMF and the World Bank, with their systems of weighted voting that are still a long way from reflecting the changing balance of power, the WTO is a consensus-based organization. The WTO has, moreover, modified its norms of participation to ensure that the rising powers, India among them, are included at the heart of the negotiations and of the organization via all small-group consensus-building meetings. It is thus the one organization where we might expect to see greater loyalty from India to accompany the country's growing voice. Interestingly, however, even in this 'easy' test case, we do not find much evidence of growing socialization from India. In 2003, at the Cancún ministerial, India had the dubious distinction of being dubbed one of the 'can't do' countries; in 2008, Alan Beattie of the *Financial Times* named India's chief negotiator 'Dr No'. India's negotiation strategy continues to be highly distributive even in a forum that is largely conducive to its participation and has served its interests well. Despite repeated calls that India, along with other rising powers, take on greater responsibility in the provision of the public good of free trade, India has continued to argue for special considerations for developing countries.³⁵

In the IMF, India's position suggests even greater scepticism towards the regime and reluctance to take on any new responsibilities (understandably so, given that the IMF's governance structure is considerably less B(R)IC-friendly than the WTO's). India's response to European hopes that the BRIC countries might be willing to contribute actively to recovery from the financial crisis and attempts to increase IMF activity to this end has been decidedly lukewarm. Speaking at the IMF's International Monetary and Financial Committee in April 2012, India's finance minister at the time, Pranab Mukherjee, stated:

³⁵ While India has undoubtedly contributed to the occurrence of deadlocks in the Doha Development Agenda negotiations, it is far from being solely responsible for this. The EU, US and several other parties have been just as much to blame as India for deadlock in certain stages of the negotiation. For an analysis of the various causes of the deadlocks at different stages of the negotiation, see Amrita Narlikar, ed., *Deadlocks in multilateral negotiations: causes and solutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

We feel that EU efforts should continue to play the primary role for its members as and when the situation so demands. We feel that IMF assistance should only underpin the EU's efforts and play a catalytic role in order to provide confidence to investors ... We would also stress that any financial contributions made should be voluntary and not in any way linked with future voice or governance reform.³⁶

India's agenda for reform of the IMF, moreover, remains strong. Hence, while insisting on the voluntary nature of additional resources that countries (including India) might give and delinking these contributions from quota revisions, it has joined the BRICS group in insisting on the understanding that its new contributions (e.g. India's contribution of US\$10 billion in June 2012) 'are being made in anticipation that all the reforms agreed upon in 2010 will be fully implemented in a timely manner, including a comprehensive reform of voting power and reform of quota shares'.³⁷ India, moreover, is involved in the BRICS initiative to cultivate new BATNAs—a classic distributive tactic—to the existing regime. The Delhi Declaration of March 2012 discusses the possibility not only of a development bank (a potential, if still far from concrete, challenge to other multilateral lending institutions) but also of other mechanisms, such as an agreement for extending credit facilities in local currencies under the BRICS Interbank Cooperation Mechanism (which, in effect, could result in a decreasing reliance of the BRICS on the dollar).

A similar pattern in India's behaviour can be seen in other multilateral institutions. Xenia Dormandy, for instance, observes: 'Aside from its role in the tsunami response group and in UN peacekeeping operations, the government has been less than enthusiastic about burden-sharing mechanisms ... Leading pundits in India agree, expressing no great need for India to take on wider responsibilities, considering the costs they involve and the possibility of being perceived as a US pawn.'³⁸

The one regime in respect of which India's negotiation behaviour might be seen to represent an exception to the norm is that of nuclear non-proliferation. With its impeccable record of non-proliferation to other states, India emerges here as a regime upholder, in contrast to some of the other officially recognized nuclear weapon states (NWS). Further, as Indian officials have repeatedly argued, India did not violate any of its international obligations by conducting the 1998 tests because it was never a signatory to the NPT. It also chose to bind its own hands voluntarily, for instance via a no first use commitment. One could thus use this argument to suggest that India takes its international responsibilities seriously in the regime, and further that its willingness to accept constraints (such as inspection of its civilian facilities) under the 123 Agreement suggests increasingly integrative behaviour. But an alternative interpretation is at least as plausible. To agree to voluntary no first use after having conducted nuclear tests, which violate at least

³⁶ Statement by Pranab Mukherjee, Minister of Finance for India, on behalf of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Sri Lanka, International Monetary Fund, International Financial and Monetary Committee, 21 April 2012, www.imf.org/External/spring/2012/imfc/statement/eng/ind.pdf, accessed 19 March 2013.

³⁷ 'Media note on the informal meeting of the BRICS leaders ahead of G20 summit in Los Cabos', 18 June 2012, <http://www.brics.utoronto.ca/docs/120618-loscabos-note.html>, accessed 19 March 2013.

³⁸ Dormandy, 'Is India, or will it be, a responsible stakeholder?', p. 126.

the spirit of the regime if not the letter, suggests a low threshold for responsibility. In fact, it could be argued that India's agenda-setting efforts have actually been quite disruptive to the regime: the exceptions created specifically for India, which accord it the status and recognition of a *de facto* NWS, effectively blur the distinction between the NWS and non-NWS that is fundamental to the regime. India may have signed the deal with the US, but it remains to be seen exactly how the distinction between civilian and military facilities, for inspection purposes, will play out. The deal, as already mentioned earlier, is far from a full-blown alliance, and carefully circumscribed commitments on inspections and technology purchases may be a very small price to pay for the overwhelming gain of India's having acquired the legitimacy of a NWS without signing up to the NPT. In terms of coalition patterns and negotiation strategies, then, nothing fundamental has changed for India in the non-proliferation regime either.

Responsible to whom then, and why?

The previous section suggests that there are important continuities between the post-independence India and the rising India in terms of all three variables (strategy, coalitions and framing). India's dominant strategy does still seem to be distributive; its coalition pattern still reveals a reluctance to bandwagon and even some continuity with bloc-type coalitions; and its moralistic style of framing its negotiating positions has not disappeared, though it may at times be somewhat tempered by a more pragmatic discourse. These dominant negotiating trends have deep cultural roots, but they are undoubtedly reinforced by some of the bottlenecks in India's development status and pattern. One illustration of this follows, and is useful because it captures the dominant trend on all three variables.

In the July 2008 WTO talks, mentioned above, India bore a great deal of the blame for causing the deadlock. The immediate issue over which that deadlock occurred was agriculture, with India leading the charge of developing countries that sought greater flexibilities via the special safeguard mechanism and also demanded a lowering of agricultural subsidies by the United States. Kamal Nath, India's Minister for Commerce, justified his country's refusal to make concessions on agriculture in the following terms:

For us, agriculture involves the livelihoods of the poorest farmers who number in the hundreds of millions. We cannot have a development Round without an outcome which provides full comfort to livelihood and food security concerns in developing countries ... The poor of the world will not forgive us if we compromise on these concerns. These concerns are too vital to be the subject of trade-offs.³⁹

And indeed, India's refusal to make any trade-offs involving agriculture contributed significantly to the July 2008 deadlock. While certain characteristics of India's negotiating culture constituted an important influence on its adopting this position, just as important were domestic concerns with development. Agricul-

³⁹ Statement of Shri Kamal Nath, Indian Minister of Commerce and Industry, at WTO TNC meeting, 23 July 2008, http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/dda_e/meeto8_stat_ind_21jul_e.doc, accessed 19 March 2013.

ture is not India's most productive sector, and its contribution to GDP has declined from 18.1 per cent in 2006/2007 to 16.6 per cent in 2009/2010. By tying its own hands in this low-productivity sector, the Indian government could have taken on vital reform in this area. But it was extremely reluctant to do so, given the large proportion of its population employed in this sector (until as recently as 2010/2011, 52 per cent of India's total workforce was employed in agriculture).⁴⁰ India's relatively weak manufacturing sector, along with low levels of literacy, high levels of corruption and inadequate welfare mechanisms, are all deterrents to facilitating a smooth transition for the millions of small farmers whose lives would indeed be jeopardized were India to face a sudden surge in imports. Add to these issues the Indian government's commitment to food security and price stability, and India's adoption of a strict distributive strategy on agricultural trade liberalization becomes more understandable. So also do other distributive moves, including the willingness to accept only voluntary constraints, rather than binding commitments, on emissions to mitigate climate change.

A similar story can be told about India's continued commitment to coalitions that show balancing behaviour and an affinity for blocs, rather than bandwagoning and pragmatic issue-based alliances, and also in the framing of its demands. While India, in aggregate, has flourished under the opportunities offered to it by globalization, poor distributive mechanisms within the country have resulted in increasing inequality.⁴¹ India may be among the fastest-growing economies of the past decade, but across multiple indicators it remains a developing country. Like-mindedness with the West in terms of democracy and language may, at a later stage, acquire greater prominence in the national discourse. But when the livelihoods of so many of its people are still precarious (25 per cent of the population live below the poverty line), it is not surprising that India has continued with the old habit of throwing in its lot with other developing countries. A persistent wariness of joining bandwagons—whether through formal alliances or informal ententes—is consistent with this pattern.

These development constraints also affect India's choice of framing strategies. We certainly see some greater pragmatism: for instance, even in the area of trade, where India's leadership of coalitions of developing countries is strong, the language is not of the new international economic order but focuses on fairly specific issues (e.g. in the G33 on the special safeguard mechanism in agriculture). But it would be premature to suggest that a language of pragmatism has replaced the language of morality, fairness and ethics. Once again, turning to Minister Kamal Nath in July 2008, we find a useful and dramatic example that is at least partly reminiscent of India post-independence and indeed as a leader of the G77 in UNCTAD:

⁴⁰ *Trade Policy Review, India*, WT/TPR/S/249, 2011.

⁴¹ See e.g. Dipak Mazumdar, 'Decreasing poverty and increasing inequality in India', in *Tackling inequality in Brazil, China, India and South Africa: the role of labour market and social policies* (Paris: OECD, 2010), http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/tackling-inequalities-in-brazil-china-india-and-south-africa-2010/decreasing-poverty-and-increasing-inequality-in-india_9789264088368-6-en, accessed 19 March 2013.

All manner of objections are being raised to our right to safeguard livelihood concerns of hundreds of millions. Are we expected to stand by, see a surge in imports and do nothing? Do we give developed countries the unfettered right to continue subsidizing and then dumping those subsidies on us jeopardizing lives of billions? The position of developed countries [*sic*] is utterly self-righteous: they have enjoyed their SSG [(current) special safeguard] (and want to continue it) but our SSM [special safeguard mechanism] must be subject to all sorts of shackles and restraints. This self-righteousness will not do. If it means no deal, so be it.⁴²

Powerful domestic pressures are thus at work, and they could perhaps dictate India's reliance on distributive negotiation strategies, balancing coalitions and moralistic framing. Were this the case, India would be unlikely to assume international responsibilities until and unless these domestic concerns changed. But, as I have argued above, this is not the case. India's negotiating behaviour varies, depending on whom it is bargaining with. This in turn suggests that India is perhaps not reluctant to be a responsible power *per se*, but that it sees itself as owing its responsibility to different constituencies.

In accordance with the analysis presented above, the distributive negotiation strategy remains the dominant one in its bargaining with the established powers. The dominance of the state—at least partly a function of post-colonial state-building—translates into a distributive approach to dealing with MNCs and NGOs. Even in international organizations that have proved responsive to India's rise and have modified their decision-making processes accordingly, integrative moves are surprisingly few. India shows a greater willingness to adopt a mixed distributive strategy with other rising powers and an integrative strategy with smaller powers.

India's coalition alignments and framing tactics map out quite closely and consistently with its negotiation strategy. A tendency to balance against established powers is accompanied by the creation and strengthening of coalitions with other developing countries, both rising powers and smaller developing countries, including LDCs. The coalitions it leads are 'issue-based' in that we see a variation across different regimes (in contrast, for instance, to the Non-Aligned Movement or G77), with, for example, the BASIC coalition on climate change, or the G20 and the G33 in the WTO. Interestingly, these coalitions usually comprise developing countries (rather than a mix of developed and developing) and show the greater ideational coherence and longevity that usually characterize bloc-type coalitions rather than issue-based ones.

We see some change in framing tactics on different fronts, including coalition rationalization. In trade negotiations, for example, Indian negotiators seldom offer ideational loyalty or Third Worldism as a motivating force, and instead justify their positions in the language of shared interests. But even here, pragmatism is not the only justification. For example, when explaining and elaborating on India's Africa policy, Indian negotiators have readily used phrases like 'the principle of co-development', 'partnership', 'South–South cooperation' and

⁴² Statement of Shri Kamal Nath at WTO TNC meeting, 23 July 2008. Note particularly that the objection suggests a replay of a North–South dimension to the debate by referring to the 'self-righteousness' of the 'developed countries' rather than identifying specific and individual interests.

‘common purpose’.⁴³ When dealing with the established powers and international organizations (for instance in the WTO, when asked to make concessions by the developed countries), the use of moralistic justification and appeal to ideas of justice and fairness increase.

These variations offer us a useful insight into how a rising India approaches the touchy question of international responsibility. In so far as responsibility involves a willingness to share the burden of the provision of global public goods, we see considerable reluctance, manifested in the persistent use of the distributive strategy as the dominant one, particularly towards the established powers, private actors and international organizations. Hence also India’s reluctance to make concessions in trade negotiations or accept binding commitments in climate change negotiations—and indeed its persistent refusal to sign the NPT and other treaties on nuclear non-proliferation. But we see a readiness to provide club goods for smaller groups of countries, especially when they involve smaller developing countries. We see this in its willingness to allow free-riding by smaller members in coalitions and to promote their demands. This behaviour fits with that of post-independence India, but a rising India has a greater ability to do this effectively alongside a well-established willingness to do so.

Whether rising India’s motivations for its willingness to assume club-level responsibilities are different from those of post-independence India needs further study. But one might anticipate a mix of the logics of ‘appropriateness’ and ‘consequences’ driving this behaviour. Considerations of appropriateness derive at least partly from India’s own experiences in the first half-century of its independence, when it would take up causes (such as the new international economic order) as a leader of the marginalized many. Considerations of consequences may involve several factors. A willingness to use integrative strategies and build coalitions with other developing countries legitimizes India’s claims to a position of importance in many international negotiations. To the extent that India’s rise still poses a challenge to the established powers (and certain norms and rules that they uphold), strengthening the hand of smaller allies makes more sense for India than bandwagoning with the developed world. Further, given the complexity and seriousness of its domestic problems, it would be much harder for Indian negotiators to justify the country’s contributions to the provision of public goods (e.g. via funds for resolving the European debt crisis and thereby facilitating international financial stability) than similar contributions to club goods for smaller countries (e.g. aid to LDCs, large proportions of whose populations are even worse off than India’s poorest).

Policy recommendations

On the basis of the analysis set out above, how might India best be engaged with? And are there any lessons to be learnt for Indian negotiators as they attempt to fulfil the Great Power aspirations of their country?

⁴³ Author’s interviews, New Delhi, Sept. 2008.

Policy recommendations for India's negotiation partners

The analysis conducted in this article reveals that India is a tougher negotiating partner for some parties than for others. The established powers, private actors and international organizations have thus far seen India play hardball; other rising powers have seen a mix of behaviours; only the smaller players, such as the LDCs, need to seek no major modification in India's negotiating behaviour.

From the perspective of the established powers and private actors, and especially international organizations, engagement so far has not resulted in a significant change in India's behaviour. Despite having secured *de facto* legitimacy as a nuclear weapon state, it is still not a signatory to the NPT; despite the involvement of the US in facilitating its nuclear legitimacy, the Indo-US relationship is nowhere near special enough to merit the status of an alliance; despite being courted by MNCs and despite its own need for greater foreign direct investment, Indian bureaucracy has not made it any easier for private actors to do business in the country; despite having acquired a seat at the high table of WTO negotiations, it remains reluctant to make the concessions necessary to ensure the provision of the public good of free trade. In other words, bending over backwards to bring India into the centre of international power politics has not yet transformed it into a conformist, pro-West negotiating partner, and there is little reason to believe that it will do so in the future. Two policy prescriptions result from this insight.

First, perhaps where the established powers, private actors and international organizations have gone wrong is to assume that greater engagement produces greater buy-in equally from all the rising powers. A more effective strategy might be to frame seats at major negotiating tables in terms of a bargaining game. This would apply not just to India but also to other rising powers. Market size would be a necessary but not sufficient condition for gaining entry into the major governance forums or indeed attracting FDI or deepening bilateral relations. Rather, states would have to signal their intentions and commitment to share the burden of international responsibility through, for instance, signing up to major treaties that underpin particular regimes or by accepting a greater share of the responsibilities than the majority of players would be expected to take on. Note that the rising powers—perhaps predictably—have resisted any preliminary attempts to link responsibility and reform (for instance in the IMF).

In those areas where such resistance is especially high and no compromise is possible, a second strategy might help (not only in respect of India, but with the other BRICS as well). This might be to push India to suggest alternative ways in which responsibility might be conceptualized. This seems like a reasonable proposal on the following grounds. India may have resisted taking on certain international responsibilities because it does not buy into the values that those responsibilities represent. To require it to accept values antithetical to its own in order to acquire Great Power status would not violate the most basic standards of international accountability. But instead of nay-saying, India could be encouraged to articulate more clearly which alternative public goods it might be willing

to provide. Such a strategy would be useful not only for those who have borne the brunt of India's distributive bargaining stick, but also for other rising powers negotiating with each other. Innovative solutions might result, with the rising powers finding common ground on certain values. In so far as neither India nor the other rising powers have fully identified their own visions of global order, engagement along these lines at this stage would be especially important in facilitating the generation of ideas.

Policy recommendations for India negotiating as a rising power

There is much that India could do both to protect its own interests and to improve its claims to Great Power status.

First, there is no escaping the fact that Indian negotiators find their hands tied, albeit to varying degrees depending on the issue area and negotiating partner, by domestic constraints. If it is to embrace its international responsibilities more effectively, India must recognize that it owes considerable responsibility to its own people. For example, it would be easier for India to take on more responsibilities in the WTO via agricultural liberalization if it were to improve literacy and education levels, facilitate infrastructure investment, reform land and agricultural subsidies, ensure growth in the manufacturing sector and reduce levels of corruption, all of which would provide the small subsistence farmers in India with viable and more fruitful alternative ways of earning their livelihoods. A more developed India with a more equitable growth pattern is likely to enjoy more ability to make concessions and take on new responsibilities. But India does not need to wait for the nirvana of development to negotiate effectively, as suggested by the policy recommendations below.

The fact that rising India continues to provide certain club goods to other developing countries, echoing the leadership shown by post-independence India, deserves more scholarly and public attention. For Indian negotiators who are accused of failing to take on responsibilities commensurate with India's rising power, a less defensive strategy than that currently followed would be to point to the alternative types of responsibility that it has taken on historically and continues to assume.⁴⁴ But at some point, if India is to make the transition from a rising power to a Great Power, it will have to go beyond its commitment to

⁴⁴ For an example of India's defensiveness on the issue of international responsibility, see Shyam Saran, 'The evolving role of emerging economies in global governance: an Indian perspective', 7 June 2012, www.ficci.com/EmergingEconomiesPaper-shyam-saran.pdf, accessed 23 March 2013. Saran writes: 'The activism of India or other emerging countries on certain regional and international issues may not always be aligned with that of the Western countries. This does not make such activism irresponsible, just as lack of enthusiasm for Western actions on certain issues, which India from its standpoint may consider injudicious, also cannot be criticised as irresponsible conduct ... The same argument can be made about the global financial and trading systems, which have been put in place and are dominated by the industrialized economies of the West ... If the emerging countries have been able to achieve rapid growth in their economies, they have been able to do so despite the constraints imposed on them by the global economic and financial systems rather than because of them. The sub-text here is that since the existing regimes have enabled the emerging economies to develop, they should acquiesce in the rules and regulations set by the Western countries rather than seek to modify or alter them. This is not a valid assumption. There may be rules that emerging economies may find acceptable. There may be others they may want to see modified so as to reflect their interests.'

the provision of club goods and accept some responsibilities for the provision of public goods.

The third strategy thus available to India would be to signal clearly which public goods it would be willing to provide, moving beyond the discourse of rejecting those proposed by others. As argued above, India has not yet fully developed these ideas (nor, indeed, have the other rising powers). Explicit internal debates on this would be important steps towards identifying and articulating India's vision of global order, and then seeking agreement on this in cooperation with other external players.