



## EDITORIAL: THE HINDU

**GENERAL STUDIES 2: INTERNATIONAL RELATION DATE: 17.01.2025**

**TOPIC: EFFECT OF POLICIES AND POLITICS OF DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES ON INDIA'S INTERESTS**

### STRENGTHENING EU-INDIA RELATIONS FOR A DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE

#### A New Era for Democracies

- The global democratic landscape experienced significant shifts in 2024, and 2025 offers a unique opportunity for democracies to regroup and establish new partnerships.
- Among these, the EU-India relationship is pivotal, requiring a transformation from strategic intent to effective action.

#### Persistent Challenges in EU-India Relations

- **Prolonged FTA Negotiations:** For over 17 years, Free Trade Agreement (FTA) discussions have dominated the agenda, overshadowing other vital areas of collaboration.
- **Missed Opportunities:** A successful FTA could counter global protectionist trends and strengthen economic and geopolitical ties, yet delays persist due to negotiation complexities.

#### Moving Beyond Trade: Expanding Collaboration

- **Economic Security:** The focus must shift to securing resilient supply chains, reducing dependence on China, and positioning India as a trusted partner.
- **Defense Cooperation:** Strengthening defense partnerships to address shared security concerns is critical.
- **Joint Innovation:** Space exploration, emerging technologies, and critical industries like pharmaceuticals present areas for collaborative breakthroughs.

#### Navigating Geopolitical Dynamics

- **Divergent Perspectives:** Europe's frustration over India's response to the Ukraine crisis contrasts with India's historical ties with Moscow.
- **Balancing Relations:** India carefully balances its engagement with Russia and China while prioritizing democratic values and avoiding entanglement in polarized power blocs.
- **Shared Concerns:** The growing "No Limits" partnership between Russia and China poses a mutual threat to democratic alliances.



## Building a Pragmatic Framework

- **Trade and Investment:** Gradual removal of trade barriers and fostering investment in critical industries can pave the way for stronger economic ties.
- **Supply Chain Resilience:** Collaborating to create alternative supply chains reduces reliance on China.
- **Defense Partnership:** Accelerating defense talks and offering advanced European weapons can diminish India's dependence on Russian arms.
- **Technology Leadership:** Strengthening the underutilized EU-India Trade and Technology Council (TTC) can counter China's dominance in emerging technologies.

## Strengthening Defense and Technology Collaboration

- **Learning from the U.S.-India Model:** India's defense ties with the U.S. serve as a template for scaling up EU-India defense cooperation.
- **Space Exploration:** Pooling resources in space technology can lead to significant mutual benefits.
- **Emerging Technologies:** Drawing inspiration from the U.S.-India iCET initiative, Europe and India can prioritize collaboration in biotech, quantum computing, and AI.

## Fostering People-to-People Ties

- **Educational Exchanges:** Promoting academic collaborations will enhance mutual understanding.
- **Cultural Engagements:** Shared democratic values can be reinforced through cultural partnerships.

## Conclusion

- As India emerges as the world's third-largest economy, it offers vast opportunities for Europe to strengthen ties.
- Beyond economic potential, a robust alliance of democracies involving Europe, India, and the U.S. can counter autocratic powers, ensuring a secure and prosperous future. By addressing shared challenges and leveraging mutual strengths, this partnership can set the foundation for a resilient global democratic order.

**Source:** <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/an-alliance-of-democracies-with-india-at-its-core/article69105340.ece>