



**RAMAIAH
UNIVERSITY**
OF APPLIED SCIENCES

CENTRE FOR
NATIONAL SECURITY STUDIES

CNSS Explainer #05

India-US New Defence Agreements

Balasubramanian C

Senior Research Officer (CNSS)



cnss@msruas.ac.in



<https://cnss.msruas.ac.in/>

Introduction

During Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's recently concluded four-day official visit to the US, India and the US have signed a **Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA)** and Memorandum of Agreement regarding the Assignment of Liaison Officers, the latest in a series of bilateral military agreements that have **enhanced defence and security cooperation** between the two countries over the past decade.

During the meeting, both two sides appreciated progress made in operationalising **Indo-Pacific Maritime Domain Awareness**, an initiative by the QUAD countries.

Already Indian warships are already participating in operations of **42-nation combined maritime forces (CMF)** led by the US in Bahrain and India is set to deploy officers at Combined Task Force-150 HQ by next year.

What?

Under the Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA), the US and India will provide reciprocal priority support to each other for goods and services that promote national defence. It will “enable both countries to acquire the industrial resources they need from one another **to resolve unanticipated supply chain disruptions to meet national security needs.**”

India is the 18th country with which the USA has signed the Security of Supply Arrangement. The agreement is non-binding, under which the USA can request priority delivery of defence items from Indian companies, and India can request priority delivery of defence items from American companies.

The Memorandum of Agreement regarding the Assignment of Liaison Officers is a progression on a decision taken earlier **to increase information-sharing between India and the US, and to post Indian armed forces officers in key strategic US Commands.** India will deploy the first Liaison Officer to the US Special Operations Command headquarters in Florida. This agreement seeks to enhance cooperation, understanding, interoperability, and sharing of information on matters of mutual interest.

Background

The vision for bilateral defence cooperation was encapsulated in the September 2013 Joint US-India Declaration on Defence Cooperation and the 2015 Framework for the US-India Defence Relationship, in which **the two countries committed themselves to increasing cooperation** in the sector.

The 2023 roadmap for defence industrial cooperation released last year envisioned the conclusion of SOSA and the RDP Agreement.

In January 2023, the US-India initiative on Critical and Emerging Technology (iCET) was discussed to expand the **strategic technology partnership and defence industrial cooperation**.

In June 2023, during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's official state visit to the US, the Department of Defence of the US and India's Ministry of Defence launched the **India-US Defence Acceleration Ecosystem (INDUS-X)**, to build a defence innovation bridge under iCET.



In 2002, India and the US had signed the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) to facilitate sharing of military information. **Between 2016 and 2020, the two sides signed four more agreements** - Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) of 2016; Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) in 2018; Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) in 2020 & the Industrial Security Annex (ISA) to the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) in 2019.

Other Defence and Security Cooperation between India and US

In 2012, the Defence Trade and Technology Initiative (DTTI) agreement was signed **to promote industrial cooperation and defence trade between the two countries.**

Subsequently, in 2016, the US designated India as a Major Defence Partner. Commensurate with this designation, in 2018, India was elevated to Strategic Trade Authorisation tier 1 status.

There is also a Memorandum of Intent between the US Defence Innovation Unit (DIU) and the Indian Defence Innovation Organization-Innovation for Defence Excellence (DIO-iDEX).

Negotiations are underway to manufacture GE F-414 jet engines in India for the LCA MK 2 fighters, and to procure 31 MQ-9B High-Altitude Long-Endurance (HALE) UAVs.