

## The mutual influence of the South Asia Strategy between China and the United States

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**Abstract:** Both China and the United States attach great importance to the strategic influence on South Asia. China's South Asia strategic objectives are to ensure transportation lanes security, promote regional stability and strengthen regional cooperation. While the U.S. strategic objectives in South Asia, in addition to breaking the "security dilemma" and strengthening its influence in South Asia, also shows an intention to target at China. However, China and the United States share common interests and needs of mutual cooperation in South Asia, if the United States tries to avoid using "destructive power" in South Asia, and cooperate with China to build "constructive power" framework, the two countries will continue to expand the effective cooperation space. So it is not only conducive to the stability of the South Asian region, but also conducive to enhancing cooperation space and political mutual trust between China and the United States.

Since the beginning of 21st century, the Indian ocean, with its favorable geographical position and abundant natural resources has become key ocean waters for the world's major power to compete for influence, so South Asia has naturally become a center of the geopolitical game of major countries. In terms of the geographical position, South Asia has three distinct characteristics: (1) South Asia is located in the intersection of Southeast Asia, West Asia and Central Asia, adjacent to the western China, but Himalayas Range serving as barrier separates South Asia from Asian landmass. The South Asian sub-region is the hub connecting Europe, Middle East, East Asia and Australia. (2) In the center of Indian ocean, South Asia geographically forms a relatively independent unit, adjacent to the Bay of Bengal and Arabian sea in the east and the west respectively. (3) India is located in the center of South Asia, which includes other countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Maldives and Sri Lanka, bordered with India by land or nearby sea, but not next to each other. In terms of geopolitical value, in addition to the geographical advantages with the Himalayas mountains in the back and the seas on the other three sides, South Asia is also the flank of the world petroleum center, which not only adds to the geopolitical competition elements in South Asia, but also has a pivotal position for South Asia in the global strategy of major countries. While, India directly cuts into the Indian ocean

more than 1600 km, not only geographically centered in South Asia, its population, landmass and GDP account for 75%, 63%, and 78% of the entire South Asian region. Whether in terms of size or resource advantage, India is the South Asian political and security center. Pakistan, another important country in South Asia, although it has nuclear weapons, yet, its economic scale and potential are no match for India.<sup>1</sup>

After the end of the cold war, the rising India, the India-Pakistan nuclear issue, the India-Pakistan conflict, Afghanistan-Pakistan conflict, Terrorist threats and other reasons together make the South Asian region increasingly become the focus of attention of major countries. Especially after the "9/11" terrorist attacks, the South Asian region becomes a hotbed of terrorism, Al Qaeda and Taliban extremists entrenched in Afghanistan and Pakistan border area frequently launch attacks, plus the non-stopped India-Pakistan conflict, and the Afghanistan-Pakistan conflict, which deteriorate the security situation in South Asia. Meanwhile, there is increasing strategic competition between regional and non-regional major countries in South Asia, such as the U.S. increasing efforts to intervene in South Asia, India seeking exclusive hegemony in South Asia, and China beginning to attach importance to its strategic influence in South Asia. As a result, the strategic situation in South Asia is becoming increasingly complex.

So, what are the strategic objectives of China and the United States in South Asia? What will be the impact of their strategies?

### **I. The strategic objectives and interests concerns of China and the United States in South Asia**

South Asia is not only indispensable in the geopolitical game of major countries, its role in the global security situation can not be ignored either. In recent years, the security situation in South Asia has not been fundamentally improved. Conflicts between nations and between religions crop up still one after another, the anti-terrorism situation gets more complex, and violent terrorism has become the biggest security risk in South Asia. Among them, Kashmir is the source of ethnic and religious conflicts, Pakistan is a nest for a variety of extreme organizations and Afghanistan is a hotbed for incubating terrorist forces. On the one hand, the political turmoil in South Asian countries and the increasingly serious threat of terrorism and other realities makes Indian national security, to a certain degree, depend on the whole South Asia regional security. On the other hand, although China and the United States in South Asia do not have entirely identical strategic objectives, yet, the two countries in South Asia are facing increasingly convergent challenges and threats in the volatile security situation.

#### ***(A) China's strategic objectives and interests concerns in South Asia***

China's strategic objectives in South Asia are mainly reflected in three aspects: (1) Safeguarding security of the economic interests. China as the world's second largest economy, the largest trading country, the No. 1 country of foreign exchange reserves, the second largest energy consuming country, with more than 50% dependence on foreign trade, as well as the high dependence on imported oil and other realities, all help boost China's economic dependence on global resources and trade. Particularly, the strategic channels for China's imports of oil and foreign trade are mainly concentrated in the Indian Ocean region, which

determines that China is a country closely related to South Asia and the Indian ocean.<sup>2</sup> Whether in view of land or ocean, overlooking Indian Ocean can find South Asia cut across China's important sea lanes to the Middle East, concerning channels' security for China's trade and energy. Therefore, although China is not a country in Indian Ocean, yet, China in the South Asian and the Indian ocean regions has the strategic requirements for energy channel security and trade channel security. (2), Promoting the stability of South Asia. South Asia is the neighboring region where China has the largest number of neighbors on land, China has a common border with India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan and Afghanistan, and the total length of the common border is close to 5000 km. South Asia is deeply affected by non-traditional security threats. Pakistan and Afghanistan, in particular, are the breeding ground for global terrorism. Bordered with the western region of China, South Asia's India, Pakistan, Nepal, and Bhutan are of significance to the security and stability of its western region. (3) Expanding economic cooperation between China and South Asian countries. As China's neighboring region, South Asia is not only the indispensable channel for China's oil transportation, but also a region with great economic cooperation potential. Since the end of the Cold War, in order to avoid a fall into a mud pit of geopolitical suspicion and strategic competition, China takes a more cautious overall strategy in South Asia. Although China and SAARC countries have the willingness to cooperate with each other, and the common interests in development of the economy, cooperation on counterterrorism and regional security and other aspects, yet, general shortage of bilateral and multilateral cooperation mechanisms results in slow progress of bilateral relations and staggering development of multilateral cooperation. Economic development level of South Asian countries is relatively low, but shows high complementarity and growing interdependence with China's economic cooperation, and their economic cooperation has great potential.

Judging from the current regional and international situations, China's major interests

in South Asia include the following aspects.

*Firstly, the stable surrounding environment is China's primary interests concerns.* China's South Asia strategy, on the one hand, through security cooperation with the United States, India, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, etc., is to effectively prevent the spreading terrorist forces from threatening regional security and safeguard China's overseas economic interests; on the other hand, to prevent terrorism in South Asia from threatening the security in China's western border areas, to prevent the "three forces" (violent terrorist force, ethnic separatist force and religious extremist force) from spreading to and infiltrating into the territory of China. At this stage, whether it is the Belt or the Road jointly built by China and neighboring countries, terrorist and extremist forces are important elements threatening security of the infrastructure construction projects along the routes. Particularly the construction of China-Pakistan economic corridor connecting Kashi, Xinjiang and Gwadar harbor, Pakistan on land, while the terrorist force, extreme force and separatist force are concentrated in the territory of Pakistan, so the security situation is explosive at any moment, which can not be ignored. China must properly respond to them and coordinate with Afghanistan and Pakistan in anti- terrorism cooperation.

*Secondly, ensuring the channel safety and expanding the low-cost energy transport channels.* Pakistan is an important gateway for China to enter the Persian Gulf, Arabian Sea and the Middle East and West Africa, while Pakistan and Afghanistan are connected with Central Asia with rich energy resources, and are China's important energy channels. Central Asia and Indian Ocean are the world geopolitical "heart" regions, which is also have the most abundant industrial material resources, especially oil and gas reserves in world. The dual temptations of geopolitics and resources have led almost all the major countries in modern times to keep an eye on the Indian Ocean and its north bank region, and to start the game of life and death.<sup>3</sup> China, as the world's largest population country with rising demand for overseas energy, South Asia

and Central Asia, Middle East and Africa are the source of China's energy imports, it is the Indian Ocean lanes that China's overseas energy transport must pass through. China's initiative to implement the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road is not only conducive to the protection of energy and trade channels, but also to open up new transport channels and effectively reduce the cost of transport. While safeguarding the Chinese economic interests, it is also beneficial to promote the economic development of all countries along the route. As for India a South Asian major country, it will have more advantages than disadvantages.

*Thirdly, China hopes to play a positive role in the healthy development of India-Pakistan relations.* Due to British colonialism--buried calamity, "Kashmir" problem between the two countries has become a difficult matter in the bilateral relations, triggered the outbreak of three wars in 1948, 1966 and 1971, led to a long-term confrontation, and the lack of basic trust between India and Pakistan, so the situation at the daggers drawn occurs sometimes.

Over the past ten years, the two sides have tried to create various opportunities for reconciliatory negotiations, while maintaining a strong position on the Kashmir issue. It is very difficulty for Indian-Pakistan relations to obtain substantive progress, and Indian- Pakistan conflict, to a certain extent, also has brought pressure to other countries in South Asia, and increased the instability of the strategic pattern of South Asia. However, stable relations between India and Pakistan is not only in conformity with the interests of the two countries, but also China's interests requirements to maintain stability in its surrounding regions.

*Fourthly, expanding economic and trade cooperation between China and South Asian region.* From the beginning of 2000, the proportion of Asian trade within the region maintained at about 50% of the total trade volume of Asia, in recent years researched about 54%.<sup>4</sup> Compared to the trade and investment cooperation between China and Southeast Asia, the economic and trade ties between China and South Asian countries are

relatively loose, and the trade volume and investment sum are limited. Despite the fact that trade between China and South Asian countries is highly complementary, and investment demand potential is great, the economic development of most South Asian countries is backward, infrastructure is poor and governments are lack of financial resources, and other factors, so their economic potential is difficult to release. China's cooperation with South Asian countries is more concentrated in economic area, while the United States and India in South Asia have more extensive common interests in the strategic and security areas. A peaceful and stable South Asia will undoubtedly meet the interests of all parties concerned.

***(B) The U.S. strategic objectives and interests concerns in South Asia***

South Asia is an important part of the U.S. global strategy. The United States strengthens its relations with South Asia, in addition to requirements for energy resources and economic interests, it is more important for it to maintain the U.S. military presence in the region in order to expand the U.S. strategic interests space and maintain the interests of its allies. In the South Asian region, the United States considers the three countries India, Pakistan and Afghanistan should be given attention in the U.S. regional and the global strategy. Because the strength of India, Pakistan and Afghanistan varies greatly, the United States focuses on the bilateral relations. The U.S. strategic focus on the U.S-Pakistan relationship is to eliminate terrorism, to promote internal stability and to prevent the nuclear proliferation, while the U.S. strategic focus on the U.S-Afghanistan relations is to eliminate terrorism, to promote a peaceful transition and prevent it from becoming a failed state.<sup>5</sup> In contrast, India's value to the United States sees rapid rise after the "9/11" terrorist attacks. India is the world's largest market in the future, is the U.S. main supporter of anti-terrorism cooperation in South Asia, and is a country critical to Indian Ocean safety. As a result, the United States has realized that it is necessary to inject new vitality into the

relationship between the two countries to deal with the strategic dilemma and internal pressure. The United States supports India to become a major regional power and a major world power. The U.S.-Indian cooperation can balance China's regional influence, and the United States and India have common needs in response to China's rising economic and military strength.

One of the main goals of the U.S. South Asia policy is to help India become a world power to serve the U.S. core interests.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, India is regarded as a U.S. permanent friend and potential partner in the strategic, economic and military fields, while Pakistan is a friend needed by the United States since Pakistan has a strategic importance in the whole world and needs to be considered in shaping a new geopolitical landscape in South Asia by the United States.<sup>7</sup> The U.S.-India civil nuclear deal is rising, whose significant changes make India become more powerful, and become the key actor in the regional geopolitical pattern. This deal will help India achieve a long-term geo-strategic objective, and an Asian force to balance China. However, the United States makes India a global or at least a regional military power in order to achieve its own interests, but also damages the interests of other countries, especially the security interests of Pakistan.<sup>8</sup>

After the "9/11" terrorist attacks, South Asia gradually becomes a fulcrum of the U.S. global strategic layout, the United States continuously increases its military, economic and diplomatic investments in South Asia. The U.S. needs to have peace and stability in South Asia is consistent with China's goals. But the U.S. long-term goal is to create a geopolitical strategic posture to check China in South Asia, which will have a profound impact on the development of China's relationship with India and Pakistan.<sup>9</sup> In concrete terms, the U.S. main interests concerns in South Asia include the following aspects:

*Firstly, responding to non-traditional security threats.* In South Asia, various non-traditional security events such as terrorism, nuclear proliferation and drug smuggling cropped up here and there, leading



to turbulence in this region and breeding a large number of insecure factors. Meanwhile, South Asia is also the intersection of Southeast Asian and the Middle Eastern Islamic extremism. From the global perspective, Pakistan's major strategic value to the United States is anti-terrorism. Although the U.S. South Asia strategy is to strive to eliminate the global terrorist forces, yet at the regional level, the U.S. policy will continue to be impacted by long-term military and economic considerations, in particular, will be subject to changes in regional security situation as well as India-Pakistan, Afghanistan-Pakistan, India-Afghanistan bilateral relations. Sometimes, the United States intervenes in South Asian affairs on the grounds of maintaining peace, but often creates problems rather than providing solutions. The United States also faces another issue, i.e. the Islamic fundamentalism may pose a challenge to the U.S. geo-strategy. By whipping up religious hatred of the American way of life and using the Arab-Israeli conflict, these Islamic fundamentalists can weaken some of the pro-West Mid-Eastern governments and ultimately harm the U.S. interests, especially in the Persian Gulf region.<sup>10</sup>

*Secondly, achieving energy and economic strategic objectives.* Energy security has long been an important consideration of the U.S. Administrations in formulating foreign policy. South Asia strategy is an important part of U.S. global strategy, the purpose of which, after the strategic encirclement of China and Russia in Europe and East Asia on the two wings is basically completed, is then to enforce effective control of geo-interests and oil and gas resources in Central Asia and Middle East.

<sup>11</sup> Although the U.S. oil imports from the Persian Gulf is not much, yet, the importance of controlling oil resources in this region is far greater than the impact of energy itself on the United States. The United States intends to control the energy pattern of the Persian Gulf, and then hold the initiative for the world's energy in order to maintain its hegemony in the world, this is the U.S. real strategic intent in this region.

This is conducive to the United States to open and control the oil and gas pipeline routes

from the Central Asian CIS countries through Afghanistan, Pakistan, and finally into Arabian Sea. In fact, as early as January 2006, the U.S. State Department started the Greater Central Asia plan, believing that the strategic conception to integrate South Asia and Central Asia is conducive to a breakthrough of the U.S. strategic bottlenecks in South Asia, especially in the Central Asian region. Energy demand by rising economies is continuously increasing, and will by 2020 show a substantial impact on the geopolitical relations. On the one hand, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka have achieved remarkable achievements in promoting human development and sustainable economic development, on the other hand, these "low income", and "low middle income" countries face similar development dilemma. They together with other countries in economic transition will face a growing population and an unprecedented challenge to energy demand. It can be predicted that South Asian countries may be unable to meet the growing demand for energy.<sup>12</sup> These new security threats are emerging, and will affect U.S. South Asia policy.

*Thirdly, balancing China with India is also a major consideration of the U.S. South Asia strategy.* After the U.S. strategic gravity turned to the Asia-Pacific region, India has become an important part of the U.S. strategy, the goal of which is to balance the growing China.<sup>13</sup>

The U.S.-India friendly relationship is not only accredited to growing political influence of the Indian immigrants, the approached bilateral relations is resulted from their common worries of China's growing power and the common concerns of global terrorism.<sup>14</sup> The United States seeks to promote India's participation in East Asia economic and security organizations so as to promote regional cooperation. The regional balance of power as such can not only reduce the U.S. financial and military burden, but can also ensure the regional forces to respond to the pressure from Beijing in the absence of the U.S. check to China.<sup>15</sup> As the South Asian subcontinent biggest and most influential country, India is an important strategic power for the United States to balance China, and is

the cornerstone of the U.S. South Asia strategy. In order to realize its global strategic goal, the United States intends to support India, to enhance its influence in Asia and even the world, and to achieve the purpose of balancing China with India. To this end, the United States on a various occasions work hard to "shape" India's image of a world's major power, to strengthen national defense and strategic cooperation between the United States and India with "high profile", to strengthen the U.S. strategic position in South Asia in order to compress China's strategic space in Asia, which invisibly complicates the complex South Asia strategic pattern. After the end of the cold war, the United States adjusts its South Asia policy, particularly adjusts the foreign policy toward India, and actively shapes and nurtures India's regional and global roles, so that it can timely play an "offshore balancer" role as the U.S. interests require, which, to a certain extent, also caters to India's long-term pursuit of the status of a major country.

## **II. The interaction between China and the United States on South Asia strategy**

Today, China's economic growth has formed the potential long-term impact on the U.S. primacy, so the United States tries to limit the impact of this trend from two perspectives. On the one hand, the United States strongly supports China's integration into the global institutions such as the World Trade Organization. On the other hand, it also attempts to prevent the Chinese mainland from taking radical actions on Taiwan or other U.S. allies in this region.<sup>16</sup> The United States hopes China to take more and greater responsibility on regional and global issues, but meanwhile also worried about the result in weakening or even eclipsing the U.S. influence and control in Asia. China and the United States are not only the two major countries with which India should develop relations, but also the most important external factors for India's relations with South Asian neighbors. All India's South Asian neighbors, under pressure from India, need more or less reliance on external forces to create a balance in their own

favor. Currently, the security pattern in South Asia depends on the influences of various South Asian countries, but also cannot be separated from the impacts of external forces.

### ***(A) The impact of the U.S. South Asia Strategy on China***

The biggest difference of South Asia strategy between China and the United States lies in the different strategic influence, different strategic focus and different direction of power-using. A positive impact of the U.S. South Asia strategy on China may have main performances as follows: (1) Cracking down on the terrorist forces in South Asia especially in Afghanistan and Pakistan will reduce relatively the penetration of "Tibetan independence" and "Xinjiang independence" forces into China, which is conducive to the maintenance of security in China's southwestern border areas. (2) The United States strengthens counter-terrorism cooperation with Pakistan, which is conducive to peace and stability across the China-Pakistan border and the entire region at large, and in the common interests of all parties.

However, the U.S. South Asia strategy has a clear intention to check China, which will undoubtedly bring a negative impact on China's South Asia strategy. This negative effect is mainly manifested in the following three aspects.

*Firstly, the U.S. South Asia strategy increases the resistance for China to build a stable environment in the surrounding regions.* It is noted that every more important change in China's surrounding environment can see a shadow of the United States, the U.S. involvement is always an important factor to affect China's surrounding security environment that cannot be ignored. In spite of this, the basic pattern of China's surrounding environment has not been reversed. At present, the developed countries led by the United States have gradually recognized the importance of South Asia for the maintenance of its hegemony, while Asian emerging economies represented by China and India have increasingly become aware of the need and urgency to work together to promote global

balance of power. In the long run, the economic interdependence between neighboring countries and China, and China's amity as well as its major country's image of advocating peaceful development will make the United States unable to do as much as it would like to in the Asia Pacific strategic layout.

*Secondly, the U.S. South Asia strategy adds resistance to improve relations between China and India.* As the world's super power, the main objective of the U.S. global strategy, of course, is to prevent the U.S. hegemonic supremacy from being challenged, and at least to extend the U.S.-led world order as far as possible. As the Indian Ocean is widely expected to become the future strategic game arena among China, the United States and India, the United States views rising India, an emerging major economy in the South Asian region, an important partner to realize its global strategy in order to balance the challenges of China's growing strength to its hegemony. This invisibly will make the political mutual trust between China and India even more fragile. India has repeatedly stressed its "non-aligned" and strategic independence, stated it will not associate with the United States to balance China, but plays China card in the India-U.S. relations to maximize the pursuit of national interests, including benefits from the civilian nuclear cooperation agreement to technology transfer and cooperation as well as weapons equipments and military cooperation. In contact with China, India never forgets emphasizing that the cooperation between two largest developing countries can bring great benefits to both parties,<sup>17</sup> but the impetus for actual cooperation is insufficient, and the cooperation benefit is limited. The United States strengthens strategic cooperation with India in South Asia to balance China's influence, not only accelerating the strategic competition and friction between China and the United States, but also casting a shadow over and increasing resistance to improvement of the relationship between China and India, making the complex China-Indian relationship more complicated, so that the strategic mutual suspicion between either China and the United States or between China and India, or even

between India and the United States is also further intensified.

*Thirdly, the U.S. South Asia strategy has a negative impact on economic cooperation between China and South Asian countries.* Many South Asian countries in economic cooperation with China play "the U.S. card" to win more opportunities and benefits. A strange phenomenon is that the South Asian countries seem unworried about the United States, the strongest power beyond South Asia and even the Indian Ocean, but see more threats from China. The "China Threat Theory" intensifies defense against and distrust of China by India and other neighboring countries, the western academic world views the rising China as a threat and challenge, China is unable to change the western world "China Threat" thinking no matter how hard it emphasizes its peaceful development.<sup>18</sup>

Besides, the extensive propaganda of Western non-governmental organizations (NGO) and one-sided reports and comments by media have a negative impact on bilateral mutual trust between China and South Asian countries. More complex and volatile situation in South Asia also inevitably adds a number of variables and security risks for China's economic cooperation with South Asian countries. In addition, the U.S. anti-terrorism campaign in South Asia drives the terrorist forces in Afghanistan and Pakistan shift to Indian-Pakistan and China-Pakistan border areas, and also poses a huge challenge to the security of China.

### ***(B) The impact of China's South Asia policy on the United States***

The different strategic objectives of China and the United States in South Asia result in different means to achieve their goals. The United States, in order to maintain a unique power position in the world, needs India in its global strategic layout, and expects India, in the regions beyond South Asia to play a more positive role in trade, political and security cooperation and other areas in order to balance the growing China's strength.<sup>19</sup> India hopes to effectively counter Pakistan with the power of the United States in South Asia, and to

achieve its goal of dominating South Asia, which makes the U.S. and India strategic interaction frequent. However, China is still unable to reflect the importance of South Asia in its geo-strategy.

Currently, South Asia has gradually become one of the regions with the most complex security situation. China and the United States continuously enhance their subjective will to actively maintain South Asian regional security and stability, but the joint action of the two countries is clearly insufficient and lack of initiative to strengthen cooperation in South Asia, yet, the negative factors produced by the two countries' strategic competition and interaction in South Asia have constantly emerged. If China and the United States cannot take effective and strong measures to strengthen cooperation in security area in South Asia, the situation in South Asia will not only become more complex, and may make the structural contradictions in the bilateral relationship more prominent.

In fact, the possible impact of China South Asia strategy on the United States may include the following three aspects. (1) With the relative declined strength of Russia in Central Asia and the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, China's influence in South Asia is likely to rise, may pose a challenge to the U.S. presence in South Asia and Central Asia, which will to a certain extent weaken the relative influence of the United States, and exacerbate the strategic competition in this region. (2) With the U.S. accelerating steps of withdrawing troops from Afghanistan, China's involvement in Afghanistan affairs in order to safeguard its own interests and the stability of the South Asian region will bring greater difficulties and challenges to the U.S.-led difficult New Silk Road Plan with Afghanistan as the core. With China's Silk Road Economic Belt construction further promoted, China's influence in Central Asia will also rise increasingly, and the U.S. power in Central Asia would be affected to a certain extent. (3) The continuously deepening China-Pakistan relations also means Chinese rising influence in South Asia, and to a certain extent, affects the interaction between the United States and Pakistan and even between

China and India.

Whether the mutual impact between China and the United States in South Asia is positive or negative depends on not only the strategic interaction between the two countries, but also the strategic influence of South Asian countries, especially India and Pakistan. In the year of 2015, the South Asian diplomacy of India has maintained a very active posture and achieved high-level contacts with most countries, made some breakthroughs with Pakistan, influenced the domestic political situation of Sri Lanka, and controlled the constitutional process of Nepal, showing a strong influence and control in South Asia. In other words, India has a strategic initiative in South Asia, its acts cannot be prevented by other South Asian countries, neither can be effectively resisted by outside foreign forces.<sup>20</sup> This is also the main reason for the United States not only to pay attention to Afghanistan and Pakistan, but also to support India to play an active role in South Asia, in Asia and even in the world.

### Conclusion

Nowadays, the rising Asia has clearly shown a overall regional trend. On the one hand, East Asia, Southeast Asia, West Asia, Central Asia and South Asia strengthen cultural ties and economic integration through offshore and onshore interconnection and interoperability, which is the trend of the times. On the other hand, the situation in South Asia, West Asia and Central Asia shows a great instability. In Afghanistan of South Asia, Taliban and Al Qaeda are making a comeback; the India-Pakistan conflict, the Islamic state and other factors are threatening the stability of South Asia. From the current situation developments, the prospects for the major powers to compete for the sphere of influence in South Asia is not clear, but the concerns of major powers on the region is rising, the main trend is not probably for contention, but seeking to establish a common front of common consensus.<sup>21</sup>

In fact, the cooperation attitude of China toward South Asia is positive and sincere, and its policy is also very constructive. China



proposes to South Asian countries to jointly build the Belt and Road, seek mutual benefit and win-win outcome and common security. Nowadays, the converging interests between China and India has become increasingly prominent, and their challenges and threats are gradually becoming converged. Both China and India have the will to change the current irrational international order. The development of bilateral relations between China and India has a very important and positive impact on the politics, economics and security of South Asia .

Meanwhile, China and the United States are the two major countries outside of the South Asian region, but also stakeholders, have common interests and the mutual needs of cooperation in South Asia. China-U.S. "complex interaction" in South Asia, in addition to both positive and negative impact on evolution of the situation in South Asia, also

indirectly affects the realization of the strategic objectives of both China and the United States in South Asia. As long as the United States avoids using in South Asia the "destructive power", and works with China to build the "constructive power", a sound strategic interaction between China and the United States can be formed in South Asia, and the strategic space for effective cooperation between the two countries continues to expand. Thus, this is not only conducive to the stability of the South Asian region, but also can enhance the political mutual trust between China and the United States, be more conducive to the South Asian region, and form a pattern of cooperation and win-win outcome in South Asia, Asia-Pacific and even the entire world.

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#### Footnotes:

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