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This is the companion volume to *In The National Interest: A Strategic Foreign Policy for India*, jointly authored by Dr Rajiv Kumar and myself. This book is based on The National Interest Project which was undertaken at the Indian Council on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) to suggest external policies and strategies for the decade 2010–20 on the basis of an analysis of India’s national interests.

This volume consists of specialised thematic and country papers which formed the building blocks of the project. We hope, in particular, that this thematic treatment of the subject will bring about new perspectives and benchmarks.

The papers are written by experts with theoretical and practical knowledge of their subjects, validated through peer reviews. In fact, the papers would not have been possible without the contributions of reviewers, participants at the initial brainstorming sessions and members of the National Interest Project research team. The views expressed are, of course, those of the authors, as also any errors or omissions.

The volume attempts a forward-looking analysis and not a historical one. While some details will have inevitably become outdated since the papers were written during 2007–09, we have not found it necessary to update them as their focus is on long-term trends and strategies. In fact, we are quite gratified that they have presaged many subsequent developments and policy initiatives, though we do not claim any causal credit!

**Santosh Kumar**  
Senior Consultant, ICRIER
About the Authors

**Anwar Alam** is Professor and Director of the Centre for West Asian Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi.

**(Late) B Bowonder** was an expert in Technology Forecasting and formerly Director (Research) and Dean of Studies, Tata Management Training Centre.

**S Chandrasekhar** is Professor, Corporate Strategy and Policy Area, at Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.

**Ramya Ghosh** is Clinical Assistant Professor of Economics, LeBow College of Business, Drexel University.

**InderRaj Gulati** is an expert in energy policy and strategy and has worked closely with Indian industry, bureaucrats, government agencies and multinationals.

**Ranjit Gupta** is a distinguished Fellow at the Institute of Peace and Conflict Study and Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Chinese Studies. He was formerly Member of the National Security Advisory Board, Visiting Fellow at the Institute of Defence Studies and Analysis, Visiting Professor at the Academy of Third World Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, and Ambassador-in-Residence at Jawaharlal Nehru University.

**Mathew Joseph** is currently working as Professor (Economics) with FORE School of Management, New Delhi. Earlier he worked as Senior Consultant at ICRIER.

**Gurmeet Kanwal** is Director, Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), New Delhi.

**Vinod C Khanna** has worked extensively on China in the Indian Foreign Service and as Director, Institute of Chinese Studies.

**Rajiv Kumar** is Secretary General of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and an economist. He was formerly Director and Chief Executive, ICRIER.

**Santosh Kumar** is Senior Consultant at ICRIER. He was formerly Dean, Foreign Service Institute, and Secretary in the Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi.

**Suman Kumar** is Head of Policy and Regulatory Affairs (India Operations), SunEdison Energy India Pvt. Ltd.

**Kaza Lalitendra** is a serving Indian Air Force Officer and was formerly with the Centre for Air Power Studies. He is an expert on the militarisation of space.

**Ajey Lele** is a Research Fellow with the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), specialising in weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and strategic and space technologies.

**Neha Malik** was formerly Research Assistant with ICRIER.

**Amitav Mallik** is a defence scientist and formerly Director, Defence Science Centre, Delhi.

**Deb Mukharji** is a foreign affairs commentator and has served as India’s envoy to Bangladesh and Nepal.

**Amitendu Palit** is Head (Development and Programmes) and Visiting Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS), National University of Singapore (NUS).

**V Raghuraman** is a consultant on energy management, energy efficiency, energy policy and regulatory and technology issues. He served as Principal Advisor (Energy), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

**Ramkishen S Rajan** is Associate Professor at the School of Public Policy, George Mason University.
R Rangachari is Honorary Research Professor at Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi; and former Member, Central Water Commission, Ministry of Water Resources, Government of India and Indo-Bangladesh Joint Rivers Commission; Chairman, Brahmaputra Board, Ganga Flood Control Commission and Indo-Bangladesh Joint Committee for Implementation of the Agreement on Ganga Waters.

Saeed Samaddar is Vice-President (Operations) at NOVA Integrated Systems, a Tata Enterprise and former Principal Director, Naval Plans. He has specialised in Japanese studies, defence economics and security issues.

Kanwal Sibal is a former Foreign Secretary, Government of India.

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This collection of incisive and engagingly written essays is a lucid exposition of the principle of national interest. It offers a wealth of analysis and debate on issues that were the building blocks for the National Interest Project and weaves together the painstaking research of scholars from multiple disciplines. The book builds a strong and persuasive case on the need to make national interest paramount in India’s trade, security and foreign policy and as a companion volume to *In the National Interest*, it is an invaluable asset for researchers, policy analysts and academia.