

# **Greece and India: A Strengthening Relationship**

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*To be organized for battle is one of the simplest methods of preserving peace*

**George Washington**

In a world that looks increasingly turbulent, and even unhinged, Greece and India enjoy excellent bilateral relations that date back to 1950. Although separated by great geographical distance, the two countries see eye-to-eye on many diverse issues and are both working earnestly in further expanding their already strong bilateral ties.

While relations between the two countries have strong economic and commercial components, recent strategic security developments have also highlighted previously semi-dormant areas of common Greek-Indian security interests and concerns. The impetus for this convergence between Athens and New Delhi emerged from the rapidly growing embrace between Turkey and Pakistan, which promises multi-faceted and potentially dangerous destabilization potentialities in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The self-appointed neo-sultan Recep Tayyip Erdogan is now an [open threat](#) to regional and world peace and security. His hallucinatory Islamist fantasies are no secret. Under his dictatorial brutally-enforced rule, Turkey has veered off into extremist

Islamism and has found a fitting, and more than willing, partner in Pakistan. Erdogan has succeeded in alienating many in the West but, still, European capitals, the NATO alliance, and the United States continue to dangerously overlook the Turkish threat to regional and world peace because “Turkey is too big to ignore.”

Greece, in particular, has been in Turkish sights for decades. Erdogan, emboldened by ill-conceived EU, and more generally Western, hesitation and, particularly, Germany’s not-so-veiled support, has unleashed unprecedented threats against Greece while strengthening his military ties with Pakistan and enabling it to appear in the Eastern Mediterranean as a “player.”

Given Turkey’s meddling in Libya, its disastrous terrorist role in Syria, its honeymooning with the Iranian mullahs, its hostility towards all Eastern Med countries, and its tin-horned “great power” posturing, Ankara’s love affair with nuclear-armed Pakistan acquires Orwellian potentialities. To boot, Erdogan’s latest brazen “initiative” of [sending Islamist terrorists](#) from Syria to Jammu and Kashmir brings Turkey, as a barefaced hostile, directly into India’s domestic affairs—and “...Ankara and Islamabad prepare for a permanent presence of surface units and aircraft of the Pakistani Defense Ministry in the Turkish operation 'Shield of the Mediterranean', with which Erdogan hopes to plunder Greek lands and plots of land from Greece.”

In view of these perilous developments, a strengthened Greek-Indian strategic partnership emerges as an urgent initiative indeed. This idea is not new; it emerged as early as 2011 when the two countries [agreed to coordinate](#) in battling terrorism and piracy in the Indian Ocean where Greek-owned shipping faced serious risks. A scheduled visit to Greece by the Indian Foreign Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar last November [had to be postponed](#) due to the Covid-19 pandemic but, in a letter to Greek FM Nikos Dendias, “*The Indian Foreign Minister... stressed that India considers Greece as a ‘strategic partner’ with which she connects a ‘long-term friendship’.*”

Greece and India are already discussing closer cooperation in the military technology sector and Greek analysts [have suggested](#) “... that Greece should invite India to the Mediterranean Sea for joint war exercises in view of the increasing tension

*with Turkey.*” Furthermore, Greece [aims to attract more Indian tourists](#) as it was demonstrated by her participation in the South Asian Travel and Tourism Exhibition last October.

The Turko-Pakistani axis has emerged as a distinct Islamist terrorist threat to both Greece and India making Greek-Indian politico-economic and strategic cooperation a natural outcome of the desire of both countries to safeguard not only their own individual interests but, also, international stability and security.

Against this backdrop, the [2017 visit](#) of four Indian warships to the Greek Souda Naval Base in Crete, as part of Indian Navy’s Overseas Deployment (OSD) to the Mediterranean Sea and the West Coast of Africa, can readily serve as the blueprint for expanded permanent naval cooperation between Greece and India to distinct mutual benefit.

These are perilous times and strengthening relations between two of the oldest cultures in the world is an unmistakable signal of determination to oppose rogue states that are kindling a repeat of the 1930s that led to the most catastrophic world conflagration ever.