

Should India Review Its One China Policy

One China policy is the diplomatic recognition by other countries of China's position that there is only one Chinese government of People's Republic of China (PRC), though Taiwan - which calls itself Republic of China (RoC) - has been governed independently of PRC since 1949. Beijing asserts that there is only "One China" and that Taiwan is part of it. It views the PRC as the only legitimate government of China, an approach it calls the [One-China principle](#), and seeks Taiwan's eventual "unification" with the mainland.

India's One China policy refers to its stance of recognising the People's Republic of China (PRC) as the sole legitimate government of China, and not recognising Taiwan as an independent state. The One China policy was first put into practice by India in 1949 when it agreed to the Chinese pre-condition for establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries. At the time, the policy was seen as a way for India to assert its sovereignty post-independence and demonstrate its commitment to non-alignment and anti-colonialism. It also reflected India's support for the principle of self-determination and its opposition to the partition of China. This policy has been a cornerstone of India's foreign policy towards China for several decades, but in recent years there have been calls to revisit this policy in light of changing geopolitical dynamics.

Over the years, the One China policy has played an important role in maintaining stability in India-China relations, even as both countries have grown and changed in different ways. The policy has prevented tensions between the two countries over the issue of Taiwan and allowed both countries to focus on more pressing issues, such as trade, security and regional stability.

However, the changing geopolitical dynamics have led to calls for India to revisit its One China policy. The reasons for this include:

1. Continuous disregard of India's core concerns by China
2. The rise of Taiwan as a major global economic and technological power
3. China's growing military assertiveness and territorial claims
4. India's growing economic and strategic ties with the United States
5. The need for India to assert its independence and defend its interests in the region

While India recognised One China policy, reciprocation in form of 'One India policy' [\[1\]](#) from the Chinese side has remained absent. China expected India to recognise Tibet as an integral part of China and accept the One China policy and India did so without reservation. To the disappointment of India, China has continued to refer Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and Arunachal Pradesh as disputed territories. China has always disregarded sovereignty of India through its stance on PoK, Jammu and Kashmir (Aksai Chin), Arunachal Pradesh, denial and issue of stapled visas to certain Indian citizens and number of skirmishes on the LAC in Ladakh and Arunachal Pradesh. The latest such act being criticising India's abolition of Art 370 that withdrew the special status granted to the Indian state of J&K.

China has consistently maintained steadfast silence over Pakistan's support to terrorism and anti-India activities and has always supported Pakistan at various international forums. Chinese support included blocking India's bid in the UNSC to declare Masood Azhar as

international terrorist as also supporting Pakistan in The Financial Action Task Force (FATF). China's nuclear and military supply relationship with Pakistan and its support to Pakistan in its disputes with India can be seen as an exploitation of Pakistan's differences with India to serve China's own interests. While India supported China for induction as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, China has failed to reciprocate India's gesture and has done everything possible to keep India out from the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

The rise of Taiwan as a major global economic and technological power has led to calls for India to reconsider its One China policy. Taiwan is now one of the largest economies in the world and is a significant player in the global technology industry. This has led to calls for India to engage more closely with Taiwan and to recognise its status as an independent state.

China's growing military assertiveness and territorial claims have also led to calls for India to revisit its One China policy. China's territorial claims in the South China Sea and its construction of artificial islands in the region have caused widespread concern and opposition. Many countries have called for China to respect the rights of other nations in the region. India too, has been concerned by China's territorial claims and has sought to defend its interests in the region, including its territorial claims in the Himalayas.

India's growing economic and strategic ties with the United States (US) have also led to calls for India to reconsider its One China policy. India has been seeking to deepen its economic and strategic ties with the United States in recent years, in order to counterbalance China's growing influence in the region. This has led to calls for India to align itself more closely with the US and its allies, which may necessitate a reconsideration of its One China policy.

Finally, there is the need for India to assert its independence and defend its interests in the region. India is a rising power in its own right and has a growing interest in maintaining stability and peace in the region. However, its close relationship with China, as defined by the One China policy, has led to concerns that India is not fully able to assert its independence and defend its interests.

The potential consequences of revisiting India's One China Policy are significant and complex. On one hand, it could lead to increased tensions between India and China, potentially jeopardizing the stability of the region and the broader global order. On the other hand, it could provide India with greater leverage and bargaining power in its relationship with China, allowing it to more effectively defend its interests and assert its independence.

In order to effectively defend its interests and assert its independence, India must consider a range of options, including strengthening its economic, political, and military ties with other regional powers, such as Japan, Australia, and ASEAN countries, as well as with the United States and its allies. This would help to counterbalance China's growing influence in the region and provide India with a stronger platform from which to defend its interests and assert its independence.

At the same time, India must also continue to engage with China in a constructive and cooperative manner, seeking to resolve differences through dialogue and negotiation, and working together to address regional and global challenges. India and China have a long history of cultural, economic, and strategic ties, and both countries have much to gain from a stable and cooperative relationship.

In view of China's position on One India policy, there is a dire need to review India's stand on One China policy, so that the interests of India and its sovereignty is protected, Chinese expansionism is contained. This will also create a level playing field especially, in areas of economic co-operation and trade deficit, as some leverage is available with India in negotiations with China. The time has come and India should rethink and revise its 'One China' policy and exploit the geographic, ethnic, and economic fault lines of China such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, Tibet, and Xinjiang.

End Notes

[1] The phrase 'One India Policy' was first articulated by Late Sushma Swaraj, the then EAM, during discussion with her Chinese counterpart, Wang Yi during latter's visit to India in Jun 2014. Source: A report by Prabal Dhal Samanta in Indian Express, 12 Jun 2014 accessed on 27 Sep 21 at <https://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/one-china-what-about-one-india-policy-sushma-to-wang/>.

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