

# India, US ink agreement for defence equipment supply

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New Delhi, 23 August

The US and the Indian defence ministry have entered into an agreement to provide each other with reciprocal priority support for goods and services that promote national defence.

The agreement, called Security of Supplies Arrangement (SOSA), marked the start of a four-day visit to the US by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

The two countries also signed a "Memorandum of Agreement regarding the Assignment of Liaison Officers," which will facilitate the posting of one military officer from each country with the military of the other. In the case of India, one naval officer will be placed with the US headquarters in Bahrain.

Interacting with the Indian diaspora after landing in Washington on Thursday, Rajnath described India and the US as natural allies.

"On August 22, 2024, the US Department of Defense (Pentagon) and the Ministry of Defence (MoD) of the Government of India entered into a bilateral, non-binding Security of Supply Arrangement (SOSA)," said the Pentagon on Friday.

SOSA will enable both countries to acquire from one



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another the industrial resources they need to resolve unanticipated supply chain disruptions to meet national security needs.

"The SOSA was signed by Dr Vic Ramdass, and Samir Kumar Sinha, additional secretary and director general (acquisitions), on behalf of the Indian MoD," said a MoD statement from New Delhi.

"This SOSA represents a pivotal moment in the US-India Major Defence Partner relationship and will be a key factor in strengthening the US-India Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI)," said Dr Vic Ramdass, the Pentagon's principal deputy assistant secretary of defence.

The Pentagon has entered into such arrangements with 18 nations to ensure mutual supply of defence goods and services. Other SOSA partners

are Australia, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, and the UK.

Bilateral SOSAs allow the Pentagon to request priority delivery for DoD (Department of Defense) contracts, subcontracts, or orders from companies in these countries. SOSA also allows the signatory nations to request priority delivery for their contracts and orders with US firms.

Given the US military's expanding supply chain, SOSAs are an important mechanism for the DoD to strengthen interoperability with US defence trade partners. The Arrangements constitute working groups, establish communication mechanisms, streamline DoD processes, and

proactively act to allay anticipated supply chain issues in peacetime, emergency, and armed conflict.

"I look forward to OUSD(A&S) hosting the next DTTI meeting this fall to deepen cooperation between our respective defense industrial bases and pursue bilateral co-development, co-production, and co-sustainment initiatives," said the Pentagon.

OUSD(A&S) stands for the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment. In the SOSA, the US and India committed to support one another's priority delivery requests for procurement of critical national defence resources. The US will provide India assurances under the US Defense Priorities and Allocations System (DPAS), with program determinations by DoD and rating authorisation by the Commerce Department.

India will, in turn, establish a government-industry Code of Conduct with its industrial base, where Indian firms will voluntarily agree to make every reasonable effort to provide the US priority support.

Rajnath Singh said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India's stature has grown. "Earlier, India's words at international fora were not heeded; but today, the whole world listens carefully," he said.