

# Geopolitical Trends and Need for Coherent Foreign and Security Policy for Nepal

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## **Abstract**

*Nepal faces a severe geopolitical threat because of the geostrategic position between India and China. This geographical positioning and the constantly changing geopolitical trends seriously impact the country. A comprehensive and coherent foreign and security policy is needed by Nepal to address the risks and threats. Realizing the evolving geopolitical effects on Nepal and the country needs to be ready with the foreign policy and security policy harmonize and coordinate the two to promote and protect the national interest. The study aims to point out the geopolitical threats for the country and recommends the fundamentals for developing a coherent and integrated foreign policy. To justify this necessity, the study explores the relationship between foreign policy and security policy and establishes an interdependent connection between the two. The article also traces the historiography of the harmonious and integrated foreign and security policy of Nepal from the nation-building phase. It identifies the situations in which the country had deviated from the core fundamentals of the foreign and security policies. Methodologically, the article has adhered to the secondary resources and has adopted a qualitative approach to collate and analyze the information thematically.*

**Keywords:** Foreign policy, security policy, Nepal, geopolitics, coherency.

## **Introduction**

It is significant to enhance the national interest of a country abroad but is equally important to secure the interest. Maintaining strong national defense and fostering a robust diplomatic corps is important for forging a strategic relationship with like-minded countries. Many scholars have different views about foreign and security policies. The foreign policy has been defined as “policy guidelines to conduct foreign relations”, “pattern of behavior of a state in relation to the other”, “policy to achieve national objectives at the international level”, “means to an end of the state” (Aneek, 2010; Burton, 1977; Long, 2011). Similarly, the security policy is defined as a “framework to provide security to nation and citizens”, “guidelines to address security needs of the country”, “understanding threats and risks of the security environment”, “a guide to action for the government,” etc. (DCAF, 2018; Romm, 1993). The line of difference between the foreign and security policies is very thin. What is common between the two policies is the “protection and promotion of national interest”, abroad or at home (Pew Research Center, 2011).

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The cohesion between foreign and security policies are not only strategic aims but the different factors affecting the policies also seem to be similar (Papadimitriou & Pistikou, 2015). The idea of “security” is very close to foreign policy (Long, 2011). As the concept of security has broadened beyond the traditional state perspective or military domain to the non-traditional security realm, widening the horizon has interrelated the aspects of foreign policy with security policy (Kissinger, 1976). This has resulted in the need for integrating foreign and security policies. Geopolitical threats are among the most prominent among the different elements causing risks and threats to both foreign policy and security policy. Present day geopolitics has resulted in serious risks and challenges for all countries, especially for the small states.

Nepal’s geopolitical threats and challenges have significantly increased owing to its geostrategic position between India and China. The simultaneous rise of the two Asian giants in the neighborhood with China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) penetrating the South Asian region disregarding India’s reluctance to participate in the initiative, has also threatened small states, including Nepal (Adhikari D. R., 2018). The maritime geopolitical risks have also been part of Nepal’s geopolitical security problems (Baral L. R., 2020). The power politics in the Indo-Pacific region has been a significant challenge to Nepal, and major powers like the United States of America (USA), China, and India are willing to influence the domestic political decisions as per their strategic interests (Baral L. R., 2017). Drawing from the experience from the other regions, it was observed that in Africa, the Indian efforts were linked to the economic rationale of expansion and the raising fears associated with the current expansion of Chinese investments (Baral B. N., 2018). Likewise, the ongoing political instability of Nepal from after the restoration of democracy in 1990 is the internal security threat where the major international powers have shown an interest (Pandey, 2016). The security of the regime has been the aim of the political elites in Nepal, and this mentality has been capitalized by the major powers in furthering their self-interests.

However, a clear definition and scope of foreign policy and security policy are lacking in Nepal. The wide gaps in the intersections of foreign and security policies have not yet been realized. The idea of an integrated foreign and security policy has not yet been imagined by the leaders, government, and bureaucrats. This study primarily focuses on examining the relationship between foreign policy and security policy and the gaps. It traces the history of the integrated strategy and foreign policy of Nepal while exploring the geopolitical risks in the neighborhood and make recommendations on investigating and integrating the two policies.

## **Relationship between foreign policy and security policy**

Although the two concepts seem to share different ideas, they are intricately related to each other. Any country’s international behavior is depicted with what it portrays, interest or significance, and risk or threat (Anton, 1994). The countries tend to act according to their choice of what they specifically think is essential (Anton, 1994). Simply, if a country is going through an economic crisis or stagnation resulting in economic insecurity, then the foreign policy of that specific country will not focus on the problems overseas but concentrate on the

problems at home (Pew Research Center, 2011). The foreign policy would be more focused on the economic interests of the country to increase investments, grants, foreign aid, and other policies (Pew Research Center, 2011). From this simple example, the relationship between foreign and security policies can be established. Therefore, according to the threat or risk perception, the security policies are created to counter those challenges, and foreign policy, as a guideline to conduct foreign relations, can be employed on furthering the interest of the country accordingly (DCAF, 2018).

The relationship between the foreign policy and security policy of a country provides an inward-looking sentiment to deal with the security issues rather than outward internationalist policies (Papadimitriou & Pistikou, 2015). However, this relationship between the foreign and security policies is determined by the capability of the state (Papadimitriou & Pistikou, 2015). If the country is a developed country, then the inward-looking relationship between two policies might not be sufficient as the threats encircling that country might also originate from the other parts of the world (Dijkstra & Vanhoonacker, 2017). The poverty-stricken and underdeveloped states may cause people of that country to be involved in different traditional and non-traditional security threats (Anton, 1994). Thus, the integrated foreign and security policy of a developed country relates to the security of “self” and security from the other (Dijkstra & Vanhoonacker, 2017).

Nevertheless, the integration of foreign and security policies of underdeveloped or developing countries may be inward-looking with a lesser focus on global concerns. Those states can focus on the security of the state and its citizens and ultimately contribute globally (Widjojo, 2005). In those countries, an integrated foreign and security policy focuses on a more nationalistic stance rather than being an internationalist (Widjojo, 2005).

Although developing and underdeveloped countries are focused on the inward-looking combination of security and foreign policies, one of the fundamentals of these principles become multilateralism (Pew Research Center, 2011). The coherence of foreign and security policies can be successful if it stands out for the support of multilateralism (Pew Research Center, 2011). Multilateralism provides states with an opportunity to forward their national interest in regional or global platforms (Burton, 1977). The developed and developing, or underdeveloped countries can voice their respective concerns on multilateral forums (Widjojo, 2005). One of the essential pillars of multilateralism is reciprocity, and this reciprocal behavior of the states (either developed or developing), can help them to fulfill the aim of promoting and protecting national interest (Widjojo, 2005). Although the integrated foreign and security policies of the peripheral state can be inward-looking, the unilateralist approach is not recommended; neither is military assertiveness for developed states for furthering their national interests as it is not viable in this world with rules and norms (Anton, 1994).

The relationship between foreign and security policies is determined by international politics as well as domestic politics (Raunio & Wagner, 2020). The unstable domestic regime in any country in the region can attract the attention of the major powers as the instability of international security, and global peace brings threats to them (Raunio & Wagner, 2020). Therefore, the foreign and security policies of the major powers are concentrated

on such unstable countries to establish democratic values and norms (Widjojo, 2005). In such situations, humanitarian intervention becomes one of the tools of foreign and security policies (Widjojo, 2005). The organizations and policy processes in the country also become a detrimental factor in determining the policies (Bjarnason, 2020). Further, the regime type, perception of the leaders, and the historical experience of the country can also be related to how a specific state can formulate and coordinate the foreign and security policy (Papadimitriou & Pistikou, 2015). The capability of the country to identify, prevent, resolve the threat or risk determines the security and foreign policy of the country (Anton, 1994).

A strong defense is required to enhance the foreign policy roles of a state (Anton, 1994). Diplomacy without national strength and security would not be very effective, but some argue that a comprehensive foreign policy will secure the defense of the country (Dijkstra & Vanhoonacker, 2017). This depends on the power relations and capabilities of the country. The defense of its national interest both at home and abroad would be equally important for any great power. However, a small state that cannot strengthen its internal capacities, militarily, economically, or politically, depends on the foreign policy tools to secure itself from threats or risks (Papadimitriou & Pistikou, 2015). A small state will employ a non-aligned, neutral, and minimalistic foreign policy as these are the diplomatic and foreign policy tools for them to survive in this international order (Raunio & Wagner, 2020). Therefore, the relationship between foreign policy and security policy also depends upon the power relations and capacity of the country.

Thus, establishing any relations between foreign and security policies depends on the characteristics and capabilities of a particular country. As security and national interest are core to both, the integration or combination and coherency of the policies is significant.

## **Historiography of integrated essence of foreign and security policies in Nepal**

The integration of foreign and security policies is essential because of their interdependence. Many countries have an integrated foreign and security policy to ensure coherence between the two policies to protect and promote the national interest. The European Union (EU) even exercises the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) (Dijkstra & Vanhoonacker, 2017). The integrated and common policy of the EU has helped to protect the interests of the member countries jointly, facilitated an integrated approach to global conflicts, and maintained regional order (European Parliament, 2021). Therefore, there are many advantages to simultaneously practicing foreign and security policies. Nepal, from the start of its nation-building stages, has emphasized independent foreign and security policies (Adhikari D. R., 2018). The geopolitical vulnerabilities of the country have always pushed the country to adopt coherent security and foreign policy. Located between the two giants, “survival” has been the eminent course of Nepal (Rose L. E., 1971). Therefore, coherency was needed in the foreign and security policies.

Nepal, as a nation, established itself in challenging conditions. The Qing Empire in the North was aggressively expanding its territories, and British East India Company was dominant in the Indian sub-continent (Rose L. E., 1971). Both the powers were trying to spread the influence in

the region and it was an arduous task for the rulers of Nepal to promote and protect the national interest of survival (Adhikari D. R., 2018). Historically, the actual departure point of Nepal's foreign and security policy can be observed in King Prithvi Narayan Shah's *Dibya Upadesh* (The Divine Counsel) where he depicted Nepal as a "yam; between the two boulders" and cautioned the rulers and statesmen in Nepal to be cautious in dealing with both the neighbors (Baral B. N., 2020). This 'yam' theory depicts Nepal's tacit foreign and security policies. The corollary of our foreign and security policies had more ramifications in this perspective (Baral B. N., 2020). King Prithvi Narayan Shah advised maintaining a treaty of friendship with the emperor of China and emphasized the significance of a treaty of friendship with the emperor of the southern sea (Baral B. N., 2018). The king had also mentioned the geopolitical risk evolving from the rise of the British East India Company and the Qing Empire, but at the same time suggested furthering national interest through a comprehensive foreign policy (Adhikari D. R., 2018). Similarly, his other policy- "*Jai Katak Nagarnu, Jhiki Katak Garnu*" refers to cautiousness and gradualism in the security and foreign policy (Ludwig F. Stiller, 1968). This, like the yam analogy was also equally important.

Nepal had a significant amount of trade with Tibet and therefore, securing the interest of Nepal and the safety of the Nepali merchants in Tibet was necessary (Rose L. E., 1971). Nepal, from the very beginning, has always wanted a trade monopoly and tried to secure the routes to Tibet (Thapaliyal, 1998). For this reason, Nepal had even gone to war with Tibet twice before the start of the 19th century (Thapaliyal, 1998). This is another instance that depicts the integration of Nepal's security policy with its foreign policy. After the Anglo-Nepal War (1814-1816) and the signing of the Sugauli Treaty with the East India Company, Nepal lost a considerable part of its territory (Acharya, 1966).

Consequently, Nepal became very conscious about its survival as an independent state (Baral B. N., 2018). Till the rule of Prime Minister Bhimsen Thapa, Nepal was aware of the security of the country from foreigners and did not promote the participation of foreigners in domestic politics or economy (Acharya, 1966). The foreign and security policies were concentrated on securing Nepal's interest from foreigners by maintaining relations (Ludwig F. Stiller, 1999). At this point, Nepal was not bent towards expanding relations but had inward-looking policies (Ludwig F. Stiller, 1999).

During the Rana regime in Nepal (1846-1950), the foreign policy was largely British-centric (Baral B. N., 2018). It was based on the assumption of relatively greater powers of the British, compared to other states. Therefore, for the security of the country, the Rana rulers focused on this policy regardless of Nepal's own military strength (Baral B. N., 2018). Nepal has supported the British in the Sepoy Mutiny in India, First World War, War of Waziristan, and the Second World War (Hamal, 1995). This foreign policy of supporting the British in the two devastating wars can be justified through the security lens.

However, in the mid-20th century, after the independence of India in 1947 and the rise of Communism in China and threats about "liberation" of Tibet, the 1950 Peace and Friendship Treaty between Nepal and India limited Nepal's foreign policy to some extent (Thapaliyal,

1998). The securitization of the Himalayas by India after the takeover of Tibet by the People's Republic of China, affected Nepal (Rose L. E., 1962). Due to the limiting nature of the 1950 treaty, Nepal was threatened because it imposed curbs on Nepal's ability to pursue an independent foreign policy (Rose L. E., 1962). Thus, during the Panchayat years (1961-1990), Nepal attempted to diversify its foreign relations. It was a time when the Cold War between the USA and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) had also escalated. To avoid any involvement in the military and ideological blocs, Nepal opted for the policy of non-alignment and was an active member of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) (Dahal S. H., 2018). Through this platform, Nepal voiced its concerns over the different issues related to power politics in different parts of the world that threatened global security and peace, which could also have affected the sovereignty and independence of Nepal (Dahal S. H., 2018). In the Cold War, Nepal's security and foreign policy were directed at dealing with the geopolitical vulnerabilities due to power politics (Whelpton, 2005).

However, after the reintroduction of democracy in Nepal in 1990, due to political instability, the security of the regime for the political elites became paramount (Whelpton, 2013). Because the political elites and leaders aimed to secure control or power over the regime, the major powers were provided with space to indulge in domestic politics and even micromanage to accommodate their interests, which have threatened the country (Whelpton, 2013).

## **Visible deviations from foreign and security policies**

There have been inevitable swings in the fundamentals of Nepal's foreign policy in different periods. Primarily, Nepal experienced the deviation from the fundamentals of the foreign and security policy provided by King Prithvi Narayan Shah after the Sugauli Treaty where Nepal lost considerable territory, and the foreign involvement started in the court of Nepal when the British Residents started residing in Nepal (Baral B. N., 2018). During the Rana regime as well, although the foreign policy was British-centric and the security policy was focused on the survival of the nation, Nepal was isolated from world politics, and the military strength of the country was used for the imperial ambitions of Britain (Rose L. E., 1971). With the decline of the imperial power in the Indian sub-continent, the political elites could not change with the changes (Rose L. E., 1962). However, after 1950 the rule of King Tribhuvan was characterized by the "special relations" with India and had deviated from the fundamentals of the foreign policy (Rose L. E., 1962). The engagement of Nepal in the securitization of the frontiers by India limited the independent foreign policy of Nepal (Rose L. E., 1962). Similarly, during the Panchayat period was criticized for the lack of democratization of the foreign policy (Whelpton, 2005). Nevertheless, it was characterized by Nepal pursuing independent and non-aligned foreign policies (Whelpton, 2005).

Moreover, after the 1990s, domestic policies overshadowed the objectives of foreign policy and hindered the country from pursuing a consistent national security policy (Whelpton, 2013). The major powers, particularly India was even engaged in the micromanagement of domestic politics. Nepal experienced massive political changes like a decade-long "People's

War”, the massacre of the royal family, direct rule by King Gyanendra, the second People’s Movement, and the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) and declaration of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal (Pandey, 2016). This period was also characterized by political instability and the inability of the Constituent Assembly to promulgate the constitution. This provided an opportunity for “opinion-making” by major powers in the internal affairs of Nepal.

At present Nepal is trapped in a diplomatic dilemma (Sharma, 2021). After the promulgation of the constitution in 2015, Nepal faced an unofficial economic blockade imposed by India, citing some reservations (Baral L. R., 2017). Nepal then attempted to search for an alternative to India and signed a transport and transit agreement with China (Sharma, 2018). It also has officially signed China’s Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Presently, Nepal is facing the direct effect of antagonism and conflict between the major powers. The US-China and China-India rivalries and attempt to drag Nepal into the Indo-Pacific region or strategy have impacted the geopolitical risk for Nepal (Baral L. R., 2021). The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) and the grant it has offered Nepal has become widely debated and the inability to take strong diplomatic decisions have led to the scrutiny of Nepali foreign and security policies (Baral L. R., 2021).

Therefore, there have been instances where Nepal’s foreign policy and security policies have deviated from their fundamentals and capitalized on those opportunities used by the regional and major powers to exert influence affecting the independent foreign policy and diplomacy of the country.

## **Evolving geopolitical threats for Nepal**

The world has constantly been changing alongside a multitude of threats such as a global pandemic, social changes, Ukraine and Afghan crises, developments in the Indo-Pacific region and the South China Sea, the emergence of QUAD (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue), AUKUS (bilateral security pact between Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States), BRI, and the military coup in Myanmar, among others. These global changes have significantly affected the interlink between global political relationships and the internal political economy (Brown, 2021). With the global pandemic as a risk, international politics will be influenced in one way or another. The Russian forces encircling Ukraine from three sides in reaction to the country’s decision to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has brought two major powers to the brink of war. With the growth of a realist or an inward-looking mentality among the countries during the pandemic, and increasing geopolitical cyber-attacks and threats, the states may have to employ drastic and unpredictable ways to pursue and protect the national interests (Cohen, Han, & Rhoades, 2020).

As Carl von Clausewitz argued, “war is the continuation of politics by other means”. The aphorism will hold true because future warfare is going to be determined by geopolitics (Brown, 2021). The US polarization and retrenchment, Asia’s reassessment, and Russia’s concern over the expansion of NATO, the rise of China through BRI, a changing Europe, and

conflicts in the Islamic and South Asian countries are among the reasons for the changing geopolitics (Cohen, Han, & Rhoades, 2020). Geopolitics is not only changing, and it has reached an unsettling phase (Bjarnason, 2020). International politics has moved beyond the conventional military challenges (Cohen, Han, & Rhoades, 2020). The pattern of global migration is changing as the refugee crisis and the flux of illegal migrants in developing or developed countries are increasing (Dalby, 2000). Also, the reconfiguration of the investment and trade patterns by the developed countries and organizations is in constant change (Brown, 2021). Proxy wars have been increasing in the different parts of the world, and the alliance dynamics are also shifting (Brown, 2021).

The primary locus of power is shifting and changing the international structure (Cohen, Han, & Rhoades, 2020). The growing nationalist agendas redressing historically perceived national humiliation have driven countries like China and Russia (Cohen, Han, & Rhoades, 2020). The rise of the individuals as the power centers in the world, above the states, has also questioned the direction of geopolitics (Gomart, 2016). The wave of populism in different parts of the world has misled citizens and invoked or justified nationalistic drives of specific individuals or governments (Gomart, 2016). The rise of the non-state actors from international terrorist organizations into the power to the multi-national companies gaining influence in the state policies have significantly affected the geopolitical situation of the world (Cohen, Han, & Rhoades, 2020). The miscalculation of some of the major powers about the geopolitical strategies of other countries has disturbed the rule-based international order (World Economic Forum, 2021). International law is at risk because of the geopolitical competition between the countries (World Economic Forum, 2021). Also, the decreasing influence of international organizations like the United Nations (UN) and others has brought tensions in the world (Thompson, Pronk, & Manen, 2021).

Geopolitical threats have increased in the South Asian region because of the constant changes. There has been the rise of India as the fastest growing economy in the world with its increasing economic and strategic ambitions (Cohen, Han, & Rhoades, 2020). India has reached the Pacific Ocean from the Indian Ocean and has shifted its interest to Africa and other parts of the world or beyond South Asia (Madan, 2021). The ongoing India-Pakistan rivalry has always affected the geopolitics of the region (Madan, 2021). Additionally, the India-China border conflicts and antagonism on other issues have increased the tensions for other states in South Asia (Pal, 2021). Further, the USA has increased its interest in the region and its partnership with India with the aim to counter China (Pal, 2021). It is also trying to influence the small states of South Asia (Pal, 2021).

These changes are affecting the small states negatively. The changing geopolitics has increased uncertainty for small states, and this uncertain future can be a substantial geopolitical risk as they benefit from the predictability of the rule-based international order (Cohen, Han, & Rhoades, 2020). Small states are have also been impacted by non-traditional security threats more than the great powers (Madan, 2021). They have become the central regions of instability because of geopolitical threats. The tensions between the neighbors can also increase the risk for the small states.



Nepal, as a small power in South Asia, will be increasingly affected by geopolitical changes. The tensions between India and China have induced a huge amount of uncertainty about the geopolitical future in the region (Pal, 2021). This has pushed Nepal into a diplomatic dilemma or uncertainty. The US-China rivalry has also impacted the foreign policy and security policy decisions and alternatives for the country (Madan, 2021). These rivalries have posed a severe geopolitical threat for the country. The geopolitical risk is likely to impact internal affairs, the economy, and other sectors. The geo-economic threat is also significantly high for a country like Nepal (Baral L. R., 2021).

Projects under the BRI are believed to bring economic prosperity and changes to the country; however, the MCC has been a major debate for Nepal. For Nepal, it has also increased the geo-economic risks associated with the economic relations between the countries (Baral L. R., 2021). The non-traditional security risks for Nepal are huge. Major power politics in the Indo-Pacific region and the Asia-Pacific strategy have added geopolitical consequences for Nepal. The Indian and American partnership aimed to curb the rise of China has ultimately increased the geopolitical risk for the country (Pal, 2021). The instability in the region with the rise of the Taliban in Afghanistan has increased the security challenges for the country as well (Pal, 2021). Nepal's policies and infrastructure are not well-equipped to face non-traditional security challenges (Madan, 2021). The uncertainties discussed above affect the country variously and therefore, it is essential for Nepal to develop comprehensive and coherent foreign and security policies.

## **Coherent and integrated foreign and security policies**

Considering the long history of coherent foreign and national security in Nepal, with some deviations from the fundamentals as well, it is now time to focus on a more coherent and integrated foreign and security policy approach. Nepal has formally chalked out the foreign and security policies and it is now time for these to be put to work coherently. The government also needs to focus on a comprehensive plan to guide the functions of these policies considering the increasing geopolitical challenges. This paper recommends some policy guidelines to the Government of Nepal relating to the development of coherency and integration in the foreign and security policies. The recommendations are as follows:

- Setting a bottom-line for both the foreign and security policies is essential in full understanding of the changing pattern of regional and global politics to validate the strategic interests. This can help the concerned authority to clear the uncertainties produced by the changing geopolitics and its impact on geo-economics.
- The comprehension of national capabilities, constraints or limitations is important for Nepal. Therefore, a definite defense policy should supplement the foreign and security policy.
- Increasing the soft power capabilities of the country is vital in order to increase the influence and dignity of the country.
- Nepal's firm foreign and security policy must transform the country's weak political economy; thus, Nepal should focus on economic diplomacy to counter the economic insecurities of the country;

- The national security policy should be beyond the state-centric idea focusing on conventional security issues. Instead, the integrated policies should focus on the non-traditional security threats categorically to deal with them specifically.
- Nepal should realize its potential strengths by redrawing innovative strategies to quickly impact our future by being aware of the power and alliance dynamics.
- It is the right time to focus on redefining the national interest accounting for the changing and rising military tensions in the neighborhood, economic disruptions, and the changing international relations.
- A “strategic autonomy” should be developed to manage the dilemma created by geopolitical rivalries.
- The concerned authorities should concentrate on increasing national resilience by focusing on self-reliance rather than being consumed by dependency and consumerism. It is crucial for the country to strategically tap the opportunities in the reconfigured trade and investment order. Nepal should be careful about its interdependence converting into an asymmetric dependence on one country.
- Nepal should actively participate in international organizations and regional or multilateral platforms to advocate the importance of the rule-based international order in the situation of eroding global norms and values.
- Nepal should create a mechanism for analyzing and investigating the increasingly aggressive geo-economic agendas of the major powers.
- The country’s security policy and diplomacy should be informed about the increasing nationalistic drives in the neighborhood and inside the country to counter the effects of those populist drives.
- In harmonizing the foreign and security policies, Nepal should be aware of the rights of individuals, businesses, and civil society.
- Nepal should develop the diplomatic capacity of the country to establish bilateral or multilateral talks between neighbors to create consensus on specific issues of mutual interest.

## **Conclusion**

The commonality between a country’s foreign policy and security policy is the protection and promotion of the national interest of the country. The two policies are intricately related to each other. The idea of threat and interest guides the relationship between the two. Different geopolitical issues and traditional or non-traditional matters threaten a country. When a country is insecure, the geopolitical vulnerabilities increase, and the major powers aim to exert influence and control over that country. The foreign policy can guide the country to regulate its relationship with other major powers or countries, and similarly, the security policy guides a state in dealing with matters threatening the national interest of that country. Thus, it is essential for any state to focus on harmonizing and integrating foreign and security policies.

The coherency and interdependency of the foreign policy and security policy can be traced to the nation-building period of Nepal. King Prithvi Narayan Shah, the founder of modern Nepal, focused on integrating the aspects of the two policies and counseled the rulers and politicians through the *Divya Upadesh*. This coherency continued till the Anglo-Nepal War in 1814 when Nepal lost territory to the British it has continued to concentrate on the security threats and geopolitical developments to formulate the foreign policy. Therefore, with continuity and changes, Nepal has been successfully harmonizing the foreign policy with the security policy. Nepal now has formulated both foreign and security policies and so it is time for the country to integrate the operation of both for sustaining in this evolving geopolitical environment.

Geopolitics has constantly been changing. The renewal and continuation of rivalries among the countries with the involvement of new actors have shifted the pattern of the geopolitical trends. This had increased the geopolitical risks for many countries. Nepal, because of its geostrategic position between the two Asian giants, faces severe implications. Considering its geostrategic position and the possible effect of geopolitics and geo-economics could have made it important for the country to formulate a coherent and integrated foreign and security policy. For this, setting a bottom line, understanding the national capabilities, increase of soft power capabilities, economic diplomacy, rethinking the national interests, and focusing on strategic autonomy and self-reliance strategies are recommended.

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