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**Sino-Indian Relations and their
Impact
on
New Zealand's Future Security**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Defence and Strategic Studies at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand

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2006

Abstract

China and India are the two most populous states on the planet, they share a common border and they have analogous aspirations of being recognised as great powers. The Sino-Indian relationship has been historically unsteady, beginning in 1962 when disputes over the Sino-Indian border triggered a war. Since the uneasy cessation of the border war, other areas of competition have impinged on the relationship between the two nations. These include nuclear competition, competition for strategic influence, and economic competition. There have also been some limited indications of cooperation between India and China.

New Zealand is over 11,000 kilometres from both Beijing and New Delhi, however, the developing Sino-Indian relationship has considerable potential to impact on New Zealand's complex security interests. To name a few, Sino-Indian tension may effect New Zealand's key trade routes that pass through areas of strategic interest to both India and China, may increase the threats from nuclear proliferation and might have a destabilising effect on New Zealand's ethnic Indian and Chinese populations. Sino-Indian cooperation, however limited, may also produce some opportunities for New Zealand in areas such as increased trade and improved regional stability

Given the complexity of both the Sino-Indian relationship and New Zealand's security interests, New Zealand needs to carefully maintain awareness of the developing relationship between India and China. This awareness should then be used to exploit opportunities that arise out of the Sino-Indian relationship, and to protect New Zealand from possible negative outcomes. Both actions will assist in enhancing New Zealand's future security.

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the advice and guidance provided by Dr. John Tonkin-Covell in the production of this thesis. As my supervisor, he was able to deftly point out inconsistencies, stimulate thinking and challenge my logic, for which I am very grateful.

I also wish to acknowledge the New Zealand Army for sponsoring my study.