PREFACE

The present doctoral dissertation deals with the strategic considerations that India would have to adopt in her foreign policy in order to attain a major power status in the world order that have emerged after the end of Cold War and dissolution of USSR. These unprecedented events ushered in revolutionary changes in politico-economic and strategic environment of the world order. The beginning of “unipolar moment”, emergence of new power configurations, onset of era of Globalisation, Information and Technology revolution and revolution in Military Affairs and removal of Cold War guiding principals of international behaviour were the factors which compelled not only India but all other nations of the Globe to re-consider their foreign policy postulates and re-define their economic and strategic orientations.

The nature of the international order emerged after Cold War appeared very complex and confusing and India too, experienced the most difficult and testing times for its policy making. For India disintegration of the Soviet Union has meant uncertainty on several aspects such as supply of weapon system, supply of spare parts, diplomatic support on Kashmir and other politico-strategic issues in and the outside the United Nations, and as a counterweight to the US in South Asia. During cold war years, India’s leaning and proximity towards the Soviet Union, in spite of its adherence to her non-aligned activism, was a historic necessity created by the geo-political compulsions. The concepts of globalization and liberalization ushered in a drastic change in the norms and standards of international relations and economic considerations began to dominate the tenets of foreign policy of nations. This change of economic realm had a huge impact on India’s foreign policy thinking. Forced by the new hard economic realities of the post-cold war era, India was left with very limited options. India ushered in an extensive financial and economic, shake-up of the old Soviet-
influenced system. Under this approach, it cut high tariffs on imports and exports, simplified regulations on industry, made bold reforms in agriculture and ancillary industries, and started the disinvestment process in the public sector to integrate her into the world economy.

India was confronted with a difficult geo-strategic reality. As a large, multi ethnic, cultural, multi religious diverse country, it shares land borders with China, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar and Pakistan apart from having a vast coastline. There are few countries in the world that are placed in a security environment as unfavourable and complex as the one in which India is located. The manifest security problems include territorial disputes, refugee influx, cross border terrorism, drug trafficking and smuggling along the frontiers and internal security problems arising out of a developing democratic policy.

The main security concerns India faced were resolving disputes with belligerent Pakistan and its obsession with Kashmir as also with China, an emerging global nuclear, military and economic power with over a four decade old boundary dispute with physical occupation of captured territory. The Pakistani government’s continued stubbornness poses a strong challenge to India’s foreign policy. Pakistan’s “invader” mindset is evident from non-compliance with past treaties, support of cross border terrorism.

Towards the closing decade India began to utilize the "strategic space" provided to her by dissolution of USSR and embarked upon the task of expanding her relations with US while retaining relations with Russia, and neighbouring countries in South Asia. India also endeavoured to normalise her relations with China and launched "Look East" policy to promote solidarity with the nations of South-East Asia. India attempted to assuage concerns of neighbouring countries by adoption of "Gujral Doctrine". The year 1998 signaled "A dramatic shift in India’s nuclear posture". India renounced its programme of covert
nuclearisation, ended indecisiveness on the nuclear issue and openly announced its nuclear ambitions. These tests reflect a strategic change from existential or recessed to minimum deterrence and have ended a regime of existential deterrence in South Asia, which had prevailed for much of this decade. The series of economic and political transformations India underwent during the closing decade of the 20th Century have enabled her to become a Global Power in the making.

The Chapter I deals with the definitional content of foreign policy and role of "National Interest" in formulation of foreign policy. The Chapter II traces the cardinal characteristics, historical roots and the emergence of pragmatism in Indian foreign policy. The Chapter III deals with the concept of strategic considerations and India's role in South Asia. It also explains the expansion of its relations with China, US, and Russia.

The Chapter IV describes the factors responsible for exercise of India's Nuclear Option and explains India's nuclear doctrine and its attainment of "minimum credible deterrence".

The Chapter V highlights the reasons and need for change in India's foreign policy in the post Cold War era and the transformations of the Indian foreign policy. It discusses the present day strategies adopted by India.

The Chapter VI concludes the study and charts out India's future course of foreign and economic relations. It also analyses the how the transformations have made India to tread the path of becoming one of the major powers in coming years.