

EU COUNCIL APPROVES CONCLUSIONS ON INDO-PACIFIC STRATEGY

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: Effect of policies and politics of developed & developing countries on India's interests

The Council of the European Union on Monday approved conclusions on a European Union strategy for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific to “reinforce its strategic focus, presence and actions” with the aim to contribute to “regional stability, security, prosperity and sustainable development,” at a time of “rising challenges and tensions in the region.”

“Current dynamics in the Indo-Pacific have given rise to intense geopolitical competition adding to increasing tensions on trade and supply chains as well as in technological, political and security areas. Human rights are also being challenged. These developments increasingly threaten the stability and security of the region and beyond, directly impacting on the EU’s interests,” a statement from the Council said. “The Council tasked the High Representative and the Commission with putting forward a Joint Communication on cooperation in the Indo-Pacific by September 2021,” it stated.

Long-term focus

The renewed EU commitment to the Indo-Pacific will have a long-term focus and will be based on “upholding democracy, human rights, the rule of law and respect for international law,” it stated. The EU will aim to promote effective rules-based multilateralism, it said, reiterating its support for ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations) centrality, a point also stressed by India.

The EU will work together in order to mitigate the economic and human effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and work towards ensuring an inclusive and sustainable socio-economic recovery, it said. The EU’s approach and engagement will look to foster a “rules-based international order, a level playing field, as well as an open and fair environment for trade and investment, reciprocity, the strengthening of resilience, tackling climate change and supporting connectivity with the EU.”

“Free and open maritime supply routes in full compliance with international law remain crucial,” it said.

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