

# INDIA'S MOVE ON ARTICLE 370 IS 'ILLEGAL AND INVALID', SAYS CHINA

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - China

India on Wednesday told China “not to comment on the internal affairs” of other countries, in response to Beijing describing the dilution of Article 370, on the one-year anniversary of the move, as being “illegal and invalid”.

China had “no *locus standi*” on the matter, the Ministry of External Affairs said.

In a statement in Beijing, in response to a question from the Pakistani media, the Chinese Foreign Ministry repeated its opposition to “any unilateral change to the status quo” in Jammu and Kashmir, echoing its statements on the issue last year.

“China follows closely the situation in the Kashmir region,” Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said on Wednesday. “Our position is consistent and clear. This issue is a dispute left over from history between Pakistan and India. That is an objective fact established by the UN Charter, UN Security Council resolutions and bilateral agreements between Pakistan and India. Any unilateral change to the *status quo* is illegal and invalid.”

MEA spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said India had “noted the comments of the Chinese MFA spokesperson on the Indian Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir”.

“The Chinese side has no *locus standi* whatsoever on this matter and is advised not to comment on the internal affairs of other nations,” he said.

Last year, Beijing had particularly voiced its opposition to the creation of a Union Territory in Ladakh, which included within its boundaries the Aksai Chin region, now occupied by China, although India had pointed out to China that the change had not altered India’s external boundaries or its territorial claims in any way. Wednesday’s statement from Beijing did not mention Ladakh.

Mr. Wang said the Kashmir issue “should be properly resolved peacefully through dialogue and consultation between the parties concerned”.

“Pakistan and India are neighbours that cannot be moved away,” he said. “Peaceful coexistence serves the fundamental interests of both and the common aspiration of the international community. China hopes that they can properly handle the differences through dialogue, improve relations, and jointly safeguard peace, stability and development of both countries and the wider region.”

The Foreign Ministry did not, however, respond to a question on a new map issued by Pakistan on Tuesday and refrained from criticising the move. “I have already stated China’s position on the Kashmir issue,” Mr. Wang said, adding he would not repeat the statement.

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