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German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock's visit to India and [talks with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar](#) have set the stage for a more updated bilateral relationship. The two sides signed an agreement on mobility and migration that boosts travel for students, researchers and investors and businesses, and the meeting was preceded by Germany's agreement to fund renewable energy projects worth a billion Euros. The year 2022 has seen intense high-level engagement, as Prime Minister Narendra Modi made two visits to Germany — for the India-Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations with Chancellor Olaf Scholz in Berlin and the G-7 outreach summit in Bavaria. The leaders also met at the G-20 summit in Bali. In 2023, Mr. Scholz is expected to be in Delhi, in spring, and again in September for the G-20 summit in India. On the multilateral stage, Ms. Baerbock, a leader of the German Alliance 90/Green party, made countering climate change an important issue where New Delhi and Berlin can cooperate at the G-20 under India's presidency. Mr. Jaishankar spoke of the need to keep pushing for UN Security Council reform, where India and Germany have been part of the 'G-4' grouping since 2005. Ms. Baerbock also walked back previous controversial comments calling for the "United Nations track" to resolve the Kashmir dispute; [she told The Hindu](#) ahead of her visit that she believes Kashmir is a "bilateral dispute" to be resolved between India and Pakistan only.

The substance of the relationship will be tested in continuing differences over the war in Ukraine. Mr. Jaishankar's line to journalists was that India's imports of Russian oil, a national interest necessity, remain a fraction of the fossil fuels Europe continues to buy. While this may be correct, it is also true that the European Union countries have cut all other links with Moscow, and falling fuel imports are likely to drop further once the December 5 launch of the "oil price cap" for seaborne imports kicks in. On the other hand, India's imports of Russian oil have soared to a whopping 21-fold increase, making Russia India's biggest supplier. Writing in the Foreign Affairs Journal, Chancellor Scholz said that the world was facing an "epochal, tectonic shift", using the term *Zeitenwende* or "turning point" to describe the geopolitical transition post Russia's war in Ukraine, and accused Russian President Vladimir Putin of "shattering" an international peace architecture. For India, which inherits the G-20 presidency in the year of this *Zeitenwende*, it will be necessary to work more closely with Germany to bring all western partners on board with Mr. Modi's plans to forge "global unity", without letting the deep divisions with Russia derail consensus on important tasks such as fighting climate change, inequality, poverty and the digital divide.

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