

CHINA MUST RESPECT RULES, SAYS FRANCE

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - China

Emmanuel Bonne

A day after the Chinese Ambassador in India objected to the outgoing U.S. Ambassador's comments on the India-China stand-off, a senior French diplomat, on Thursday, said that "when China breaks rules, we have to be very robust and very clear". When it came to direct threats to India, he said, France had always been supportive on Kashmir at the UN Security Council and did "not let the Chinese play any procedural games".

"Let us not go for confrontation — it's much easier to say this from Paris, [than] from Delhi when you almost have a problem in the Himalayas and when you have Pakistan at your border. And I mean on direct threats to India, we have always been very clear. Whether on Kashmir we have been very supportive of India in the Security Council, we have not let the Chinese play any kind of procedural games," Emmanuel Bonne, Diplomatic Adviser to French President Emmanuel Macron, said at a webinar organised by the Vivekananda International Foundation on Thursday.

Referring to the stand-off in eastern Ladakh, he said that when it came to the Himalayas, the statement had been "perfectly clear". "What we say publicly, we say to the Chinese also privately. We need to be robust..." Mr. Bonne said.

Mr. Bonne was in India for the third India-France strategic dialogue led by National Security Adviser Ajit Doval from the Indian side.

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Mr. Bonne thanked India for its support recently in "countering disinformation" from Turkey and Pakistan, and said that their relations with Pakistan were "at a historic low". "We very much appreciate the support we got not only from your authorities but also from Indian civil society when our country was under attack by some leaders in Turkey and Pakistan and in other countries," he said.

Saying that they wanted China to respect "certain rules, be less aggressive," Mr. Bonne said China should work in the same framework as others and it was important for France to be more defensive, aggressive but also be more dynamic and nimble, and join forces.

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