

TERROR TRAIL: THE HINDU EDITORIAL ON PAKISTAN ACTION AGAINST TERRORISTS

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - Pakistan

In his [speech to the UN Security Council \(UNSC\)](#) marking 20 years since the resolutions that announced a global commitment to the war against terror after the U.S. 9/11 attacks, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar made a pitch for greater coordination between counter terrorism agencies worldwide. He highlighted the necessity to streamline the process of the UN's top body in designating terrorists while strengthening coordination in the agencies that check their financial resources. First, the world must acknowledge that terrorist organisations use not only extortion and money laundering, drugs and wildlife trafficking to raise funds, but, in the present and future, will use loopholes in digital security and the “anonymity” provided by block chain technology to access finances. Second, in a clear reference to Pakistan, he spoke of the need to link actions between the UN and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), and for countries that “wilfully provide financial assistance and safe havens” as well as “5 star” treatment to criminals and terrorists, to be held to account by them. His words are significant given that a FATF committee, the Asia Pacific Joint Group (APJG), is meeting this week to finalise recommendations for the FATF on whether to continue [Pakistan's 'greylisting status'](#), downgrade it to a blacklist, or let it off, decisions that India is watching closely. Finally, he pointed to countries that allow their “political and religious” affinities to decide on issues of designation of terrorists, blocking and unblocking requests at the UNSC for such reasons rather than technically evaluate the evidence against these individuals. While the broad message here was for China, which has often blocked India's efforts to designate individuals at the UNSC, this also includes Turkey and Malaysia which have helped Pakistan avoid stringent measures at the FATF thus far.

While Mr. Jaishankar's words were meant for the global struggle with terrorism since 2001, their import is for India's particular problems with Pakistan and cross-border terrorism in the present for the impending decision at the FATF plenary next month. Pakistan's recent actions, including the sudden arrests and quick convictions of most wanted figures [Zaki Ur Rehman Lakhvi](#) and [Hafiz Saeed](#), and the [warrant for JeM chief Masood Azhar](#), all in cases of terror financing, indicate that Islamabad is aware of the importance of these decisions for its economic future; for the moment, the government is appearing to fall in line with the FATF's 27-point action plan. By drawing the connection between the actions of the UNSC and the FATF together, Mr. Jaishankar is indicating that India is not only watching what Pakistan does but also how the international community “walks the talk” on “zero tolerance to terrorism”.

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