

# CHINA OFFERS TACIT SUPPORT TO INDIA

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - Pakistan

China on Wednesday appeared to have walked a thin line by tacitly supporting Indian air strikes against the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) terrorist camp in Pakistan, but making it plain that it would not label Islamabad as a state sponsor of terrorism.

China's deft balancing act became visible during comments by Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi during the course of the Russia-India-China (RIC) Foreign Ministers' meeting in the picturesque town of Wuzhen.

Without referring to the cross-border attack by the Indian Air Force on Tuesday on a JeM training camp in Balakot, Mr. Wang said that it was "especially important" to "eradicate the breeding grounds of terrorism and extremism."

Endorsing the Chinese Foreign Minister's remarks, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj on two occasions referred to Mr. Wang's observation.

In response to a question on whether there was divergence on the Pulwama attack between India and China, Ms. Swaraj said: "As far as joint strategy is concerned, you just heard Foreign Minister Wang Yi's speech. What he said during his concluding statement, he reiterated here, and he said that we would cooperate on eradicating the breeding grounds of terrorism."

Referring to the adoption of a common approach by the three RIC countries, Ms. Swaraj said that, "This is not only a common strategy for the three of us, but it is resolution for the three of us."

But the Chinese Foreign Minister also said Pakistan was opposed to terrorism.

"China, Russia and India have reaffirmed our strong opposition to terrorism in its various forms and manifestations. At the same time, we believe that Pakistan has always been opposed to terrorism," Mr. Wang observed.

Referring to the "recent developments between India and Pakistan," Mr. Wang said he appreciated "statements by Indian and Pakistani friends saying that they would exercise restraint and avoid escalation of the situation."

## 'Mutual friend'

Besides, describing China as a "mutual friend" of India and Pakistan, he hoped that both countries "can conduct dialogue to establish facts through investigations to keep things under control and maintain peace and stability in the region."

Short of offering mediation, the Chinese Foreign Minister said that Beijing was "playing a constructive role not the opposite."

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