

# AIR STRIKE ACROSS LOC PRE-EMPTIVE, SUSHMA TELLS CHINA, RUSSIA

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India - Pakistan

Making India's case: Sushma Swaraj with Wang Yi, centre, and Sergei Lavrov, left, in Wuzhen on Wednesday. PTI

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj on Wednesday blamed Pakistan's inaction against Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) — the international terror group responsible for the Pulwama attack — for triggering the strike by the Indian Air Force across the Line of Control, and reiterated that New Delhi was averse to any escalation of tensions with Islamabad.

"In the light of continued refusal of Pakistan to acknowledge and act against terror groups on its territory and based on credible information that the JeM is planning other attacks in various parts of India, the Government of India has decided to take pre-emptive action. The target was selected in order to avoid civilian casualties" Ms. Swaraj said during her remarks at the plenary foreign ministerial meeting of the Russia-India-China grouping.

She added: "No military installations were targeted. The limited objective of the pre-emptive strike was to act decisively against the terrorist infrastructure of the JeM in order to pre-empt another terrorist attack in India."

Highlighting that India was exercising restraint, Ms. Swaraj said: "India does not wish to see further escalation of the situation..."

Earlier, in the first high-level interaction with China after the Pulwama attack, Ms. Swaraj mounted a robust attack on Pakistan, accusing it of harbouring the JeM, which had masterminded the "worst terrorist" attack against the Indian security forces on February 14.

In her opening remarks during a one-on-one interaction with Chinese State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the sidelines of the ministerial meeting, Ms. Swaraj stressed that she was visiting China "at a time of grief and anger in India."

Slamming Islamabad for the Pulwama attack, Ms. Swaraj pointed out that the "worst terrorist attack directed against our security forces," has been "claimed by JeM, a Pakistan-based and supported terrorist organisation banned by the UN and other countries."

"This terrorist attack is the direct result of the impunity and cover provided to the JeM and its leaders by the Pakistani side," she said.

Ms. Swaraj made it plain to Mr. Wang that "the entire UN had spoken with one voice condemning the terrorist attack."

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