

# CONCEPT OF INDO-PACIFIC IS A REJECTION OF SPHERES OF INFLUENCE: JAISHANKAR

Relevant for: International Relations | Topic: India's Foreign Policy evolution and changes

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**NEW DELHI:** The concept of [Indo-Pacific](#) is a rejection of spheres of influence and an indication of how ties between countries of the region will evolve, Indian foreign minister S [Jaishankar](#) said on Friday adding that it was not an attempt to create Cold War camps of the past.

Stating that every era had produced its own strategic concepts and analytical constructs, Jaishankar in a speech to a Global Townhall organized by think tanks in Indonesia and Australia, said "the sharp distinction between the Pacific and Indian Ocean theatres was only made after the Second World War."

The intensification of globalization and inter-dependence and the rebalancing in the global order are some of the factors that have led to the evolution of the current concept of the Indo-Pacific, the minister said adding that this "landscape actually creates an ethos for greater cooperation."

There was a growing recognition of the logic of the "Indo-Pacific" Jaishankar said noting that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Germany, France and the Netherlands had subscribed to this approach.

"Indo-Pacific is also a rejection of spheres of influence and all that this may imply. It is a reiteration that the world cannot be frozen for the benefit of a few, even if that is the case with the United Nations. It is an indication of our future, not a throwback to the past. Only those harbouring a Cold War mindset will see such intentions," the minister said.

The comment can be seen as clear riposte to China which has slammed the concept of the Indo-Pacific as a product of an "outdated Cold War mentality" promoted by the US and "comprising bloc confrontation." Chinese foreign minister Wang Yi has been quoted as saying that the Quad – that brings together India, Australia, Japan and the United States – as an Asian NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation).

India also sees China and some other countries as the stumbling blocks in the reform of the UN Security Council (UNSC), the global high table. India has been seeking a revamp of the UNSC include countries like itself given that the present composition of five veto-wielding permanent members and 10 non permanent members was a structure put in place when the UN was created in 1945.

In his speech, Jaishankar noted that during the covid-19 crisis, "Indian diplomacy has actually put its Indo-Pacific approach into practice."

"We provided assistance to Solomon Islands, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Kiribati, Tonga, Tuvalu and Palau for procurement of medical equipment and supplies to assist in their response to covid-19. This was natural given the growing development partnership between India and the Pacific Islands," the minister said referring to India's increased outreach to the Pacific Island States.

The covid-19 pandemic had underlined the need for greater international cooperation, the minister said.

“In a world where trust and transparency are now at greater premium, it highlights the importance of building more resilient supply chains. It is also a reminder of the importance of multilateralism. And that, in turn, requires adherence to a rule-based global order,” the minister added.

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