

# CHINA CHANGES TACK ON KASHMIR

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Cautious move: China is moving ahead with its ties with India and Pakistan on separate tracks, a spokesperson said. [pti](#)

Ahead of Chinese President Xi Jinping's visit to India and Nepal, Beijing has dropped references to the role of the United Nations in resolving the Kashmir issue.

Instead, Beijing has advocated direct talks between New Delhi and Islamabad. In the presence of visiting Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan and Chief of the Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Geng Shuang, in response to a question, said: "China's position on the Kashmir issue is consistent and clear. We call upon India and Pakistan to enhance dialogue and consultation on issues including Kashmir and consolidate mutual trust. This is in line with the interests of both countries and common aspirations of the world."

## Significant departure

Mr. Geng's statement is a departure from the recent position adopted by Beijing after India revoked Article 370. China had backed Islamabad to internationalise the Kashmir issue at the United Nations.

"The Kashmir issue, a dispute left from the past, should be peacefully and properly addressed in accordance with the UN Charter, Security Council resolutions and bilateral agreement," State Councillor and Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi had said in his address to the UN General Assembly last month.

During his daily media briefing, Mr. Geng pointed out that China was moving ahead with its ties with India and Pakistan on separate tracks.

## Common thread

Asked whether Mr. Khan's visit would have any bearing on President Xi's expected visit to India from October 11, Mr. Geng said China and India were both major developing countries and emerging markets.

Referring to last year's Wuhan informal summit between President Xi and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he pointed out that "there has been good momentum in our bilateral relations and we have been advancing our cooperation and properly managing differences and sensitive issues."

He stressed that the same spirit should be maintained as the ties between New Delhi and Beijing enter their "next phase".

The spokesperson pointed out, in reference to Mr. Khan's visit, that China and Pakistan were "all weather strategic partners," who were set to add more substance to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) — the flagship undertaking of President Xi's signature Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

Earlier, a Pakistan government statement said Mr. Khan would exchange views on "regional

developments including the state of peace and security in South Asia” arising from the situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

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