

Joint Statement: Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting

March 03, 2023

We, the Foreign Ministers of Australia, India and Japan and the Secretary of State of the United States of America met in New Delhi, India on 03 March 2023, for the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Our meeting today reaffirms the Quad's steadfast commitment to supporting a free and open Indo-Pacific, which is inclusive and resilient. We strongly support the principles of freedom, rule of law, sovereignty and territorial integrity, peaceful settlement of disputes without resorting to threat or use of force and freedom of navigation and overflight, and oppose any unilateral attempt to change the status quo, all of which are essential to the peace, stability and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region and beyond.

2. We reiterate our conviction that the Quad, acting as a force for regional and global good, will be guided by the priorities of the Indo-Pacific region through its positive and constructive agenda. Through the Quad, we seek to support the region through practical cooperation on contemporary challenges such as health security, climate change and the clean energy transition, critical and emerging technologies, infrastructure and connectivity, addressing the debt crisis through sustainable, transparent and fair lending and financing practices, space cooperation, cyber-security, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), maritime security and counter-terrorism.

3. Reaffirming our consistent and unwavering support for ASEAN centrality and unity, and the ASEAN-led architecture- including the East Asia Summit and ASEAN Regional Forum- we remain committed to supporting implementation of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and will be guided in our work by ASEAN's principles and priorities. We welcome Indonesia's 2023 ASEAN Chairmanship and will support its Chair theme "ASEAN Matters: Epicentrum of Growth", as we identify tangible areas for the Quad to support the work of ASEAN. In addition, we are committed to further strengthening our respective relationships with ASEAN, thus creating a platform for greater Quad collaboration in support of the AOIP.

4. We are committed to supporting Pacific Island countries in line with the objectives of the Pacific Islands Forum's 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, guided by Pacific priorities of climate change, resilient infrastructure and maritime security. We support regional institutions in the Pacific and are also further strengthening our cooperation with the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), to address the region's most pressing and important challenges. We welcome India's leadership in finalising the IORA Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.

5. We are pleased to note the progress made under the Quad Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Partnership (HADR) for the Indo-Pacific, since our last meeting in September 2022, when we signed the Guidelines for the Partnership. We welcome the outcomes of the first HADR tabletop exercise and biannual meeting held in India in December 2022. We look forward to the finalization of the Partnership's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) which would enable an efficacious and coordinated response mechanism.

6. We concur that the rules-based international order is anchored in international law, including the UN Charter, and the principles of sovereignty, political independence, and territorial integrity of all states. We are committed to cooperate to address attempts to unilaterally subvert the UN and international system, in consultation with our partners and through multilateral and international platforms. We reiterate our unwavering support for the UN Charter, including its three pillars, and our steadfast commitment to strengthening the UN and international system through a comprehensive reform agenda, including through expansion in permanent and non-permanent seats of the UN Security Council. In this regard, we commit to active and constructive engagement in the Inter-Governmental Negotiations (IGN) process on Security Council Reforms with an overall objective of making the UN Security Council more effective, representative, and credible.

7. We will support meritorious and independent candidates for elections in the UN and in international forums to maintain the integrity and impartiality of the international system. We note with appreciation the UN Secretary General's call for full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In this regard, we underscore the importance of achieving SDGs in a comprehensive manner without prioritizing a narrow set of such goals, and reaffirm that the UN has a central role in supporting countries in its implementation.

8. We recognize that peace and security in the maritime domain underpins the development and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific, and reiterate the importance of respect for sovereignty, consistent with international law. We reiterate the importance of adherence to international law, as reflected in the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), to meet challenges to the maritime rules-based order, including in the South and East China Seas. We strongly oppose any unilateral actions that seek to change the status quo or increase tensions in the area. We express serious concern at the militarization of disputed features, the dangerous use of coast guard vessels and maritime militia, and efforts to disrupt other countries' offshore resource exploitation activities.

9. We are determined to deepen engagement with regional partners, including through information-sharing, capacity-building and technical assistance, to strengthen maritime domain awareness; counter illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; enhance their capability to protect and develop offshore

resources, consistent with UNCLOS; ensure freedom of navigation and overflight; and promote the safety and security of sea lines of communication. We look forward to continuing these discussions at the Quad Maritime Security Working Group meeting hosted by the United States in Washington DC in March 2023. In this context, we welcome the progress made under the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness (IPMDA).

10. We unequivocally condemn terrorism and violent extremism in all its forms and manifestations. We denounce the use of terrorist proxies and emphasize the importance of denying any logistical, financial or military support to terrorist organizations which could be used to launch or plan terrorist attacks, including transnational and cross-border attacks. We reiterate our condemnation of terrorist attacks, including 26/11 Mumbai, which claimed lives of citizens from all Quad countries, and Pathankot attacks. We are committed to working together with our regional and international partners to promote accountability for the perpetrators of such terrorist attacks, including through designations by the UN Security Council 1267 Sanctions Committee. In this regard, we express our concern at attempts to politicise the working of the UNSC Sanctions Regimes and call on all states to maintain the transparent, objective and evidence based working methods of UNSC Sanctions Committees.

11. We note with deep concern that terrorism has become increasingly diffuse, aided by terrorists' adaptation to, and the use of emerging and evolving technologies such as unmanned aerial systems (UAS) and the internet, including social media platforms for recruitment and incitement to commit terrorist acts, as well as for the financing, planning, and preparation of terrorist activities. We welcome the focused discussions on these themes at the Quad Counter-Terrorism Policy Meeting and tabletop exercise hosted by Australia in October 2022. We are pleased to announce the establishment of the Quad Working Group on Counter-Terrorism, which will explore cooperation amongst the Quad, and with Indo-Pacific partners, to counter new and emerging forms of terrorism, radicalization to violence and violent extremism. We look forward to its first meeting in the United States in 2023 to continue our discussions on this global issue.

12. We strongly emphasise the importance of maintaining peace, stability and prosperity and express our deep concern at the deteriorating situation in Myanmar. In this regard, we emphasise the need for complete cessation of violence, the release of all those arbitrarily detained, resolution of issues through dialogue, unhindered humanitarian access and transition to an inclusive, federal democratic system in Myanmar. Towards this, we reaffirm our consistent support to the ASEAN-led efforts, including the work of the ASEAN Chair and Office of the Special Envoy, and call for the full implementation of ASEAN's Five-Point Consensus. We also encourage the international community to work together in a pragmatic and constructive way towards resolving the crisis in Myanmar.

13. We condemn North Korea's destabilising ballistic missile launches, including the launch of yet another Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM) on February 18, 2023 in violation of UN Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs). We reaffirm our commitment to the complete denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula and urge North Korea to comply with its obligations under UNSCRs. We reconfirm the necessity of immediate resolution of the abductions issue. We stress the importance of addressing proliferation of nuclear and missile technologies related to North Korea in the region and beyond.

14. We continued to discuss our responses to the conflict in Ukraine and the immense human suffering it is causing, and concurred that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is inadmissible. We underscored the need for a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine in accordance with international law, including the UN Charter. We emphasised that the rules-based international order must respect sovereignty, territorial integrity, transparency and peaceful resolution of disputes.

15. We welcome the announcement of the first class of Quad Fellows, who will begin their academic pursuits in the United States in August 2023.

16. We look forward to the next Quad Leaders' Summit being hosted by Australia this year.

17. We will work closely to align and complement Quad's agenda with Japan's Presidency of the G7, India's Presidency of the G20 and the United States' APEC host year in 2023.

18. We will continue to meet regularly to deliver concrete benefits and serve as a force for good, deepening practical and positive cooperation for the benefit of the Indo-Pacific region.

New Delhi

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