



Delhi Policy Group

# Foreign Affairs Review

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Delhi Policy Group

Core 5A, 1st Floor, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi- 110003

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# DPG Foreign Affairs Review

## Volume 1, Issue 2

### December 2019

#### ABOUT US

Founded in 1994, the Delhi Policy Group is among India's oldest independent think tanks with its primary focus on international and strategic issues of critical national interest. Over the past decades, the Delhi Policy Group has established itself in both domestic and international circles, particularly in the area of national security.

In keeping with India's increasing global profile as a leading power and the accompanying dynamism of India's foreign and security policy, the Delhi Policy Group has expanded its focus areas to include India's broader regional and global role; India's initiatives to strengthen its strategic periphery; India's political, security and connectivity challenges and policies across the Indo-Pacific; and the strategic partnerships that advance India's rise. To support these goals, the DPG undertakes research, publishes policy reports and organises conferences on strategic and geo-political, geo-economic, and defence and security issues.

#### DPG Foreign Affairs Review

DPG Foreign Affairs Review is compiled by our research team from publicly available information and open source media to provide an overview of significant developments related to India's foreign affairs during the month. Your comments and feedback can be addressed to Mohit Musaddi at [mohit@dpg.org.in](mailto:mohit@dpg.org.in).

#### Cover Photographs:

*(Photographs top to bottom)*

*Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi with the Prime Minister of Mauritius Mr. Pravind Jugnauth in New Delhi on December 6, 2019. Source: Twitter/ @Narendra Modi*

*EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia Retno Marsudi in New Delhi on December 13, 2019. Source: Twitter/ @Dr. S. Jaishankar*

*L-R: Shri Rajnath Singh, Defence Minister of India; Dr. S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister of India; Mr. Mike Pompeo, United States Secretary of State; and Dr. Mark Esper, United States Secretary of Defence in Washington for the 2nd India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue on December 18, 2019. Source: Twitter/ @Dr. S. Jaishankar*

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## I. Asia

### 1. [Prime Minister Narendra Modi meets Prime Minister of Mauritius Mr. Pravind Jugnauth](#)

During a private visit to New Delhi, the Prime Minister of Mauritius Mr. Pravind Jugnauth called on the Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi on December 6. Prime Minister Jugnauth expressed deep appreciation for India's support in many development cooperation projects being implemented in Mauritius, such as the Metro Express Project, ENT Hospital, and the Social Housing Project. Prime Minister Jugnauth conveyed that accelerating the pace of all-round development of Mauritius and deepening the scope of cooperation with India will be his priorities in the new term. He expected India to play an important role in this endeavour.



*Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi with the Prime Minister of Mauritius Mr. Pravind Jugnauth in New Delhi on December 6, 2019. Source: Twitter/ @Narendra Modi*

### 2. [Video Conference between the Prime Minister of India and the President of Maldives](#)

On December 4, [Prime Minister Narendra Modi](#) of India and President Ibrahim Solih of Maldives jointly inaugurated several developmental projects in Maldives via video conference. The projects included the gifting of Made in India Coast Guard Ship *Kaamiyaab* to Maldives, launch

of RuPay card, lighting up of Male using LED lights, High Impact Community Development Projects and the launch of fish processing plants. President Solih expressed his heartfelt appreciation to Prime Minister Modi for his personal commitment to further strengthen the very strong relations between the Maldives and India.



*President of Maldives Ibrahim Solih inspects CGS Kaamiyaab, an in-shore patrol vessel gifted to Maldives by the Government of India. Source: Twitter/ @presidencymv*

3. [Telephone Conversation between the Prime Minister of India and President of Afghanistan](#)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had a telephonic conversation with President of Afghanistan Mr. Mohd. Ashraf Ghani on December 24, 2019. Reiterating India's abiding commitment, as a close friend and neighbour, to a unified, sovereign, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan, the Prime Minister underlined India's principled support to an inclusive peace process in Afghanistan which is Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled.

4. [Visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia to India](#)

EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar hosted his Indonesian counterpart Ms. Retno Marsudi in New Delhi on December 13-14 for the [6<sup>th</sup> India-Indonesia Joint Commission Meeting \(JCM\)](#). In the meeting, both sides reiterated their

commitment to strengthen ties in the areas of defence, security, connectivity, trade and investment and people-to-people exchanges.

During her visit, Ms. Marsudi also attended the combined Ministerial Keynote Session of the Delhi Dialogue XI and the Indian Ocean Dialogue VI. Inter alia, her speech stressed on the continuing strategic partnership between India and Indonesia, particularly in the maritime domain.



*EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia Retno Marsudi in New Delhi on December 13, 2019. Source: Twitter/ @Dr. S. Jaishankar*

##### 5. [Visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Maldives to New Delhi](#)

Foreign Minister of Maldives, Mr. Abdulla Shahid was on an official visit to New Delhi from December 10 – 14, 2019. During his visit, Mr. Shahid co-chaired the 6<sup>th</sup> Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) between India and Maldives along with his Indian counterpart Dr. S. Jaishankar. The two ministers reviewed the progress achieved in implementing the vast and ambitious agenda of bilateral cooperation agreed between the two countries.

The [Joint Statement](#) stressed on the ongoing cooperation between the two countries in security and defence, trade, investment and economic



cooperation, bilateral development partnership, connectivity, people to people cooperation and cultural exchanges. [Memorandum of Understandings \(MoUs\)](#) on “cooperation between the Election Commissions of India and Maldives”, “cooperation between the Financial Intelligence Units of India”, and an “Instrument of Ratification for the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters” were exchanged during the Foreign Minister’s visit.

Mr. Shahid also [called on](#) the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and during the meeting, the Prime Minister reiterated India’s commitment to partner with the Government of Maldives for a strong, democratic, prosperous and peaceful Maldives.

#### 6. [Third 2+2 Dialogue between Foreign and Defence Secretaries of India and Australia](#)

The third edition of the India-Australia Foreign and Defence Secretaries Dialogue (2+2) was held in New Delhi on December 9, 2019. The Indian delegation was led by Defence Secretary Dr Ajay Kumar and Foreign Secretary Shri Vijay Gokhale, while the Australian side was led by Defence Secretary Mr Greg Moriarty and Foreign Secretary Ms Frances Adamson. During the dialogue, issues related to bilateral defence engagements, areas to enhance cooperation in the field of defence industry and defence technology as well as the prevailing regional security concerns were discussed.

The two sides welcomed the recent progress made in deepening bilateral, political, economic, security and defence cooperation. They discussed regional and global developments and also exchanged views on achieving their shared objectives of peace, progress and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region. The 2+2 meeting also provided opportunities for the two sides to review the status of their bilateral relationship in the context of the emerging scenarios.

#### 7. [Visit of the Chief of the Army Staff to Japan](#)

General Bipin Rawat, Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee and Chief of the Army Staff was on an official visit to Japan from December 3-6. During the visit, the Army Chief-led delegation interacted with senior hierarchy of the Japan Self Defence Force with an aim to strengthen the bilateral defence ties between the two nations. The Army Chief also met Mr. Taro Kono, Minister of Defence, Japan to discuss issues of mutual self-interest.

## 8. [Meeting of Special Representatives of India and China](#)

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Special Representatives of India and China were held in New Delhi on December 21, 2019. The Indian side was led by National Security Advisor Mr. Ajit Doval while Mr. Wang Yi, State Councillor and Minister of Foreign Affairs of China led the Chinese delegation. Both sides agreed that it is important to maintain peace and tranquillity in the border areas for the overall development of the bilateral relationship, pending final settlement of the boundary question. There was also a consensus that both sides should respect each other's sensitivities and concerns in order to build mutual trust, as this was important for the future development of the bilateral relations between India and China.

## MEA Regional Conferences

### 9. [Indian Ocean Dialogue VI](#)

India hosted the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of IORA's Indian Ocean Dialogue in New Delhi on December 13, 2019. The theme for the Dialogue "Indo-Pacific: Re-imagining the Indian Ocean through an Expanded Geography" was intended to build upon the growing recognition of the Indo-Pacific concept in strategic and academic circles within the region and beyond. The sessions of the Dialogue included Indo-Pacific: Seamless and Collective; Maritime Connectivity and Infrastructure; and Delivering Public Goods at Sea.

### 10. [Delhi Dialogue XI](#)

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) hosted the 11th edition of the Delhi Dialogue on December 13-14, 2019. The theme for this year's Delhi Dialogue was "Advancing Partnerships in Indo-Pacific" and was co-organised with the assistance of the Research and Information Systems (RIS) for Developing Countries. The sessions of the Dialogue consisted of Building Bridges in the Indo-Pacific; Indo-Pacific Construct: Emerging Architecture; Regional Connectivity in the Indo-Pacific; Industrial Revolution 4.0 and Indo-Pacific; and Future of the Multilateral Trading System.

There was a Ministerial Keynote Session (Combined Session of Delhi Dialogue XI and Indian Ocean Dialogue VI) in which the Foreign Minister of Indonesia Ms. Retno Marsudi, the Secretary General of IORA Dr. Nomvuyo Nokwe and Minister of State for External Affairs [V. Muraleedharan](#) delivered keynote addresses. EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar

delivered the [valedictory address](#) at the combined conference. He urged participants to look beyond the search for identity of views on every element of the Indo-Pacific concept and instead invest time on meaningful cooperative initiatives based on open, free and inclusive Indo-Pacific platforms.

## II. North America

### 1. [Second 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue between India and the United States of America in Washington DC](#)

EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar and Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh met US Secretary of Defense Dr. Mark Esper and Secretary of State Michael Pompeo in Washington DC on December 18 for the 2<sup>nd</sup> India-USA 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue. The 2+2 Ministerial is the highest-level institutional mechanism between the two countries and provides for a review of the security, defence and strategic partnership between India and the United States. At the outset, the ministers reiterated their commitment to a free, open, inclusive, peaceful, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region. They reiterated their support for ASEAN Centrality, rule of law, freedom of navigation and overflight, peaceful resolution of disputes, and sustainable and transparent infrastructure investment.

Overall, the [Joint Statement](#) emphasised on a Global Partnership for Principles, Peace and Prosperity; on building an enduring Defense and Counterterrorism Partnership; on Economy, Energy, Environment and Mutual Prosperity; on Shared Leadership in Science and Space; and on Building Bonds between the citizens of India and the USA.

Noting the success of India-U.S. naval cooperation, the Ministers emphasised the importance of enhancing other areas of military-to-military cooperation. They also emphasized on the importance of defence enabling agreements in which they noted the rapid progress to implement the COMCASA, discussions on BECA, the signing of the Industrial Security Annex (ISA) and the progress made under the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI).

Condemning terrorism in all its forms, the Ministers called for concerted action against all terrorist networks, including al-Qa'ida, ISIS/Daesh, Lashkar e-Tayyiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), Haqqani Network, Hizb-ul Mujahideen, TTP and D-Company. The Ministers called on Pakistan to take immediate, sustained and irreversible action to ensure that no territory under its control is used for terrorism against other countries in any manner, and to arrest and prosecute the perpetrators of cross-border terrorist attacks, including 26/11 Mumbai and Pathankot.



*L-R: Shri Rajnath Singh, Defence Minister of India; Dr. S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister of India; Mr. Mike Pompeo, United States Secretary of State; and Dr. Mark Esper, United States Secretary of Defence in Washington for the 2<sup>nd</sup> India-US 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue on December 18, 2019. Source: Twitter/ @Dr. S. Jaishankar*

## 2. [Visit of the External Affairs Minister to Canada](#)

EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar visited Ottawa on December 20, 2019. During his visit, he held discussions with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his Canadian counterpart François-Philippe Champagne. With FM Champagne, EAM Jaishankar did a comprehensive review of India-Canada bilateral ties and discussed opportunities for more productive collaborations in different sectors. The EAM also underlined the importance of respecting national integrity and unity and provided an accurate understanding of Jammu and Kashmir developments. They also exchanged views on a number of global and regional issues like the challenge of terrorism, including cross-border terrorism.

### III. Europe

#### 1. [Visit of King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden](#)

Their Majesties King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden were on a State visit to India from December 2 to 6, 2019 at the invitation of President Ram Nath Kovind. As part of their visit, they held discussions with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar and also met Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman. With PM Modi, the Royal couple held extensive discussions on boosting cooperation between India and Sweden. PM Modi and King Carl XVI Gustaf also co-chaired the India-Sweden High-Level Policy Dialogue on Innovation Policy thus invigorating the India-Sweden friendship with closer cooperation in innovation and technology.



*President of India Shri Ram Nath Kovind meets King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden during their ceremonial welcome at Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi on December 2, 2019. Source: Ministry of External Affairs*

#### 2. [Visit of the Prime Minister of Portugal to India](#)

The Prime Minister of Portugal Mr. Antonio Costa was on a working visit to India from December 19-20, on an invitation extended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to attend the second meeting of the Organising Committee on the celebrations for the 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

PM Modi also had a bilateral meeting with PM Costa in which they discussed a broader roadmap for strengthening bilateral relations in areas such as defence, science and technology and trade. This was the third official meeting between the two prime ministers in a span of three years.

3. [Telephone Conversation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Ms. Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission](#)

On December 2, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had a telephonic conversation with the President of the European Commission Ms. Ursula von der Leyen. During the call, the Prime Minister pointed out that India-EU partnership is based on shared values like democracy, respect for rule of law, multilateralism, rules-based trade and rules-based international order. He also appreciated the identification of issues like climate change, connectivity, renewable energy, maritime security, addressing radicalisation and terrorism, as her priority areas. The Prime Minister expressed his keen desire to work together for strengthening the India-EU Partnership.

4. [Telephonic Conversation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Prime Minister of the U.K. Mr. Boris Johnson](#)

PM Modi congratulated Prime Minister Mr. Boris Johnson over telephone on his electoral victory in the recently concluded elections in the UK on December 19. Both leaders expressed commitment to further strengthen the India-U.K. ties. The Prime Minister also invited Boris Johnson to visit India at his earliest convenience.

5. [External Affairs Minister of India meets Swedish Foreign Minister Ann Linde](#)

Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Ms. Ann Linde met EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar during her visit to India as part of the delegation of King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia of Sweden from December 2 to 6, 2019. EAM Jaishankar and FM Linde discussed the expanding of India-Sweden bilateral cooperation in environment, manufacturing, health and Smart Cities. The EAM also urged for a greater mobility of Indian talent to Sweden. The two ministers also agreed on a new consultation mechanism and close cooperation in the United Nations. They discussed challenges of terrorism, especially cross-border terrorism and agreed to work together in international forums to address the challenge of terrorism. Days after Sweden raised the issue of human rights in Jammu and Kashmir, EAM Jaishankar emphasised to FM Linde that the right to life was the most basic human right.

6. [Visit of the External Affairs Minister of India to Italy](#)

EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar visited Italy from December 6-8, 2019 to deliver his remarks at the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the Mediterranean Dialogues (MED). He explained India's interests in the Mediterranean and the Gulf and made the case for India's greater global relevance.

During his visit, he met Senator Roberta Pinotti, Foreign Minister of Italy Luigi Di Maio and Prime Minister Mr. Giuseppe Conte. He also interacted with a wide cross-section of Italian Members of Parliament and welcomed their understanding of India's concerns and aspirations in addition to reiterating their commitment to further strengthen ties between India and Italy.



*EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar at the 5<sup>th</sup> Mediterranean Dialogues in Rome on December 7, 2019. Source: Twitter/ @Dr. S. Jaishankar*



#### IV. West Asia

##### 1. [External Affairs Minister's visit to Iran](#)

EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar was on an official visit to Iran on December 22 – 23, 2019. During his visit, EAM Jaishankar co-chaired the 19<sup>th</sup> Session of the India-Iran Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) with his Iranian counterpart Dr. Mohammad Javad Zarif. During the Meeting, the two Ministers reviewed and positively assessed progress in bilateral cooperation, including connectivity, trade and commerce, cultural and people-to-people contacts. They also exchanged views on regional and global issues of mutual interest. Both sides also shared concerns regarding the grave threat posed by terrorism and called for an immediate end to all support to terror sanctuaries. They agreed that State aid, abetment and support to terrorism should be condemned.

EAM Dr. Jaishankar called on the President of Iran Dr. Hassan Rouhani during which he apprised the President of the outcomes of the Joint Commission and progress in India-Iran bilateral ties. Jaishankar also met Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Rear Admiral Mr. Ali Shamkhani and Minister for Roads and Urban Development, Mr. Mohammad Eslami.



*EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar with President of Iran Dr. Hassan Rouhani in Tehran on December 23, 2019. Source: Twitter/ @Dr. S. Jaishankar*

## 2. [Visit of the External Affairs Minister to the Sultanate of Oman](#)

EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar visited Oman on December 24, 2019 at the invitation of Foreign Minister Yousuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah. During his visit, the EAM also held meetings with other ministers such as Sayyid Badr bin Saud al Busaidi, Minister Responsible for Defence Affairs and Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmoud Al Said, Deputy Prime Minister of Oman. An agreement for cooperation in the field of Maritime Transport between India and Oman was signed. The visit further provided an opportunity for the two ministers to hold in-depth discussions on a wide range of bilateral, regional and global issues and has also advanced India's growing engagement with Oman and the region.

## V. Africa

### 1. [Visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Guinea to India](#)

Mr. Mamadi Touré, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Guineans Abroad of the Republic of Guinea visited India on an official trip from December 02-05. EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar held discussions with FM Touré in which they covered all aspects of the India-Guinea bilateral relations including development partnership, capacity building and trade and commerce. Both the ministers underscored the need to further expand and deepen bilateral engagement to realize true potential, particularly in new areas such as defence and security.



*EAM Dr. S. Jaishankar greets Mamadi Touré, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Guineans Abroad of the Republic of Guinea in New Delhi on December 5, 2019.*

*Source: Twitter/ @Dr. S. Jaishankar*



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