

Joint Communiqué of the 16th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Russian Federation, the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China

Zhejiang, 27 February, 2019

We, the Foreign Ministers of the Russian Federation, the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China held our 16th meeting in Zhejiang, China on 27 February 2019 and discussed international and regional issues of common concern.

The Ministers recalled that the Russia-India-China (RIC) Informal Summit in Buenos Aires in November 2018 was an important milestone, during which the three leaders agreed to strengthen coordination, build consensus, enhance cooperation and promote world peace, stability and development. The Informal Summit imparted fresh impetus into the trilateral cooperation. The Ministers reiterated their commitment to work together to further their cooperation on important issues discussed at the Informal Summit and take the trilateral cooperation to a new level.

3. The Ministers reiterated the importance they attached to the Russia-India-China trilateral format as a platform to foster closer dialogue and practical cooperation in identified areas. As countries with significant international and regional influence, the three countries stand ready to expand mutual consultations and cooperation on international and regional issues of mutual interest in the spirit of mutual respect, respect for sovereignty, non-interference in internal affairs, unity, mutual understanding and trust. The common development and close cooperation of the three countries is conducive for world peace and stability and promoting global growth.

4. The Ministers reiterated their firm commitment to multilateralism and the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. The Ministers recognized the need for reform of multilateral institutions. They recalled the 2005 World Summit Outcome document and reaffirmed the need for a comprehensive reform of the UN, including its Security Council, with a view to making it more representative, effective and efficient, and to increase the representation of the developing countries so that it can adequately respond to global challenges. Foreign Ministers of China and Russia reiterate the importance they attach to the status of India in international affairs and support its aspiration to play a greater role in the United Nations.

5. The Ministers supported the G20's leading role in global economic governance and international economic cooperation. They expressed their readiness to enhance communication and cooperation including through G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting and other means, through

consultations and mutual support in areas of respective interest. They looked forward to positive outcomes from this year's Osaka Summit.

6. The Ministers reiterated the importance of BRICS cooperation and commended the fruitful results of the Johannesburg Summit. The three countries will work actively to implement the outcomes of the successive BRICS summits, deepen BRICS strategic partnership, strengthen cooperation in the three pillar areas of economy, political and security cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges.

7. The Ministers underlined that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is an important, effective mechanism in promoting multilateral political, security, economic and people-to-people exchanges in the region, plays an important role in maintaining regional peace and stability and promoting prosperity and development of its member states. The Ministers welcomed the outcomes of the Qingdao Summit held in June 2018, which emphasized inter alia, the principle of "Shanghai Spirit". The Ministers reiterated necessity to expand cooperation between SCO member states, observers and dialogue partners. They called for broadening contacts and interactions between SCO and international and regional organizations especially with United Nations Organization and its specialized bodies, as well as with ASEAN and others.

8. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to equal, indivisible common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security. The Ministers reiterated the importance of the role and the need for closer cooperation and consultations in various regional fora and organizations such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and the Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD), to jointly contribute to regional peace, stability, sustainable development and prosperity.

9. The Ministers strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. They called on the international community to strengthen UN-led global counter-terrorism cooperation by fully implementing the relevant UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions and the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, while respecting sovereignty and independence of all states, and expeditiously finalizing and adopting the UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism at the earliest. They reiterated that states and their competent agencies play a central role in both national and international counter-terrorism efforts. They also stressed that terrorist groups cannot be supported and used in political and geopolitical goals.

10. The Ministers stressed that those committing, orchestrating, inciting or supporting terrorist acts must be held accountable and brought to justice in accordance with existing international

commitments on countering terrorism, including the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the FATF standards, international treaties, including on the basis of the principle "extradite or prosecute" and relevant international and bilateral obligations and in compliance with applicable domestic legislation.

11. The Ministers underscored the importance of the three international drug control convention and other relevant legal instruments which constitute the cornerstone of the drug control system. They reiterated their commitment to address the world drug problem, on a basis of common and shared responsibility. The Ministers expressed their determination to counter the spread of illicit drug trafficking in opiates from Afghanistan, which poses a serious threat to regional security and stability.

12. The Ministers believed that the United Nations should play a key role on security-related issues in the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and welcomed adoption by the UN GA 73-d session of the resolutions "Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security" and "Countering the use of information and communications technologies for criminal purposes". They agreed that the UN has a key role in developing universally accepted norms of responsible state behavior in the use of ICTs to ensure a peaceful, secure, open, cooperative, stable, orderly, accessible and equitable ICT environment. They recognized the need for a universal and binding regulatory instrument on combating the criminal use of ICTs in the UN framework and reiterated that all countries should participate in the evolution and functioning of the Internet and its governance on an equal footing. It is important to ensure the inclusiveness and openness of relevant international processes and the fair distribution of basic internet resources, and to build a multilateral, democratic and transparent Internet governance system. They remained committed to working together for the peaceful, secure, open, cooperative and orderly use of ICTs.

13. Emphasizing the indivisible nature of peace and security, the Ministers stressed that current challenges to international security require urgent efforts to promote global stability. Such efforts should be based on the principles of consensus and respect for interests and concerns of all interested States.

14. Prevention of arms race in outer space is a key factor for maintaining international peace and security. The Ministers expressed their serious concern about the possibility of an arms race in outer space and of outer space turning into an arena for military confrontation. They reaffirmed that the prevention of an arms race, including of the placement of weapons in outer space, would avert a grave danger for international peace and security. The Ministers emphasised the paramount importance of strict compliance with the existing legal regime providing for the peaceful use of outer space. They also reaffirmed that there is a need to

consolidate and reinforce this regime. They welcomed the meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts to discuss possible elements for a legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space including inter alia, on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space. They stressed that practical transparency and confidence building measures may also contribute towards non-placement of weapons in outer space. They reiterated that the Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has the primary role in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement or agreements, as appropriate, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. They supported the UN Group of Governmental Experts to consider and make recommendations on the substantial elements of the above-mentioned internationally binding instrument.

15. They advocated the compliance and strengthening of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BWC), including by the adoption of the Protocol to the Convention with the effective verification mechanism. To address the threat of chemical and biological terrorism, they supported and emphasized the need for launching multilateral negotiations on an international convention for the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism within the Conference on Disarmament.

16. The Ministers reiterated support for the Government and people of Afghanistan in their efforts to achieve an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process and to build a peaceful, secure, united, sovereign, democratic, stable, prosperous and inclusive country that exists in harmony with its neighbours. The Ministers reaffirmed their support to the efforts of the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces in fighting terrorist organizations.

17. The Ministers stressed the importance of multilateral interactions on the Afghanistan issue, including the SCO, the Moscow Format, the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process, the Kabul Process and the Regional Economic Cooperation Conference on Afghanistan. They welcomed the successful holding of a meeting of the SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group at the level of deputy foreign ministers in Beijing on 28 May, 2018 and the Second Round of the Moscow Format Consultations on Afghanistan on 9 November, 2018. India offers to host the next SCO-Afghanistan Contact Group at the level of deputy foreign ministers meeting in 2019.

18. The Ministers welcomed the significant, positive changes in Korean Peninsula since 2018 and DPRK's declared commitment for denuclearization. They welcomed the talks and consultations between the US and the DPRK, as well as improvement of inter-Korea relations. The Ministers reaffirmed that the Korean Peninsula issues should be resolved by peaceful and diplomatic means and expressed the hope that all parties concerned work together for continued

progress in the political settlement process and realize denuclearization and lasting peace on the Peninsula at an early date.

19. The Ministers underscored that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the Iranian nuclear issue was an important achievement of multilateral diplomacy, which serves international and regional peace and security and the common interests of the international community. Recalling the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on the Iranian Nuclear Programme and the UN Security Council Resolution 2231, they called upon all parties to fully comply with their obligations and ensure full and effective implementation of the JCPOA to promote international and regional peace and security. They recognized Iran's right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy as also the international community's strong interest in the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme.

20. The Ministers reiterated that a two-state solution should be pursued to achieve a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Palestinian issue through negotiation based on the relevant UN resolutions, the principle of "land for peace", the Arab peace initiative and pre-existing agreements between Israel and Palestine, leading to the establishment of a sovereign, independent and united State of Palestine coexisting peacefully with the State of Israel.

21. The Ministers stressed that a political and diplomatic solution, is the only reliable way to solve the Syrian issue. They reaffirmed support for the Geneva peace talks, the role of the UN as the main channel of mediation and the implementation of UNSC Resolution 2254. The Ministers welcomed the efforts of the Astana guarantors for improvement of the situation in Syria and the results of the fourth trilateral meeting in Sochi in February 2019. The Ministers hoped to see that the Constitutional Committee starts its work as early as possible, and that a political solution that accommodates the legitimate concerns of all parties could be found through an inclusive "Syrian-led and Syrian-owned" political process, with a view to seeking a political settlement of the Syrian conflict and safeguarding Syria's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity. The Ministers called for enhanced coordination to fight against all terrorist organizations in Syria including those listed by the UNSC. The Ministers stressed the urgent need for socio-economic reconstruction in Syria and called upon the international community to provide necessary assistance in that regard in de-politicized and non-discriminatory manner, contributing, inter alia, to the return of Syrian refugees.

22. The Ministers expressed concern over the continuing conflict in the Republic of Yemen, which has resulted in civilian casualties and damages to civilian infrastructure. The Ministers called on the international community to take necessary measures to support the political settlement process and improve Yemen's economic and social conditions. The Ministers also called on all parties to the conflict to abide by the Stockholm Agreement.

23. The Ministers stressed that the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Libya should be respected and upheld. They encouraged various factions in Libya to overcome their dissension and engage in broad-based, inclusive political dialogue pursuant to the Libyan Political Agreement to seek mutually acceptable solutions on all outstanding issues. The Ministers reaffirmed support for the UN-led political settlement process and the political transition plan proposed by the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Libya Ghassan Salamé, and called on the international community to make joint efforts for substantive progress in the political settlement process. The Ministers expressed support to Libya in its fight against the ISIL, Al-Qaeda and other terrorist organizations.

24. The Ministers declared that they are closely following the emerging situation in Venezuela. They called for the principles of United Nations Charter, the norms of international relations and international law to be adhered to by all. They are of the view that it is for the people of Venezuela to find political solution to resolve their differences through constructive dialogue and discussions, without resorting to violence. They stated that democracy, development, peace and security in Venezuela are of paramount importance for the progress and prosperity of the people of Venezuela.

25. The Ministers noted the intensified cross-border capital flows and risks as a result of the monetary policy adjustments by key developed economies. The Ministers supported strengthening the global financial safety net (GFSN), with a strong, quota-based and adequately resourced IMF at its centre. The Ministers stressed their hope to see the IMF complete the 15th General Review of Quotas by the Spring Meetings 2019 and no later than the Annual Meetings 2019, and agree on a new quota formula as the basis for realignment of quota shares to result in increased shares for dynamic economies in line with their relative positions in the world economy and hence likely in the increased shares of emerging markets and developing countries as a whole, while at the same time ensuring the voice of the poorest members.

26. The Ministers expressed their firm commitment to a rules-based, transparent, non-discriminatory, open and inclusive multilateral trading system centring around the WTO and firmly opposed to unilateralism and protectionism. They supported efforts to improve the WTO and believed such efforts should uphold its core values and basic principles and reflect the interests of all its members, especially developing members. The pressing task is to resolve the deadlock on appointments to the Appellate Body, an issue which concerns the WTO's survival.

27. The Ministers agreed that the imposition of unilateral sanctions beyond those adopted by the UNSC as well as "long-arm jurisdiction" were inconsistent with the principles of international law, have reduced the effectiveness and legitimacy of the UNSC sanction regime, and had a negative impact on third States and international economic and trade relations.

28. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals in order to achieve equitable, inclusive, open, all-round, innovative and sustainable development in a balanced and coordinated manner in the economic, social and environmental dimensions and attain the goal of eradicating poverty by 2030. The Ministers urged developed countries to honour their ODA commitments on time and in full and provide capital, technological and capacity-building assistance to developing countries in accordance with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

29. The Ministers welcomed the agreement reached at COP 24 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Katowice on guidelines for operationalizing the Paris Agreement. They restated their commitment to combating climate change.

30. The Ministers welcomed the holding of a Russia-India-China Vice Foreign Ministers/Deputy National Security Advisors Consultation on Afghanistan in May 2018 in Moscow.

31. The Ministers expressed satisfaction with the outcomes of the 16th Trilateral Academic Conference held in Russia in May 2018 and welcomed the 17th Trilateral Academic Conference to be held in China.

32. The Ministers welcomed the successful second edition of the visit of RIC young diplomats hosted by India in April 2018 and agreed to hold the third such interaction in Russia in 2019.

33. The Foreign Minister of the Russian Federation and the External Affairs Minister of the Republic of India thanked the People's Republic of China for hosting and making excellent arrangements for the meeting.

34. The Ministers decided to hold the next trilateral meeting in Russia. The time and venue of the meeting will be agreed through diplomatic channels.

* * * * *

Source: https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/t1641466.shtml