



## Ministry of External Affairs

Government of India

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# Opening remarks by External Affairs Minister at the 16th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Russia-India-China (RIC)

February 27, 2019

His Excellency Foreign Minister Wang Yi ,  
His Excellency Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov,  
members of the respective delegations,

Friends and colleagues,

It is a pleasure for me to lead the Indian delegation for the 16th meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Russia, India and China. I thank Foreign Minister Wang Yi for the wonderful arrangements that have been made for our meeting.

All of us last met in the RIC Foreign Ministerial Meeting in New Delhi on 11 December 2017 where we had an opportunity to engage on international and regional issues of common interest. We had resolved to continue our discussions and strengthen our cooperation in the trilateral format. Since then, our Leaders met at the RIC Informal Summit on 30 November 2018 on the margins of the G-20 Summit in Buenos Aires which shows the importance attached by our leaders to the RIC format.

Russia, India and China are countries that carry important voices in international politics and have the potential to significantly influence world events. Together we can play a constructive role in addressing pressing issues of common concern and challenges facing our world.

Terrorism tops the list of the existential threats that the world faces today. You are aware of the recent heinous terrorist attack on our security forces in Pulwama, Jammu and Kashmir perpetrated by Jaish-e-Mohammed, a Pakistan-based and supported terrorist organization proscribed by the United Nations and other countries. We lost more than 40 personnel from our Central Reserve Police Force while several others are injured seriously.

Such dastardly terrorist attacks are a grim reminder for the need for all the countries to show zero tolerance to terrorism and take decisive action against it. Following the Pulwama terrorist attack, instead of taking seriously the calls by international community to act against Jaish-e-Mohammad and

other terror groups based in Pakistan, Pakistan denied any knowledge of the attack and outrightly dismissed claims by Jaish-e-Mohammed.

In the light of continuing refusal of Pakistan to acknowledge and act against terror groups on its territory, and based on credible information that JeM was planning other attacks in various parts of India, Government of India decided to take pre-emptive action.

The target was selected in order to avoid civilian casualties. This was not a military operation. No military installations were targeted. The limited objective of the pre-emptive strike was to act decisively against the terrorist infrastructure of JeM in order to pre-empt another terror attack in India.

India does not wish to see further escalation of the situation. India will continue to act with responsibility and restraint.

Excellencies, in our discussions today, I look forward to having productive exchanges with you on other important issues such as climate change, reformed multilateralism, RIC cooperation under the framework of international organizations and international hot-spot issues. I believe the Wuzhen Meeting of RIC will positively contribute to the ongoing global discussions on a host of issues.

**Wuzhen**

**February 27, 2019**

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