

'PEACE AND TRANQUILITY IN THE BORDER AREAS REMAIN THE BASIS FOR NORMAL RELATIONS'

# India Always Has Bilateral Approach on China, says EAM Jaishankar

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New Delhi: Even as external affairs minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday stressed that peace and tranquillity in the border areas clearly remain the basis for normal relations with China, he pointed out that it would be fair to state that India has essentially taken a determinedly bilateral approach to China. He seemed to indicate that New Delhi is not seeking to build any formal alliance to counter China as charged by Beijing.

Jaishankar's remarks were made while delivering an address on the theme "China's foreign policy and international relations in the new era" at a conference organised by

the MEA's Center for Contemporary China Studies (CCCS).

"Peace and tranquillity in the border areas clearly remain the basis for normal relations. From time to time, this has been mischievously conflated with the sorting out of the boundary question," Jaishankar said.

"The truth is that the prerequisite has been and remains one much more modest, and even that was breached in 2020," the minister recalled.

He noted that the "continuation of the current impasse will not benefit either India or China" and "new normals of posture will inevitably lead to new normals of responses". This is a significant message given amid the ongoing party congress. Jaishankar said it is the willingness



to take a long-term view of their ties that the two countries must display today. He said, the last few years ha-

ve been a period of serious challenge, both for the relationship and for the prospects of the continent.

India's search for a "more balanced and stable relationship" with China stretches across "multiple domains and many options". He said: "Given the developments of 2020 (in Galwan), they obviously focus on an effective defence of the border. This was notably undertaken even in the midst of Covid."

The minister said looking back at seven decades of engagement, it would be fair to state that India has essentially taken a determinedly bilateral approach to China.

But he noted that India must prepare to "compete more effectively, especially in our immediate periphery".