

**Remarks by Dr. S. Jaishankar Hon'ble External Affairs  
Minister at the Raisina Roundtable @ Tokyo  
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I am delighted to participate at the Raisina@Tokyo. I thank ORF, JBIC and Keizai Doyukai for their collaboration to make this happen. This session is about how India and Japan, who enjoy a special strategic and global partnership, intend to meet the challenges facing the global order. There are many aspects to this subject and I will flag eight points that are worthy of debate.

2. The first pertains to the changes in the order itself, created by an accumulation of political and economic rebalancing, accelerated by globalization and now reflected in multi-polarity. Whatever metrics we use – GDP, technology, influence, or demography – the top 20 or 30 nations are not what they were two decades ago. Even less so what they were 4 or 8 decades before. Not only are the countries that impact us different, but so is their relative weight, importance and capability. As a result, new balances are being sought and sometimes achieved. This drives the volatility that we currently experience.

3. The second refers to the structure of the order. That has frayed in many ways, becoming less predictable or disciplined. In fact, there is a considerable amount of disorder. It has become much harder to create a consensus among more players, especially when they do not agree on their inter se position. What we see in

multilateralism, especially the United Nations, is both an expression of this as well a cause. Consequently, we are turning increasingly to like-minded partners who gather together for a particular purpose.

4. The third is in regard to the landscape. After 1945, these were neatly compartmentalized into theatres for the convenience of dominant powers. That has begun to change as capabilities are constrained and commitments come into question. A more modest era requires greater collaboration. But it also requires wider arenas to be effective. A good example of this is the Indo-Pacific.

5. Third, there are the different challenges that we confront. Three decades of globalization have created tremendous economic and technology concentrations, which now have major strategic implications. These have led to leveraging of trade, investment, connectivity, resources and even mobility. In many ways, the nature of power itself has undergone a change. That has been further aggravated by the impact of technology. National boundaries no longer provide effective defence. On the contrary, every technology advance – AI or chips, green or clean tech, space or drones – has also brought its own vulnerabilities. Few nations can deal with it on their own. At the same time, the competition for primacy has also become more intense.

6. Fourth, to add to this mix is a shift in global attitudes. The unequal benefits of globalization and stagnation in the quality of life has created political backlash in many societies. The trauma of

the Covid has made the world even more insecure. We have all experienced what it is to depend on others for basic necessities. Strategic autonomy is consequently sought by many more countries and regions.

7. Fifth, in this background, it is not surprising that global risk taking has been on the increase. We see it in conflict in Europe, in disregard for international law in Asia, in the nature of developments in the Middle East and in the weaponization of the normal. Longstanding agreements are not necessarily observed, raising question marks about the stability of the environment in which we all operate.

8. Sixth, the most universal expression of the global order is still the United Nations. Its reform is therefore of paramount importance. As fellow members of the G4 grouping, India and Japan seek to make the UN structures more contemporary. This is an uphill task but we must persevere.

9. Seventh, as to powers that are so central to multi-polarity in Asia, it is also in our common interest that the overall balance remains in favour of freedom, openness, transparency and a rules-based order. The world will watch how we support each other in this shared goal through various relationships and initiatives.

10. And eighth, the transformation of India in the last decade makes us a more effective and credible partner. Whether it is ease of doing business, infrastructure development, ease of living,

digital delivery, a startup and innovation culture or shaping the international agenda, India is a very different country today. This is important for Japanese to recognize.

11. Summing it all up, the world is now more volatile, uncertain, unpredictable and open-ended. This is the prospect that India and Japan have to confront, both from their national perspectives as well as from the point of view of their relationship. Can we safeguard stability, security, freedom, progress and prosperity for ourselves, for the larger region, and indeed, for the world?

12. A few propositions are worth examining in that regard:

- (i) Can our economic weight be a greater stabilizing factor? Trade has stagnated but investment has been more dynamic. Is there scope for a big jump?
- (ii) The deployment of technologies on the horizon is clearly the game changer. Is there scope for collaboration in this regard? Obvious examples are the semiconductor domain, electric mobility, renewables, AI and space.
- (iii) As two nations with strong climate change priorities, can we develop practical cooperation in support of global objectives. Japan has a history of involvement with logistics and mass transportation in India. While our energy trajectories have been separate so far, green hydrogen is bringing many potential partners together. Are these new areas worth exploring.

- (iv) Connectivity is also acquiring greater salience with new production and consumption centres. India is today working on major corridors to its East and West. They include the IMEC initiative through the Arabian peninsula, the International North South Transport Corridor, the Trilateral highway in South East Asia and the Chennai-Vladivostok route that has polar implications. Our two nations have converging views about the need for transparent and collaborative connectivity. How do we develop this domain?
- (v) In a world where global commons and global good is being short changed, greater development efforts by the more capable international players is imperative. As a voice of the Global South, India is particularly conscious of this responsibility. Our development efforts today span 78 nations across different continents. Can we coordinate in that regard?
- (vi) The responsibility to safeguard and secure is no less onerous. Maritime safety and security has become a particularly pressing concern. So have issues of cyber security. At the same time, the challenges of the past and the present remain very much with us. Counter-terrorism is a good example. It is also necessary to strengthen our defence capabilities for the benefit of the larger region. This family of defence and security concerns are likely to occupy a larger place in our thinking.

13. Let me conclude with three broad observations. One, the world is heading for re-globalization with building of resilient and reliable supply chains and trusted and transparent digital transactions. India and Japan are natural partners in that regard. Two, as democracies and market economies, we also share basic affinities. Our commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific is being taken forward by the Quad with each passing year. The value of this contribution is also being increasingly appreciated across the world. And three, as we look at the opportunities and challenges of the future, the comfort we have built up is a foundation to think more ambitiously. The progress in India in the last decade promises even more for our partnership. This gathering has been convened precisely to assess the future of our collaboration. I look forward to its deliberations.

Thank you.

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