



AUKUS fallout: France pledges to 'defend truly multilateral international order' with India amid diplomatic row with Australia-US

Description

FRANCE/INDIA: The French and Indian foreign ministers spoke over the phone on Saturday, vowing to deepen their strategic partnership now that Paris' ties with the US and Australia have been strained by a submarine deal debacle.

France and India will “*work on a joint program of concrete actions to defend a truly multilateral international order,*” French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian and his Indian counterpart, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, said in a statement on Saturday. Released by the French foreign ministry, it also said the two had discussed the situation in Afghanistan and the Indo-Pacific.

The diplomats have vowed to continue building strategic partnership based on a “*relationship of political trust between two great sovereign nations.*” Le Drian and Jaishankar agreed to meet in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session next week.

On Friday, France recalled its ambassadors from Washington and Canberra after Australia scrapped a major submarine program with France in favor of acquiring nuclear-powered submarines with the help of the US and UK.

Paris furiously protested the new arrangement between Australia, the US and UK, known as AUKUS. Le Drian called the ditching of French-Australian submarine program “*a stab in the back.*”

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