



Ex-Indian FM explains why Quad neglected Ukraine

Description

Russia isn't a threat to the region and India wants to stay neutral, Kanwal Sibal told RT

India *"prevailed"* in ensuring that a joint statement with the US, Japan, and Australia did not mention or condemn Russia over the conflict in Ukraine, former Foreign Minister Kanwal Sibal told RT. Sibal explained that the eyes of the 'Quad' should remain focused on the Indo-Pacific, and New Delhi has no quarrel with Moscow.

The leaders of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue issued a [joint statement](#) on Tuesday following a summit in Tokyo, Japan. The statement largely focused on security issues in the South China Sea and Asia more broadly, and Ukraine was briefly mentioned as a *"tragic conflict"* and a *"humanitarian crisis,"* which all four leaders discussed their responses to.

The Quad leaders referenced *"respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity,"* but did not condemn or even name Moscow.

Sibal, a veteran diplomat who served as India's foreign minister between 2001 and 2002, told RT on Tuesday that this was not an accidental oversight.

"Russia is not a threat to the stability and security of the Indo-Pacific countries," he explained. *"Therefore, bringing in Russia or the Ukraine conflict... will be a problem because at least India will not accept this sort of enlargement of the Indo-Pacific agenda."*

With India pursuing investment in Russia's Far East and continuing to purchase Russian oil, a separate [statement](#) on Monday by the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework – a coalition of 13 Pacific countries convened by the US – made no mention of Ukraine or Russia either.

In both of these statements, India has *“not allowed the inclusion of Ukraine or Russia in the sense of any condemnation... apart from the reference to the humanitarian situation,”* Sibal continued.

While a White House readout of US President Joe Biden and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s meeting in Tokyo on Tuesday included a condemnation of *“Russia’s unjustifiable war against Ukraine”* by Biden, Modi offered no such declaration.

“India said nothing about Ukraine, not at all,” Sibal said of the bilateral statement. Regarding the Quad’s communique, he added that *“India’s view has prevailed, and we will not accept any condemnation of Russia or any negative reference to Russia.”*

As a founding member of the Non-Aligned Movement during the Cold War, India equipped its military with Soviet weapons without ever entering an alliance with the USSR. According to some [analysts](#), 85% of major Indian weapons systems to this day are of Russian or Soviet origin, and in military, economic, and political matters, New Delhi and Moscow still officially describe their relationship as a *“special and privileged strategic partnership.”*

While the US has [offered](#) India new weapons systems and Biden has urged Modi not to step up purchases of Russian oil, the White House has thus far been unable to get New Delhi on board with sanctions against Moscow or a formal condemnation of Russia’s military operation in Ukraine.

There is *“no question at all”* of India sanctioning Russia, Sibal said, adding that *“Russia has never in history sanctioned us, but the West has sanctioned us for years and years and years.”*

“India will abide by any sanctions approved by the United Nations Security Council,” he concluded. *“Short of that, no. India will not.”*

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