

## SECTION IV

### FUTURE COLLABORATION

#### WEBINAR ON QUADRILATERAL PATH TO REFORMED MULTILATERALISM

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The Quad grouping traces its roots to the co-ordinated disaster rehabilitation efforts between the US, India, Australia and Japan in response to the Dec 2004 Tsunami. After a flurry of [ensuing activities](#), in 2007 the Quad was established as a diplomatic and maritime security dialogue.

The grouping was often referred to as an opportunistic [axis of democracies](#) to contain China; the excitement about the Quad abated after some closed-door consultations and a few maritime military exercises. The 2007-2008 global financial crisis coupled with individual hesitations within the Quad, overwhelmingly tipped the balance in favour of economic engagement with China over strategic realities. This imbalance, largely aimed at reducing friction with China through economic pursuits, put the Quad in suspension by 2008.

The promise of China's co-operation, however, did not materialise. Since 2008, world leaders have tried to engage with China, in the hope that deepening economic engagement would constrain China from any military adventurism. On the contrary, this approach has met with disappointment and burdened irreversible strategic costs on each nation, irrespective of the degree, depth and expanse of their bilateral economic arrangements with China.

This realisation on the back of increased Chinese economic coercion and military assertiveness, led to the Quad being revived in Nov 2017 with [officials from the four Quad countries meeting in Manila](#) on the side lines of the 12<sup>th</sup> East Asia Summit.

If the 2007-2008 Global Financial Crisis was responsible for tipping the scale in favour of economic engagement with China, the COVID-19 pandemic crisis has accelerated a movement in the opposite direction within the Indo-Pacific and across the globe. There is increased urgency to create a coalition of like-minded powers to dilute Chinese assertiveness, while China has grown even more aggressive in its diplomacy and its military posturing in the South China Sea, East China Sea and along the India's northern borders – all while the world is engaged in fighting COVID-19.

The Quad can be the first line of defence, it must respond by operationalising not just the military exchanges but also formalising economic and technology partnerships that will undergird a meaningful new multilateral, provide it with resilience and appeal in the Indo-Pacific region.

This Webinar will focus on Quads ability to stitch together a reliable and resilient chain of partners in the region – a “Plus Quad” rather than a “Quad plus”, that can collectively place strategic deterrence and economic costs on Chinese adventurism in the short term and in the longer term aspire to reformed multilateralism. The webinar will include discussions on four likely areas of cooperation and contestation (*included in the agenda*). It will be moderated by Gateway House and will include three experts discussing the agenda.

**Key findings will be shared on the next working day of the scheduled Webinar.**

**The detailed webinar outcome document will list the ideas discussed, learnings and suggest possible collaborations going forward.**

## AGENDA

### SECURITY CO-OPERATION

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**Objective:** Historically the security co-operation agenda of Quad has been limited to the maritime domain. Since the beginning of this year, each Quad member has faced different dilemmas resulting from Chinese actions – diplomatic, military, and unconventional. As Australia recently discovered, China adopted coercive economic policies in response to its calls for investigation into the origins of COVID-19 at the WHO. India on the other hand was reminded of the unsettled land border with China. Recently, Japan reported a possible passage of Chinese submarine through the south-western contiguous zone. The US Navy also reported that a Chinese warship fired a military grade laser at one the P-8 surveillance aircrafts.

The expanding Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean, attempts to create an Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) in the South China Sea, including the air space above the disputed Paracel and Spratly islands as well as the use of non-military maritime militia are unsettling to regional powers.

At present, these countries continue to operate a large network of bi-lateral or mini-lateral security engagements that seek to improve interoperability. This interoperability though a sound foundation for security co-operation needs to be scaled up to a NATO like architecture wherein, defense co-operation expands to all facets and not limited to maritime issues. An act of aggression on one member must be recognized and acted upon by all member nations.

Can a new charter for the Indo-Pacific create a larger global coalition of like-minded partners for strategic co-operation and provide a stronger deterrence to Chinese military adventurism? How can the Quad create a *Hormuz Dilemma* akin to the *Malacca Dilemma* for China?

### ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

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**Objective:** In Dec 2001, China was admitted to WTO with a hope that [China would liberalise to meet the rising democratic aspirations of its people](#). China has used multilateral bodies and the global thirst for open economies to its advantage to emerge as the unipolar champion of global manufacturing.

The COVID-19 pandemic has severely exposed the degree of global dependencies on value chains originating from China or value chains that are deeply integrated with China through the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Many countries, especially those with fragile economies are in greater danger of succumbing to Chinese debt traps thereby limiting their space to make strategic decisions that are antithetical to Chinese interests.

In May 2020, the US announced the [Economic Prosperity Network](#) (EPN) that aims to expand and diversify supply chains that protect people in the free world. President Trump also recently announced his intentions to expand the G7 to G10/11 to include all Quad members. Japan has announced a \$2 billion package to re-shore its critical companies back to Japan, while Australia has reached out to new markets in India and the UK.

How can the Quad members build around networks like the EPN and [Blue-Dot](#) to create sustainable infrastructure and economic linkages, regionally and beyond? Should Quad members like Japan and Australia continue to participate in the RCEP? Should the US continue to negotiate a trade deal with China? What trends will shape the future of value chains and globalisation? What reforms are needed to ensure a more globalised yet less dependent economic environment?

## TECHNOLOGY CO-OPERATION

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**Objective:** COVID-19 is likely to intensify technological competition between China and the U.S., shifting their rivalry from a traditional geopolitical tussle to one for tech supremacy and tech sovereignty. A country that leads in introducing not just technologies, but the associated standards can gain significant economic dominance.

Consequently, the UK has recently announced the D10 grouping, aimed at developing 5G technology by channeling investments in the telecommunication companies of these countries. Another grouping, launched in Jun 2020, the [Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence \(GPAI\)](#) with India as one of the founding members, aims to bring together leading experts from industry, civil society, governments, and academia to collaborate on AI. Additionally, the recent collaboration through the Quad plus platform to combat COVID-19 are signs of nations coming together for a common cause.

Beyond the COVID-19, can regional players overcome capability mismatches to democratize and develop digital technology as a common global good? What can be the answers to increasing cyberthreats, as the ones recently faced by Australia? How can industrialized European nations like UK, France and Germany converge to counter Chinese digital hegemony and cyber threats?

## REFORMED MULTILATERALISM

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**Objective:** Founded in 1945, the UN for the last 70 years has aimed to maintain international peace and security, develop friendly relations among nations, achieve international cooperation, and be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations, all through a rules-based international order.

The existing rules have not reformed to adjust to new realities, and are now out-of-date; they have failed to deter and contain outright violations by many nations. Embedded flexibilities like the non-binding nature of many regulatory outcomes and the subsequent lack of punitive deterrence to violations leaves open backdoors that provide maneuverability to those nations able to alter status quo through military and economic coercion.

This has forced smaller powers and nations to collectively negotiate outside the ambit of UN for regional harmony - like the ASEAN negotiating the Code of Conduct in the South China Sea with a China that blatantly disregards UNCLOS and its territorial limits. The Indian Foreign Minister, Dr S Jaishankar, during the recently concluded Russia-India-China virtual meeting emphasized on the importance of: 1) practice of established concepts and norms 2) need for leading voices in the world to be exemplars in every way and 3) reformed multilateralism to cater for the historical injustice and aspirations of the new world order.

How can the Quad which hosts the four leading global voices become the magnet that attracts like-minded nations, small and big cutting across continents and oceans to converge on the new world order realities?

## **FLOW OF WEBINAR DISCUSSION**

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Date: 23 Jul 2020

Time: 1 hour 10 minutes

### ***All timelines as per Indian Standard Time***

17.30-17.33: INTRODUCTION BY GATEWAY HOUSE

17.33-17.36: OPENING REMARKS BY PETER RIMMELE, INDIA HEAD AT KAS

17.36-18.20: DISCUSSION BEGINS; QUESTIONS ASKED TO EACH OF THE THREE EXPERTS ON THE SUBJECT BY GH MODERATOR

18.20: AUDIENCE Q&A

18.35: SUMMATION OF DISCUSSION BY GATEWAY HOUSE MODERATOR

18.40: CLOSING REMARKS BY GH

## **WEBINAR RULES**

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Note:

- Time will be strictly adhered to.
- No Power Point slides required.
- Bios will be shared in advance.
- There will be no formal introductions