

Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2021

Remarks With Prime Minister Narendra Modi of India, Prime Minister Scott Morrison of Australia, and Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga of Japan in the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue Leaders Virtual Summit

March 12, 2021

President Biden. Hello, everyone. I wish we were able to do this in person, but it's wonderful to gather with friends even—even in this virtual format. We're reminded that we're in the midst of a global crisis, but we're going to overcome that as well.

The Quad group is—was created in the wake of, as you just—everyone just saw on that short film—in the wake of a crisis under my predecessor George W. Bush, on the two-oh-four—the 2004 tsunami. I remember later, Mr. Prime Minister, in Japan, going and visiting that—the aftermath of that. It was devastating what you all went through.

And for the first time, we're convening this group as—at a leader level. And I want to thank my counterparts for joining me today: Prime Minister Morrison and Modi and Suga. You—it's good to have you all. Like I said, I wish we were doing this together.

The—it's also the first multilateral summit that I've had the opportunity to host as President. And on this—and on this moment, it's a purpose that I think we all are concerned about: a free and open Indo-Pacific is essential to each of our futures, our countries.

The United States is committed to working with you, our partners, and all our allies in the region to achieve stability. And this is a group of—particularly important because it's dedicated to the practical solutions and concrete results.

And, my counterparts, if you'll forgive me, I'd like to give one example of why it matters. There are many examples, but yesterday I signed into law the American Rescue Plan to get the American people through this pandemic and kick start our economy and our economic recovery. It's a bill that will get meaningful help into the hands of people in our country who need it the most.

Consequently, this week, the OECD revised up its expected rate of growth for the United States this year as a consequence of that legislation. In fact, it doubled it from 3.2 percent to 6.5 percent; the fastest rate in 1-year economic growth since 1984. And it's critical because the OECD also predicted that the United States economic growth, fueled by the ARP and increased vaccinations, will be a key driver in global growth this year and our trade partners benefiting around the world as a consequence.

But to get this right, we all have to focus on generating domestic demand and driving sustainable global growth. And we've—launching an ambitious new joint partnership that is going to boost vaccine manufacturing, and—for the global benefit—and strengthen vaccinations to benefit the entire Indo-Pacific.

We're establishing a new mechanism to enhance our cooperation and raise our mutual ambitions as we address accelerating climate change. And we're renewing our commitment to ensure that our region is governed by international law, committed to upholding universal values, and free from coercion.

We've got a big agenda ahead of us, gentlemen, as you well know, but I'm optimistic about our prospects. The Quad is going to be a vital arena for cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. And I look forward to working closely with all of you in the coming years.

And now, Prime Minister Modi, I'm kicking it over to you. And again, it's great to see you.

[*At this point, Prime Minister Modi spoke via videoconference from New Delhi, India.*]

Prime Minister Modi. Your Excellencies President Biden, Prime Minister Morrison, and Prime Minister Suga: It is good to be among the friends. I thank President Biden for this initiative.

Excellencies, we are united by our democratic values and our commitment to a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific. Our agenda today—covering areas like vaccines, climate change, and emerging technologies—make the Quad a force for global good.

I see this positive vision as an extension of India's ancient philosophy of *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*, which regards the world as one family. We will work together, closer than ever before, for advancing our shared values and promoting a secure, stable, and prosperous Indo-Pacific.

Today's summit meeting shows that Quad has come of age. It will now remain an important pillar of stability in the region. Thank you.

President Biden. Thank you.

U.S. Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken. Prime Minister Morrison.

[*Prime Minister Morrison spoke via videoconference from Sidney, Australia.*]

Prime Minister Morrison. President Biden, for this wonderful initiative and bringing us together. And my fellow Prime Ministers, it's great to see you. *Namaste.* Good morning. *Konnichiwa.* And from Australia, g'day.

As we begin a new day here in Australia, it's not yet dawn. But we join together as Quad leaders of nations to welcome what I think will be a new dawn in the Indo-Pacific through our gathering.

History teaches us that when nations engage together in a partnership of strategic trust, of common hope, and shared values, much can be achieved. When the world emerged from the Great War and our last global pandemic a century ago, it soon found a Great Depression and another global conflict that unleashed a poverty and a devastation that was unthinkable.

As we emerge from this global pandemic and the global recession, let us together create a different future. It is the Indo-Pacific that will now shape the destiny of our world in the 21st century.

As four leaders of great, liberal democracies in the Indo-Pacific, let our partnership be the enabler of peace, stability, and prosperity, and to do so inclusively with the many nations of our region to share in their vision, as expressed through ASEAN, for an open, inclusive, and resilient Indo-Pacific; to respect and support their sovereignty, independence, and security by upholding our values and supporting international law; and to address the many challenges we face, from COVID to climate change.

Know, friends, that Australia, while looking to our friends in all of these tasks, we never leave it to our friends. We'll do our share of the heavy lifting to lighten the burden for us all.

I'm delighted to now hand over to my good friend Yoshi, Prime Minister Suga.

[*Prime Minister Suga spoke via videoconference from Tokyo, Japan.*]

Prime Minister Suga. Joe, Mr. Modi, and ScoMo: It is a great honor to realize the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. leaders' summit with all of you, working together to realize a free and open Indo-Pacific.

Starting with the response to the tsunami disaster that we just saw on the video, the Quad four countries transformed into a forum for diplomatic dialogue in 2007.

Since then, after overcoming some difficult circumstances from around 2017, we gained a fresh momentum. In October, last year, we reached the stage of holding the Foreign Ministers meeting here in Tokyo. Less than half a year since then, we are now holding this first leaders' summit. And I do feel emotional about the development. I thank Joe for your initiative.

With the four countries working together, I wish to firmly advance our cooperation to realize a free and open Indo-Pacific and to make visible and tangible contribution to the peace, stability, and prosperity of the region, including overcoming COVID-19.

Yesterday was the 10th anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake. We received massive support from the U.S., Australia, and India in our response to the disaster. Joe visited the affected areas soon after the disaster. And I thank you once again.

I look forward to a fruitful discussion today.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:32 a.m. from the State Dining Room at the White House. Prime Minister Suga spoke in Japanese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

Categories: Addresses and Remarks : Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, leaders virtual summit; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : India, Prime Minister Modi; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Australia, Prime Minister Morrison; Meetings With Foreign Leaders and International Officials : Japan, Prime Minister Suga.

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