**An open letter to the Foreign Minister of India**

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Your Excellency,

It is my hope that you are doing well. At the very outset, I would like to congratulate you on the successful conclusion of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit. It is indeed a portentous step towards inter-state cooperation, placing India at the helm of the region, as a leader in political and economic collaboration.

Be that as it may, Sir, I am writing this letter to you in light of your recent remarks at the SCO Summit. As a kind reminder, Your Excellency, when asked by a reporter about the possibility of India and Pakistan dialogue, you remarked “Victims of terrorism do not sit together with perpetrators of terrorism to discuss terrorism”. As you may expect, this has given rise to a plethora of questions. It has come as a great surprise that the honourable Foreign Minister of a State, so engulfed in pursuing regional cooperation, can be so callous in statements made to the press. It pains me to remind you, that you were not speaking on behalf of the BJP in an election campaign, but rather as the custodian of foreign policy of India. Sir, I am also reasonably sure that a sizeable population on your side of the border may be wondering who the “victims” and “perpetrators” actually are! Especially in the prevailing environment (in light of your government’s policies). However, that is a matter which I shall delve into in due course.

[Wapda win men, women tennis titles in National Games](https://www.nation.com.pk/30-May-2023/wapda-win-men-women-tennis-titles-in-national-games)

Sir, as the Foreign Minister of a nation possessing your economic strength, it would be naïve on my part to remind you of the basic principles of democracy and the benefits of regional cooperation. The influence of India is not only in our region but your aspirations of becoming a global player are also vivid. This leaves you in a precarious position when it comes to determining foreign policy. Historically, we have seen nations in such positions go one of two ways. The first is a Collaborative Model, where the South Asian countries can adapt to an EU-style model, with India as the major beneficiary through regional cooperative growth. The truth of today saddens me, India has for the most part, gravitated towards a Competitive Model, bullying her smaller neighbouring countries, potentially the regional allies (traits of which were commonly found in the likes of Adolf Hitler’s Germany, Benito Mussolini’s Italy, and Joseph Stalin’s Soviet Union).

While a simple man like myself would be dwarfed in discussing history with your esteemed intellect. May I still, respectfully, draw your attention towards a few (undeniable) historical facts, which Your Excellency may have overlooked, prior to making such irresponsible statements on such serious platforms? Firstly, it would be pertinent to reintroduce a gentleman called Commander Kulbhushan Jadhav of the Indian Navy—a man renowned as the living face of Indian terrorism. May I remind your Excellency, Commander Jadhav has, on oath, admitted to running a network of terror, in an attempt to sponsor terrorism in Pakistan (an endeavour which resulted in the loss of thousands of Pakistani lives). This is a case that India (unsuccessfully) has taken before the International Court of Justice. May I also highlight the fact that Pakistan has allowed Commander Jadhav’s mother and wife to visit him, as a goodwill gesture (another factor uncommon to the foreign policies of your State). Commander Jadhav even has consular access, which cannot be said for Kashmiri freedom fighters which the Indian state has taken into custody, or the infamous Mr Ajmal Kasab a la Mumbai who was proven to be in your custody, long before the attack was perpetrated. Let me not go down the long road of ‘false flag’ operations that seem to govern your regional foreign policy.

[PCB wishes birthday to ex-int’l cricketer Shakeel Khan](https://www.nation.com.pk/30-May-2023/pcb-wishes-birthday-to-ex-int-l-cricketer-shakeel-khan)

In this regard, Your Excellency, may I also point out the financial support offered by the Indian state to UN-designated terror organizations such as Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan and Baloch Liberation Army etc. On a lighter note, please say hello to the likes of Brambagh Bugti, Mr Tariq Fateh et all when you meet them on your soil. All this and much more has been brought up by the Pakistani authorities (with irrefutable evidence) to the relevant and global and UN Forums, which you have failed to deny.

The ‘Genocide Watch’ issued the ‘India Genocide Warning’, wherein it stated that Islamophobia has become a “state-manufactured ideology” and that BJP (your party) has “made Islamophobia central to its program for harassing India’s 192 million Muslims and depriving them of their rights as Indian citizens”.

Similarly, in 2019, the ‘EU Disinfo Lab’ published a report titled “Indian Chronicles”. This report asserted that India “resurrected dead media, dead think tanks and NGOs. It even resurrected dead people. This network is active in Brussels and Geneva in producing and amplifying content to undermine—primarily—Pakistan”. This is an operation that has been run by your state since 2005, resurrecting over 10 NGOs accredited to the UN Human Rights Council, conducting several identity thefts, as well as launching over 750 fake media outlets covering 119 countries. Therefore, Your Excellency, as the Foreign Minister of India, may I recommend you peruse these reports and ‘assertions’, as they may act as a fact check before your next (grand) statement to the press.

[Pakistan beat Japan 3-2 to qualify for Junior Asia Cup semis](https://www.nation.com.pk/30-May-2023/pakistan-beat-japan-3-2-to-qualify-for-junior-asia-cup-semis)

While the list goes on, we can speak of multiple other issues such as the farmers’ protests, Kashmir (where unilateral action has been taken in an internationally recognized disputed territory), or the lack of sports, cultural and people-to-people exchanges since your party has been in power. Although, I am quite sure that a man of your stature must understand (better than most) the issues of your great nation. But, then again, keeping in view the hate-based sentiments that are synonymous with your party (as is evidenced by both the election mantras which brought you into power, or the policies implemented through the same power), it forces one to ponder, maybe the harm being caused within your own country is all part of the larger plan. Surely, Your Excellency, perhaps now you may forgive my earlier ‘assertion’ re a sizeable chunk of the Indian population is wondering as to who the real “victims” and “perpetrators” are!

In the presence of such allegations (most of which are backed with incontrovertible evidence), Your Excellency, may I implore you to exercise your good judgment for the betterment of over two and half billion people of this region, through regional cooperation. An olive branch was extended from this side of the border (by attending the SCO Summit), which could lead to mutually beneficial outcomes for both our great nations; alas your body language while receiving our Foreign Minister gave it up all. I believe it may be time to leave behind the hatred and rhetoric and usher in an era of peace and prosperity in this region. It always takes a tall man with an acute sense of history and a vision for the future to leave their mark on history.