



RAISINA

DIALOGUE 2023

PROVOCATION, UNCERTAINTY, TURBULENCE:
LIGHTHOUSE
IN THE TEMPEST?

MESSAGES





सत्यमेव जयते



MESSAGE

The holding of the 8th edition of the Raisina Dialogue is a welcome development, being a gathering that is widely attended by the international community. This year, it seeks to capture the state of the world through its theme of *“Provocation, Uncertainty, Turbulence: Lighthouse in the Tempest?”*

2. This description, dramatic as it may seem, is by no means an inaccurate understanding of world politics today. The devastating impact of a once in a century pandemic is still being felt across geographies, especially developing ones. Rising debts and growing disruptions have also been more prominent, often translating economic fragility into political challenges. Climate events are occurring with ever greater frequency and need to be factored into every calculation. And of course, the Ukraine conflict has had knock-on effects in terms of fuel, food and fertilizer security that is making the world even more anxious. The behaviour of states has also contributed to greater tension and sharper polarization in an already difficult scenario.

3. Over the next few days, the Raisina Dialogue will host conversations on these and other pressing issues that we all face. From rising strategic ambitions to emerging geo-political concepts, from perilous economic models to heightened vulnerabilities, from contested sovereignty to threatened global commons – practitioners and analysts will ideate on a host of questions.

4. This is an opportunity for us to be future ready. To probe geo-political palpitations before they become tremors. To prepare to be first responders as much as effective solution providers. I look forward to the deliberations.


(Dr. S. Jaishankar)

वसुधैव कुटुम्बकम्

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संयुक्त 2023 INDIA

विदेश सचिव
Foreign Secretary



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Message

I am delighted to welcome you to the 8th edition of the Raisina Dialogue-India's premier conference on geopolitics and geostrategy.

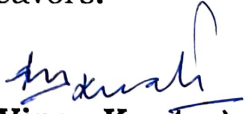
Over the years, the Raisina Dialogue has established itself on the World stage as a major annual gathering of the most significant and powerful voices of the global strategic community. It has become a permanent fixture in the calendars of opinion shapers and decision makers across the World. I congratulate our partner, the Observer Research Foundation, for realizing the vision of making New Delhi an epicenter of debate, a confluence of ideas, and a landing zone for solutions that can transform the World we live in.

I find the conference to be reflective of India's growing confidence, ambitions and capacities. India has always propagated the spirit of dialogue and debate. India's theme for its G20 Presidency- '*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*', that is, 'One Earth. One Family. One Future', echoes the sentiment to seek collective solutions for common problems.

I am pleased to welcome distinguished Leaders, Ministers, journalists, academia, think-tankers and young scholars to the Raisina Dialogue- to share their vision, to ignite our minds and reach out to the world.

The theme of the Raisina Dialogue 2023: *Provocation, Uncertainty, Turbulence*- is indicative of the increasing faultlines and fragilities in the global ecosystem. In the words of our Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, "*our priorities will focus on healing our One Earth, creating harmony within our One Family and giving hope for our One Future*"- that is, to be a lighthouse, in this tempest.

I wish the delegates of the Raisina Dialogue 2023 a memorable stay, a thought-provoking conference and all success in their endeavors.


(Vinay Kwatra)





Message from the Chairman, Observer Research Foundation

Two decades ago, 'Vision 2020' was almost an act of faith. It evoked unbounded optimism over an immaculate globalised world riding its way to universal prosperity on the back of free markets knit together by closely integrated trans-national supply chains. It felt as if we had finally invented a perpetual motion machine lubricated by a rules based international order. Today, that engine lies broken and rudderless—hostage to trade wars and increasing strategic competition.

The challenge today as we assemble for the 8th edition of the Raisina Dialogue is to respond to a world where multilateralism lies fatally wounded in conflicts that spill over multiple domains that none of the Geneva Conventions can control. We are in a highly digitalised world where anger and hate spread with far greater virulence than reason. What terms of engagement can we now create for countries that no longer wish to talk to each other? We need new rules of the road, more so because we are no longer just a community of states; but are joined by a multitude of new actors who traverse these highways with far greater speed than we do as nations.

In a hyper-connected world, where people hyper-ventilate on Twitter 24x7, the business of governance has also become far more complex. Actors other than nation states play an increasingly outsized role in either shaping norms in what remains of the international order or impeding the shaping of such norms altogether.

Many believe the answer lies in building gated communities of nations that grant membership based on the reliability of cardholders. 'Minilateralism' is how we like to call it. Others harbour fantasies of a plutocracy of independent yet globally connected financial sub-national units that run global affairs out of a Global Capital located perhaps in the Swiss resort town of Davos. Both frameworks, however, are fatally flawed: The issues that confront us can no longer be contained within these old walls held together by pillars of trust. The real world

keeps breaking and fragmenting both the carefully constructed narratives, and the norms and sanctions that hold them together.

Caught in-between are nations, middle powers, beleaguered emerging economies that if given a choice would have no interest in either engaging in geo-political competition or playing ball with revisionist powers keen to overturn the existing global order. Yet, these nations bank upon global multilateral institutions to manage their own geo-political tensions and the impact of trade wars and great-power conflicts on their territories. As multilateral institutions corrode, these middle powers find their choices constrained.

There are tectonic events taking place. And the greater their magnitude, the weaker is our capacity to respond. Some communities are left to cope with little help from outside, if at all. A sad commentary on the state of global affairs but that is what disruption looks like.

And this is only Act I of the saga. In Act II, we are seeing technology attempting to substitute agency-led order and norms by discrete anonymised protocols for finance, trade, commerce, and communication. The Age of the Intelligent Machine is here. But unlike in science fiction, it does not manifest itself as an omniscient chat-bot that has all the answers to all our questions. The Machine Age slips in, concealed in a Kafkaesque thicket of structures, protocols and self-learning algorithms created by tech entrepreneurs and agents, ordering and controlling the lives of both the governing and the governed. The question is how democratic, or else intrusive, are these going to be. Given the nature of our society today, we can be sure that negotiations and confrontations will be intense.

The Raisina Dialogue 2023 is being hosted as India takes charge of the G20 in a year that promises to be more than ordinary. This forum comes at a time when we in New Delhi believe we have the ability to incubate conversations where many of these posers must be responded to. Our hope is that the Raisina Dialogue can be the most influential of these platforms during India's Presidency, a forum where each one of us, in these tempestuous times, contributes to the quest for answers and becomes part of the lighthouse that guides the ship back safely to shore.

—Sunjoy Joshi



Curator's Note: President, Observer Research Foundation

This edition of the Raisina Dialogue is special. It is the first Dialogue in India's *Amrit Kaal*, or 'Golden Age'—an epoch marking the 25 years leading up to a century of India's Independence. Colonial rule may have left India starving of resources, but what it could not shackle were its hopes and dreams. Today, those aspirations remain alive, and the 75 years that passed have led to this moment. *Amrit Kaal* is when this country shall lift its population to decent standards of living; when the state will grow in its capacity to serve the needs of not just its own citizens but of the world; and when the nation will engage its intellectual prowess to help shape a new global order that is responsive to all humanity and to our shared planet.

The Raisina Dialogue seeks to be an ideational companion in this journey. There is a heady agenda for the Dialogue in the days ahead, and we all should prepare to engage with new voices and new ideas that could shift our paradigms.

2023 is also significant as it is the year that India takes the helm at the G20—a grouping of nations that are pivotal to the world's future not for their economic size, but because their actions have cascading regional and global consequences. The failures of the G20 countries will be the world's; and their successes will reverberate. Their prosperity will lift their neighbourhoods and their missteps can disrupt beyond their own borders. The Dialogue's agenda is shaped by the ambitions of the G20 this year. From debating the need for reforms in multilateralism to encouraging lifestyle changes to mitigate the climate crisis, the Raisina Dialogue aims to be in step with India's G20 goals.

Among those aims is for the G20 to be inclusive. As Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at the Voice of the Global South Summit, "As far as India is concerned, your voice is India's voice; your priorities are India's priorities." This sentiment will be reflected in the Raisina Dialogue G20 Think Tank Town Hall on March 5th, where we will gather not only the G20 nations but participants from 80 other countries to share our thoughts on our common future.

That collective future may be difficult to imagine at this moment, given what we went through in the first two years of this decade. Indeed, has it only been two years? As Vladimir Lenin once famously said, “There are decades where nothing happens, and there are weeks where decades happen.” From old conflicts resurfacing in Europe to expedient morality in Afghanistan, from wanton disregard for the environment to selfish motivations taking primacy over the common good in the international response to the COVID-19 pandemic—what already feels like a long decade saw the worst of humanity in full display. Forums like the Raisina Dialogue strive to bring out the best in us. It is during these gatherings that India’s exaltation on Amrit Kaal could catalyse an inclusive development policy that is fit-for-purpose. The theme for this year’s Raisina Dialogue is—“Provocation, Uncertainty, Turbulence: Lighthouse in the Tempest?”. Can all of us assembled here in New Delhi be a lighthouse in our own way? As the world is being battered by a perfect storm, multiple beacons are needed to illuminate the way. India seeks to be one of them, and to inspire others to be the same.

Last year, as we opened the Dialogue, we made a promise to the Prime Minister: that as hosts, we would follow the sun to where the best, most plausible ideas await. And that, as we did this, we would invest in building the next generation of global diplomats. This year, on February 18th, we launched *Raisina @ Sydney* alongside iterations of the Dialogue in Delhi, Berlin, and Washington, DC. The Raisina Dialogue is now truly following the sun, seeking inspiration from across the globe.

In October 2022, we inaugurated the *Raisina Forum for the Future of Diplomacy* in New Delhi. It brought together diplomats from over 30 countries to rethink the spirit of their official responsibilities. The world’s diplomatic corps are now first responders to health crises and to natural and man-made disasters. The investment in skills and character that may be demanded of them have to be made now, and we hope to fill that need through this new annual initiative.

Leadership, after all, is a societal need and incubating it is a public good. Continuing our tradition of engaging the brightest minds from around the world, we are welcoming the largest ever cohort of the Raisina Young Fellows Programme to the 12th edition this year. The 2023 batch will have 48 fellows from 33 countries. It is our hope that these young minds—and others who will join us at the Dialogue—will take with them new ideas, new friendships, and a new resolve, inspired by the ethos of India’s G20 leadership: ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’—One Earth, One Family, One Future.

Stronger, together—that is the Indian way. Perhaps, that is the only way.

—Dr. Samir Saran



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