

Institute of Chinese Studies

PANEL DISCUSSION

*The 20th Russia-
India-China
Trilateral Academic
Conference, 2025*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Speakers:

**Anuradha Chenoy
Ashok K. Kantha
Aravind Yelery**

1 December 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Speakers: **Prof. Anuradha Chenoy**, former Professor and Dean, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; and, Adjunct Professor, Jindal School of International Affairs, O.P. Jindal Global University, Sonipat.

Mr. Ashok K. Kantha, former Ambassador of India to China; and, Honorary Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies; Distinguished Fellow, Vivekananda International Foundation, New Delhi.

Dr. Aravind Yelery, Associate Professor, Centre for East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi; and Honorary Fellow, Institute of Chinese Studies, New Delhi.

Moderator: **Prof. Alka Acharya**, Director, Institute of Chinese Studies; and, former Chairperson and Professor, Centre for East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.

Venue: Zoom Webinar

- The panel underscored the significance of the 20th Russia–India–China (RIC) Trilateral Academic Conference as a crucial platform for dialogue and cooperation, positioning it within a pivotal historical juncture that could influence the evolution of international norms and institutions in the 21st century.
- The panellists underscored the recognition of the larger shift towards multipolarity, as well as the need for building consensus through such dialogues for practical policy deliverables.. The speakers also highlighted how the RIC works toward attaining these goals.
- Prof. Alka Acharya described the RIC as a platform for exchanging ideas in the international, regional, economic, political, and cultural spheres. She noted that the exchange aims at cooperation, contributing to regional stability as well as global peace and development. Expanding upon the theme of the 20th RIC, she highlighted how the shift towards multipolarity signalled points of convergence between the three countries, while also discussing their roles *vis-à-vis* institutions of the Global South.
- Mr. Ashok K. Kantha discussed the centrality of the Russian initiative in the RIC process while clarifying India’s position that the process must be led by mutual respect and interest. He stressed that the dialogue did not constitute a united front against any country, but the aim was to convert dialogue into concrete policy deliverables. He also noted that the lack of consensus on the nature of turbulence in the global scenario pointed to limited strategic

convergence among the countries. Mr. Kantha concluded by underscoring the consensus to continue RIC cooperation and to maintain dialogue through intersessional roundtables.

- Prof. Anuradha Chenoy stressed the need for strategic autonomy, people-to-people exchange, and overcoming trust deficits in collaborations under the rubric of developing multipolarity. She noted a common refrain among Indian and Russian attendees: unequal power relations should not create hierarchy, and that each country must retain agency and be treated with equality and dignity. She also highlighted the centrality of the border issue in navigating India-China relations and the need for de-escalation. She stressed the need to foster a better public perception and the role of initiatives such as the Young Scholars' Dialogue.
- Dr. Aravind Yelery's presentation focused on the fiscal viability of the goals set by the conference. He argued that fiscal risks to RIC countries in the past 25 years have originated from developed economies, and such volatilities are bound to continue in the foreseeable future. He pointed out imbalances between the levels of risk which RIC will face and the consensus on risk aversibilities built by them. He also noted reticence on the part of China and Russia in discussing and dealing with these financial risks.
- Prof. Alka Acharya, in her concluding remarks, explained that differences in policy-formulation priorities were shaped by how closely research organisations worked with their respective governments. While highlighting how this factor differentiated India from China and Russia, she reiterated the need to realise tangible outcomes in the RIC process. Above all, she argued that reasoned, informed and far-sighted debates were needed in the process of defining the norms and institutions that would shape the 21st century.

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