

# Shangri-La Dialogue

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## 1. Overview

The **Shangri-La Dialogue (SLD)** is Asia's premier defense and security summit held annually in Singapore. Organized by the **International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS)** since 2002, it brings together defense ministers, military chiefs, and high-level policymakers from across the Asia-Pacific and beyond.

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## 2. Background & History

- **Founded:** 2002
- **Organizer:** International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS), a UK-based think tank
- **Venue:** Shangri-La Hotel, Singapore (hence the name)
- **Purpose:** Facilitate open dialogue on Asia-Pacific regional security, defense cooperation, and conflict resolution

### Why it was established:

- Growing security tensions in Asia
  - Need for a Track 1.5 platform (mix of official and unofficial dialogue)
  - Promote transparency in military affairs and cooperation
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## 3. Structure of the Dialogue

- **Frequency:** Annual (usually May or June)
- **Participants:**
  - Defense Ministers
  - National Security Advisors
  - Chiefs of Defense Forces
  - International Think Tanks and Academics
- **Format:**
  - Plenary Sessions (broadcasted)

- Special Sessions and Breakouts (closed-door)
- Bilateral/Multilateral meetings

#### **Major Countries Participating:**

- USA, India, China, Japan, Australia, ASEAN nations, UK, France, etc.
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#### **4. Importance for India**

- Platform for strategic engagement with Indo-Pacific and global powers
  - Forum to articulate India's position on regional security, Indo-Pacific policy, maritime security, and counter-terrorism
  - Opportunity to counter Chinese narratives in international forums
  - Showcase defense diplomacy, e.g., Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative, SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region)
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#### **5. Key Developments in Recent Years**

##### **Shangri-La Dialogue 2024 (Held: May 31 – June 2, 2024)**

- **Theme:** Maintaining peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific
- **India's Representation:** CDS Gen. Anil Chauhan
  - Emphasized India's commitment to a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific
  - Highlighted concerns about aggressive maritime behavior in the South China Sea
  - Called for respect of international law, UNCLOS
- **China-USA Tensions:**
  - Debates on Taiwan Strait, South China Sea
  - Diplomatic efforts to prevent escalation
- **Ukraine Conflict Discussions:**
  - Impact on global security architecture
- **New Security Partnerships:**
  - Strengthening of Quad cooperation (India, USA, Japan, Australia)
  - AUKUS updates and tech sharing

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## **6. Criticisms of the Dialogue**

- Mostly limited to rhetoric and diplomatic signaling
  - No binding commitments or resolutions
  - China occasionally skips or downgrades representation
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The Shangri-La Dialogue is a vital platform shaping the future of security in Asia. For India, it provides an essential stage to project its growing defense capabilities, strategic vision, and commitment to peace and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.

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