

India Warns NATO Over 'Double Standards' on Russia Trade Amid Sanctions Pressure



India has issued a pointed warning to NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) members, cautioning them against applying what it calls “double standards” in pressuring New Delhi over its ongoing trade with Russia. The statement comes amid rising tension over Western sanctions and calls for countries to reduce economic ties with Moscow.

Speaking at a media briefing on Tuesday, senior officials from India’s Ministry of External Affairs underscored that India will continue to pursue its national interest and independent foreign policy, including its energy and defense-related trade with Russia.

The reaction follows reports that NATO member states have been privately urging India to scale down its imports of Russian oil and defense equipment. Some European diplomats have hinted at the possibility of secondary sanctions on countries that continue high-volume trade with Russia amid the ongoing Ukraine conflict.

“India does not support coercion or threats under the guise of diplomatic engagement,” said a senior official, who requested anonymity. “It is ironic that while European countries themselves continue buying Russian gas through indirect channels, they expect others to cut ties.”

India has consistently maintained that its relationship with Russia is based on strategic and economic considerations, not ideology. As one of the largest importers of Russian crude oil in recent years, India argues that the discounted energy imports have helped stabilize domestic inflation and keep consumer prices in check.

The Indian government also questioned the fairness of Western demands, pointing out that many NATO countries have found ways to maintain selective economic ties with Moscow, particularly in the energy sector.

“There cannot be one set of rules for Europe and another for Asia,” the official added.

Analysts believe India’s firm stance reflects a broader shift toward a more assertive foreign policy, especially as it seeks to balance strategic ties with the West while protecting long-standing partnerships in Eurasia.

Western calls for reducing trade with Russia come at a time when India is deepening economic partnerships across the Global South and diversifying its defense imports. While New Delhi has not violated any international law or United Nations sanctions, the pressure from NATO could complicate diplomatic engagements in multilateral forums.

Looking ahead, observers will be watching whether NATO’s approach evolves to accommodate India’s position or whether tensions over trade with Russia will grow into a more significant diplomatic flashpoint.