



Indian Council of World Affairs
Sapru House, Barakhamba Road
New Delhi

May 1, 2014

Press Release

Fifth India-EU Forum

(29-30 April, 2014)

The fifth India-EU Forum was organized by the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) in collaboration with the European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), Paris and FRIDE, Madrid on 29-30 April 2014 at the Sapru House, New Delhi. A joint initiative of the ICWA and the EUISS, the Forum aims to generate academic discussion on issues relating to India-EU partnership. Thematically, the fifth Forum comprised of five sessions. It was attended by diplomats, research scholars, academia and media.



(L-R) Dr. Eva Gross, Senior Analyst, EUISS, Dr. Antonio Missiroli, Director, EUISS, Ambassador Rajiv K Bhatia, DG, ICWA, Ms Anne Marchal, First Counsellor, Delegation of the European Union to India, Ambassador Jaimini Bhagwati, RBI Chair Professor at ICRIER & Member Advisory Council IDFC.

In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Rajiv K. Bhatia, Director General, ICWA, discussed the history of India-EU Forum, major emerging trends in the European foreign policy and India-EU relations. As process of election is underway in India and EU, Dr. Antonio Missiroli, Director, EUISS, in his opening remarks, noted that the Forum was held at an appropriate moment to analyze India and EU's foreign policy dynamics. Ms. Anne Marchal, First Counsellor & Head of Political Affairs Section, Delegation of the European Union to India, in her special remarks, said that the Forum had assumed a significant place in the Track-II diplomacy between India and the EU. Ambassador (Dr.) Jaimini Bhagwati, RBI Chair Professor at the ICRIER, in his keynote address, commented on the conflict between Ukraine and Russia and its implications for EU foreign policy, impact of Eurozone crisis, India-EU economic relations and socio-economic challenges in India and the EU.

While analyzing the emerging political and strategic trends in India and the EU in the first session, it was noted that New Delhi and Brussels were facing several strategic challenges, which primarily originated from structural changes in the global and national political processes. Political and security transition in Afghanistan and other regional issues relating to Myanmar and Bangladesh were discussed in the second session. Speakers argued that despite the difference in policy objectives, India and EU approaches to deal with the political challenges resemble to some extent.



Participants of the Fifth India-EU Forum

The third session of the Forum critically examined foreign policy orientations of India and the EU and their responses to the contemporary crises in Europe and West Asia. Despite divergence in their national interests to West Asia, it was noted that India and the EU can cooperate at the multilateral forums to help in finding political solution to the conflict in West Asia. In the fourth session, the discussions focused on the changing dynamics of Asia-pacific, evolving power struggle, role of multilateral institutions and need for convergence between India and the EU. The EU representative apprised the audience about initiatives taken by the EU under ASEM and ASEAN-EU dialogue.

The year 2104 marks a decade of India-EU strategic partnership. The fifth session of the Forum focused on the India-EU strategic partnership. It assessed the implementation of the Joint Action Plan, critical issues and major challenges for India-EU relations. Economic ties between India and the EU remain strong and would provide the base for enhancing cooperation in other areas. Development cooperation, people-to-people contacts, infrastructure, energy and environmental cooperation are very significant in expanding trade and investment between India and the EU. In his concluding remarks, Ambassador Bhatia emphasized on greater and more frequent academic interactions between ICWA and EUISS.
