

2016



Foreign Policy Review

*Annual Report on the Developments in the Field of
Foreign Affairs*

Indian Council of World Affairs
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Prepared by Research Faculty
Indian Council of World Affairs
New Delhi

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1. Ministry of External Affairs
2. Ministry of Commerce
3. Ministry of Finance
4. President's Office
5. Vice President's Office
6. Prime Minister's Office
7. Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP)
8. Press Information Bureau

1. SOUTH ASIA

The bilateral developments and visits taken place in 2016 in South Asia indicate that India tried to enhance its engagement with neighbouring countries in political, economic and security spheres. Steps taken to increase the defence cooperation with countries like Afghanistan, Maldives and Sri Lanka, continuous development assistance and capability building programme implementation are some of the positive aspects which helped in stabilising the bilateral relations. However, internal political developments in Nepal have had an impact on the relationship for a brief period and were dealt through dialogue with concerned parties. The leadership change in Nepal also helped in building better understanding of the problem. Increasing cross border terrorist attacks continue from the Pakistani side, straining bilateral relations. This had also led to the cancellation of the SAARC summit in 2016 at Islamabad and India's decision to cancel the Summit was supported by most of the SAARC member countries.

1.1 Afghanistan

1.1.A. Visit of Chief Executive Officer and Head of the Council of the Ministers of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Dr. Abdullah Abdullah to India (31st January to 4th February 2016)

H.E. Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, Chief Executive of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, visited India from 31 January - 4 February 2016. During this visit, he met Prime Minister on February 1 and held discussions on bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest including the security situation and peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan. EAM and NSA called on H.E. Dr. Abdullah, on February 1 & 4, respectively.

India reiterated its abiding commitment to stand by Afghanistan in all possible ways during the latter's ongoing political, security and economic transitions. The two sides stressed the need to fully eliminate all forms and manifestations of terrorism. It approved the 3rd phase of Small Development Projects comprising 92 projects in Afghanistan. Both sides agreed to develop connectivity through Chahbahar port in Iran on priority. An Agreement on Exemption from Visa Requirement for Holders of Diplomatic Passports was also signed.

1.1.B Visit of Prime Minister to Afghanistan (04 June 2016)

The Prime Minister of India visited Kabul on the 4th of June 2016, at the Inauguration of Afghanistan - India Friendship Dam in Herat¹. He talked about the importance of rivers, which have been bearers of great civilisations of the world and said that the Friendship Dam is a

¹<http://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visit-detail.htm?26867/Speech+by+Prime+Minister+at+the+Inauguration+of+Afghanistan++India+Friendship+Dam+in+Herat+June+4+2016>

generator not just of electricity but also of optimism and belief in the future of Afghanistan. He also mentioned about the Afghan Parliament Building, which he said, was a tribute to the epic struggle of the Afghan people to shape their future by vote and debate, not gun and violence.

Prime minister said that together, their partnership has built schools, health centres and irrigation facilities for rural communities. It has empowered women with skills and the youth with the education to shoulder the responsibility for Afghanistan's future. They have joined hands to build roads that bridge the distances of your country, from Zaranj to Delaram, and transmission lines that bring power to your homes. He also talked about India's investment in the port at Chahbahar in Iran that will give Afghanistan a new route to the world and a new path to prosperity. He further added that to implement that vision, just last month, President Ghani joined President Rouhani of Iran and him in witnessing the signing of the Chahbahar Trade and Transit Agreement between Afghanistan, Iran and India.

Prime Minister also mentioned that when the values that define Afghans prevail, terrorism and extremism will be in retreat.

While talking about India's engagement, he said that India's capacity may be limited, but its commitment is without limits. Its resources may be modest, but its will is boundless. He said that though the two countries face the barriers of geography and politics, but they define their path from the clarity of their purpose. So, on international platforms and in regional forums, India will speak in one voice for the Afghan right to a peaceful, prosperous, united, inclusive and democratic nation. And, whatever happens, in a bright or a dark moment, we will always experience, as Herat's great Sufi Poet, Hakim Jami, would say, the freshness and happiness of the gentle breeze of friendship.

1.1.C India-Afghanistan Joint Statement during the visit of President of Afghanistan to India (14th and 15th of September 2016)

In the Joint Statement that was signed between the two leaderships of India and Afghanistan, it was agreed that the Strategic Partnership Council headed by the External Affairs Minister of India and the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan will meet shortly, review the recommendations of the four Joint Working Groups dealing with diverse areas of cooperation and impart further guidance. The leaders expressed satisfaction over signing of the Extradition Treaty, the Agreement on cooperation in civil and commercial matters and the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Peaceful Uses of Outer Space during the President's visit. Both leaders welcomed intensification in the interaction involving India and Afghanistan with regional and other countries and international organisations to foster

peace, stability and development in Afghanistan. They appreciated, in particular, the outcome of the India-Iran-Afghanistan trilateral consultations and looked forward to the resumption of India-US-Afghanistan consultations in New York. The Prime Minister conveyed to the President that India would continue to engage with the international community to assist the Government of Afghanistan in all possible ways. In this context, the leaders underscored the significance of the Amritsar Ministerial Conference of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process (HoA) on the forthcoming 4 December, as well as the Brussels Conference on 5 October. They noted that the choice of Amritsar underscored the value of restoring connectivity and was in consonance with this year's theme for HoA: 'Addressing Challenges, Achieving Prosperity'. It also underscores that India and Afghanistan remain committed to the expeditious realization of seamless two-way connectivity between South Asia and Central Asia. The Prime Minister invited the President to grace the inauguration of the Amritsar Ministerial. The President accepted the invitation.

1.1.D Sixth Heart of Asia – Istanbul Process Ministerial Conference (4 December 2016),

Amritsar Declaration (December 04, 2016)

The regional initiative in the form of Heart of Asia – Istanbul Process (HoA-IP) held its Sixth Ministerial Conference in Amritsar, India on 4 December 2016. The Amritsar Conference was a significant chapter of the HoA-IP multilateral process on Afghanistan. It added multiple dimensions to the ongoing regional efforts intended to bring peace and stability to Afghanistan. All 14 HoA-IP member countries, apart from supporting countries and organisations, took part in the Amritsar Conference. Co-chaired by H.E. Shri Arun Jaitley, Finance Minister of the Republic of India and H.E. Mr. Salahuddin Rabbani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, the Conference was inaugurated by Prime Minister of India, and the President of Afghanistan.

The Conference reaffirmed the importance of the HoA-IP as an important regional platform for political dialogue and close regional cooperation aimed at promoting stability, peace and prosperity in Afghanistan and the entire Heart of Asia region, and for enhancing Afghanistan's connectivity with the entire Heart of Asia region. The HOA-IP Amritsar Conference commended the assumption of full responsibility for security by the ANDSF and for their role in fighting terrorism and violent extremism in Afghanistan besides, commitment given by the International Community for their continued financial support to the ANDSF until 2020 and assistance to them by the Post-ISAF Mission. It also lauded the development assistance commitments made by over 100 countries and international organizations at the Brussels Conference on Afghanistan in October 2016.

The Amritsar Conference named all terror organisations active in Afghanistan and the region. The Conference Declaration demanded an

immediate end to all forms of terrorism, as well as all support to it, including financing of terrorism. The Amritsar Conference stressed on effective de-radicalization and counter-radicalization strategies involving all the HoA countries to deal with the situation.

The Conference discussed about the challenges that needs to be addressed including the recent spike of Afghan refugees returning to the country and their re-integration, production of illegal opium, and drug trafficking in the HoA Region and beyond.

The Amritsar Conference reiterated its support for Afghanistan being a natural land bridge in promoting regional connectivity and economic integration in the Heart of Asia region and use its geographic location to enhance wider regional economic cooperation. In this regard, the Conference referred to the importance of energy and connectivity projects such as CASA-1000, TAPI, TUTAP, Chabahar Agreement, the Five Nation Railway, TAT linking Turkmenistan, Afghanistan and Tajikistan which would play a central role in strengthening regional cooperation between Central Asia and South Asia.

The continued commitment of regional countries to establish significant North-South and East-West corridors within the Heart of Asia Region with a focus on the development of infrastructure connecting Afghanistan and the region to seaports also figured in the declaration.

The Sixth Ministerial Declaration expressed its collective support to promote the implementation of six Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) identified in the HoA-IP with a note of satisfaction that a number of activities under various CMBs that were carried out since the Islamabad Ministerial Conference in 2015. The Conference urged the lead countries, participating and supporting countries and organizations to ensure the implementation of the activities prioritized by each CBM.

Azerbaijan to host the next Ministerial Conference of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process as Co-chair in 2017.

1.2 Bangladesh

1.2.A Visit of Foreign Minister of Bangladesh H. E. Mr. Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali to India (March 01-03, 2016)

H.E. Abul Hassan Mahmood Ali, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh, visited New Delhi for participating in the first edition of the Raisina Dialogue organized by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Observer Research Foundation. FM Ali was one of the speakers at the inaugural session of the Dialogue.

On March 2, 2016, FM Ali had a bilateral meeting with EAM during which the two Ministers reviewed progress on bilateral cooperation initiatives since Prime Minister Modi's visit to Dhaka in June 2015. Applauding the excellent state of relations that currently prevail

between India and Bangladesh, they expressed their determination to deepen ties even further. Matters of mutual interest including future political exchanges, security, connectivity and transit, power, energy, water etc. were discussed. Referring to recent incidents of attacks on minorities in Bangladesh, EAM sought swift action against the perpetrators of the crimes by the Bangladesh authorities. FM Ali assured that Government of Bangladesh was conscious of the importance of checking the activities of radical forces in the country and expressed the commitment of his Government to safeguarding Bangladesh's secular, progressive and liberal character.

1.2 B Visit of Foreign Secretary to Bangladesh from May 11-12, 2016

Foreign Secretary of India Dr. S Jaishankar paid a bilateral visit to Bangladesh on 11-12 May 2016. Foreign Secretary called on Hon'ble Prime Minister of Bangladesh Sheikh Hasina and Hon'ble Foreign Minister of Bangladesh Mr. A H Mahmood Ali, MP on 11th May and met with Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Mr. M. ShahidulHaque on 12th May.

During the talks, both Foreign Secretaries reviewed progress on decisions and understandings reached during the visit of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi to Bangladesh in June 2015. Key developments include progress on implementation of Land Boundary Agreement, commencement of supply of 100 MW power from Palatana, Tripura to eastern Bangladesh; supply of internet bandwidth from Bangladesh to Tripura; launch of coastal shipping services from Chittagong to Krishnapatnam; progress on energy cooperation; signing of the Dollar Credit Line Agreement for execution of projects under the US\$ 2 billion Line of Credit. Both sides also took stock of decisions made during recent meetings of various bilateral mechanisms in the areas of Security & Border Management, Power, Shipping, Railways, Health, Blue Economy, Establishment of Indian SEZs in Bangladesh etc.

The visit was useful in preparing the ground for the next meeting of the Joint Consultative Commission led by the two Foreign Ministers to be held in Dhaka in the second half of 2016

1.3 Nepal

1.3.A Visit of External Affairs Minister to Nepal

External Affairs Minister, Smt. Sushma Swaraj on February 9, 2016 led an all-party delegation to Nepal to attend the funeral of former Nepalese Prime Minister Sushil Koirala. Members of the delegation paid courtesy calls on Nepal President Bidhya Devi Bhandari and Prime Minister K.P. Sharma Oli.

1.3.B Visit of Prime Minister of Nepal K P Oli to India

The Prime Minister of Nepal, K.P. Sharma Oli, visited India from February 19-24, 2016. During the visit a number of agreements and MoUs were signed between the two countries on the following areas:

- Utilization of US\$ 250 million Grant component of GOI's Assistance package for Post-earthquake reconstruction assistance.
- Strengthening of road infrastructure in the Terai area of Nepal.
- In between Nepal Academy of Music and Drama and SangeetNatak Academy.
- Letters of Exchange on Transit Routes: (i) Transit between Nepal and Bangladesh through Kakarbitta-Banglabandh corridor (ii) Operationalization of Vishakhapatnam Port.
- Letters of Exchange on Rail Transport: (i) Rail transport to/from Vishakhapatnam (ii) Rail transit facility through Singhabad for Nepal's Trade with and through Bangladesh.
- Inauguration of Muzaffarpur-Dhalkebar transmission line [Initial supply of 80 MW, to be augmented to 200 MW by October 2016 and 600 MW by December 2017].

1.3.C Key points of India-Nepal Joint Statement during the State visit of Prime Minister of Nepal to India, 15-18 September 2016.

- The two Prime Ministers noted the progress in promoting sub-regional cooperation, and agreed that the two governments should explore ways to further enhance it, particularly in the areas of trade, transit, connectivity and power.
- The two Prime Ministers took note of first meeting of the Eminent Persons Group on Nepal-India Relations held in Kathmandu in July 2016.
- The Prime Minister of Nepal thanked for the prompt and extensive assistance provided by the Government and people of India in the aftermath of the devastating earthquakes of 25 April and 12 May 2015. He conveyed his gratitude to the Government of India for the latter's special assistance package of US\$ 1 billion for Nepal's post-earthquake reconstruction.
- The Prime Minister of India welcomed the setting up of the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) in Nepal, which will coordinate post-earthquake reconstruction projects.
- At the request of the Nepali side, the Indian side agreed to extend assistance to the NRA, including through sharing of experience and capacity building by the National Disaster Management Authority of India. In response to the declared policy of the Government of Nepal to grant NRs 3 lakh to each beneficiary for reconstruction of houses, Government of India conveyed that it would increase its contribution for 50,000 households from NRs 2 lakh to NRs 3 lakh. For this purpose, US \$ 50 million will be drawn by the Government of Nepal from the LOC of US \$ 750 million for post-earthquake reconstruction.

- Prime Minister of India welcomed the ongoing efforts of the Government of Nepal to take all sections of the society on board for effective implementation of the Constitution.
- The two Prime Ministers stressed the need to ensure that the open border, is not allowed to be misused by unscrupulous elements posing security threats to either side.
- The two Prime Ministers agreed to set up an oversight mechanism comprising senior officials from the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu and the Government of Nepal, which will review progress together with respective project implementing agencies/developers of ongoing economic and development projects on a regular basis, and take necessary steps to expedite their implementation.
- The two Prime Ministers directed the officials to expedite the construction of postal roads and feeder roads (Terai roads) and complete them expeditiously, in accordance with the modalities for implementation agreed by both sides in February 2016.
- The two Prime Ministers stressed the need for early development of infrastructure at integrated check posts (ICPs). They agreed that work on the Raxaul-Birgunj ICP project will be expedited with the objective of completing it by December 2016; immediately commence construction of the ICP at Biratnagar, and expedite the Detailed Engineering Reports in respect of ICPs at Nepalgunj and Bhairahawa.
- The two Prime Ministers reviewed the progress made in the implementation of the two ongoing India-Nepal cross border rail-link projects - (a) Jayanagar-Bijalpur-Bardibas and (b) Jogbani-Biratnagar, and agreed that both sides will take further measures necessary for expeditious completion of both the projects. Both sides agreed that steps will be initiated to facilitate development of three other agreed cross-border rail-link projects (Nepalgunj-Nepalgunj road; Kakarbitta-New Jalpaiguri; Bhairawaha - Nautanwa) so that the land acquisition can commence on the Nepali side.
- The two Prime Ministers directed the officials to expedite the construction of sub-station at Dhalkebar so that the Muzaffarpur-Dhalkebar transmission line can be operated at its full capacity as planned.
- The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction that both countries are engaged in preparation of a Master Plan for the cross-border interconnection for the period until 2035 and Action Plan on power trade until 2025.
- The two Prime Ministers reviewed progress of other major hydro-power projects, Pancheshwar, Upper Karnali and Arun-III, and noted that various issues be addressed expeditiously with a view to implementing the projects in a time-bound manner so that their benefits start accruing to the people at the earliest.
- It was decided to expedite finalization of the Detailed Project Report of the Pancheshwar multi-purpose project. It was agreed that both sides will continue to take measures to operationalize the Power Trade Agreement signed in 2014.

- The two Prime Ministers welcomed the signing of the MOU for the construction of Raxaul-Amlekhgunj petroleum pipeline in August 2015 and directed that construction work be undertaken expeditiously.
- Both the Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at the utilisation of the two Lines of Credit of US\$ 100 million and US\$ 250 million for development of roads and power infrastructure in Nepal.
- The two Prime Ministers welcomed the allocation of US\$ 200 million for irrigation projects, and US\$ 330 million for development of roads and Mahakali bridge from the LoC of US\$ 550 million.
- At the request of Nepal, India conveyed its willingness to extend an additional line of credit to take up projects namely, HulakiRajmarg(Phase-II); cross-border transmission line connecting Butwal, 400 KV sub-stations at Dhalkebar and Hetauda, and a polytechnic in Kaski District.
- The two Prime Ministers welcomed that the MOU between the Pashupati Area Development Trust and the Archeological Survey of India for reconstruction and renovation of the monuments at the Pashupatinath Area will be finalized expeditiously.
- The two Prime Ministers stressed the need for taking forward the cooperation in the fields of tourism and ayurvedic system of health care.

1.3.D India-Nepal Joint Commission Meeting, October 27, 2016

The fourth session of the India-Nepal Joint Commission was held in New Delhi on 27 October 2016. The session was co-chaired by the MoS, MEA, Govt. of India, Shri M. J. Akbar, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nepal, H.E. Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat. The two delegations included Foreign Secretary of India, Dr. S. Jaishankar and Foreign Secretary of Nepal, Mr. Shankar Das Bairagi, and other senior officials from the two sides.

1.3.E President of India Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited Nepal (2-4 November 2016).2

At the banquet hosted in his welcome, the Indian president spoke on the history and the prospects of India-Nepal relations. He also addressed the issues of peace and security and other common concerns that India and Nepal share.³

Kathmandu University conferred upon President Mukherjee Honorary Doctorate Degree. On this occasion, he spoke on the history of education in South Asia, and on the importance of good educational and training institutions in nation building.⁴

² For full coverage of the visit, see <http://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visit-info.htm?2/929/Visit+of+President+to+Nepal+November+0204+2016>

³ For full text of the speech, see <http://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visit-detail.htm?27561/Banquet+Speech+by+President+during+his+visit+to+Nepal+November+02+2016>

⁴ For full text of the speech, see <http://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visit-detail.htm?27567/Acceptance+Speech+by+President+at+Kathmandu+University+Dhulikhel+November+03+2016>

1.3.E Summary of Banquet Speech by President during his visit to Nepal (November 02, 2016)

- He acknowledged the historical linkages between the two countries to reinforce the warm relations and mutual understanding.
- Appreciating the ongoing democratic process in Nepal, he applauded the enterprise and achievements of the people of Nepal in their quest for peace, stability, progress and all round development. He also commented on the resilience of the people even during acute crisis situations. He re-iterated India's commitment to help when needed.

1.3.F Summary of Address by President at the Civic Reception, Rashtriya Sabha Griha, Kathmandu (November 03, 2016)

- There are no two sovereign nations in the world like India and Nepal, sharing a common culture and having an open border between them. The Government and people of India are committed to further strengthening and deepening this relationship.
- While mentioning about the role of Nepal during India's freedom movement, he stated about a shared vision of economic prosperity and sustained development for the respective nations.

1.4 Pakistan

1.4.A : Statement on Pakistan on the investigations into the Pathankot terrorist attack 14th January 2016

The GOI welcomed the statement issued by the Government of Pakistan on 14 January 2016 on the investigations into the Pathankot terrorist attack. The statement conveys that considerable progress has been made in the investigations being carried out against terrorist elements linked to the Pathankot incident. The action taken against Jaish-e-Mohammad is an important and positive first step.

It has also been acknowledged that the Government of Pakistan is considering sending a Special Investigation Team to investigate the Pathankot terrorist attack. The GOI looked forward to the visit of the Pakistani SIT.

1.4.B Meeting of Foreign Secretary and Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Foreign Secretary of Pakistan, April 26, 2016

The Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan met on the sidelines of the "Heart of Asia" Senior Officials Meeting in New Delhi. India's Foreign Secretary emphasised the need for early and visible progress on the Pathankot terrorist attack investigation as well as the Mumbai case trial in Pakistan. He also brought up the listing of JeM leader Masood Azhar in the UN 1267 Sanctions Committee. The discussions

also covered humanitarian issues including those pertaining to fishermen and prisoners, and people to people contacts including religious tourism.

1.4.C Fifth meeting between Indian Coast Guard [ICG] and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency [PMSA], July 13-14, 2016

A delegation level meeting of the ICG and the PMSA was held in Islamabad on July 13-14, 2016. The two delegations discussed operational issues relating to safeguarding of respective EEZs, exchanging of information about pollution incidents affecting the EEZ of the two countries, facilitation of maritime search and rescue operations in accordance with national laws and regulations, and humane treatment and early release of fishermen apprehended by both sides as well as early repatriation of their boats.

1.4.D Official Spokesperson's response to the statement by Advisor on Foreign Affairs of Pakistan that Pakistan would invite India for a dialogue on Jammu & Kashmir, August 13, 2016

In response to a statement by Mr. Sartaj Aziz, Advisor on Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan at a Press Briefing on 12 August, 2016, that Pakistan would invite India for a dialogue on Jammu & Kashmir on which the Pakistan Foreign Secretary would be writing to his Indian counterpart, the Official Spokesperson said:

"India would welcome a dialogue on contemporary and relevant issues in India-Pakistan relations. At this time they include a stoppage of Pakistani support for cross-border terrorism, infiltration of terrorists like Bahadur Ali, incitement to violence and terrorism across the border, parading of internationally recognized terrorists like Hafiz Saeed and Syed Salahuddin, and sincere follow up on the Mumbai attack trial and the Pathankot attack investigation in Pakistan."

1.4.E Official Spokesperson's response to a query on a note verbale from Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, received in the Indian High Commission (August 14, 2016)

In response to a query on a note verbale from Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, received in the Indian High Commission, the Official Spokesperson said:

"A communication was apparently delivered to our High Commission in Islamabad on August 12...India and others in the region have already received enough of Pakistan's trademark exports – international terrorism, cross-border infiltrators, weapons, narcotics and fake currency. We completely and categorically reject this purported communication from the Pakistan Foreign Ministry."

1.4.F Summary of statement by R.K. Singh, Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha, in response to statement made by Pakistan during the general debate at the 135th Assembly Session of IPU (October 24, 2016)

He stated that Pakistan has been misusing its powers by interfering into the internal matters pertaining to the Indian state of Jammu and

Kashmir. He made it clear to Pakistan that the entire state of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India. Terrorism remains to be the grossest violation of human rights and Pakistan has the distinction of being the epicenter of global terrorism. The people of Pakistan, Pakistan Occupied Kashmir, Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have become victims of sectarian conflict, terrorism and extreme economic hardship due to Pakistan's authoritarian and discriminatory policies in complete disregard of human rights. Given this state of affairs, the Minister stated that Pakistan will be well-advised to focus its energies on setting its own house in order and acting against the perpetrators of terrorist attacks on its neighbors instead of ritually raking up alleged human rights violations elsewhere. Pakistan having raised the issue of UN Security Council resolutions, the Minister stated that he would suggest Pakistan to first fulfill its primary obligation under the resolutions to vacate illegal occupation of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. He called upon Pakistan to stop inciting and supporting violence and terrorism in any part of India and refrain from meddling in India's internal affairs in any matter.

1.5 Sri Lanka

1.5.A Visit of External Affairs Minister to Sri Lanka, 5-6 February 2016

Smt. Sushma Swaraj led an inter-ministerial delegation to Colombo from February 5-6, 2016 for the 9th Session of the India-Sri Lanka Joint Commission. She co-chaired the Joint Commission meeting on February 5, 2016 with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka, Mr. Mangala Samaraweera. The Joint Commission meeting reviewed the progress and developments in bilateral relations since the 8th Session held on January 22, 2013. The key points discussed during the session were:

- Discussions took stock of the preparations underway on both sides to begin negotiations on the Economic and Technology Cooperation Agreement. Cognizance was taken of the reconstitution of the CEOs Forum on either side and the proposals from the Export Promotion Board of Sri Lanka for increasing trade linkages.
- The Joint Commission discussed ways to further collaboration in various projects that have been under discussion, including the upgradation of Palali Airport, infrastructure development at Kankasanturai Port, Sampur power plant and a Special Economic Zone in Trincomalee, etc.
- The Joint Commission urged early signing of the revised Air Services Agreement that has been pending since September 2013. Both sides agreed to enhance cooperation in the aviation sector, including in areas of aeronautical search and rescue, capacity building and training and use of the Indian satellite system GAGAN.

- India thanked Sri Lanka for having endorsed the “Solar Alliance”.
- The Indian housing project for construction and repair of 50,000 houses was reviewed. The Joint Commission expressed satisfaction over the completion of 44,000 houses and noted that construction is expected to commence shortly for construction of the remaining 4,000 houses in Uva and Central Provinces.
- The Joint Commission also reviewed prominent non-SDP projects such as the construction of the Jaffna Cultural Centre on grant basis and the water supply projects amounting to nearly US\$ 475 million to be undertaken by Indian companies under the Buyers’ Credit Scheme of EXIM Bank of India. The Sri Lankan side requested the Government of India to undertake more projects under the SDP model. Following the conclusion of the talks, two new SDP MoUs were signed on renovation of infrastructure in 27 prioritized schools in the Northern Province and the construction of a surgical unit and supply of medical equipment at the teaching hospital in Batticaloa.
- The two sides discussed areas of cooperation in the health sector: private sector investments, traditional medicine, training opportunities, etc.
- The Joint Commission also took stock of the Festival of India “Sangam” as a celebration of the shared civilizational heritage between the two countries.
- The Joint Commission encouraged early convening of the Joint Committee for Science and Technology related cooperation and the extension of the Programme of Cooperation which had expired in 2014.
- The Joint Commission encouraged further intensification of defence cooperation through several defence related mechanisms already in place.
- The Joint Commission acknowledged the importance of cooperation in counter terrorism and agreed on the need for the two countries to work together.
- Both sides agreed to find a permanent solution to the fishermen issue.
- On February 6, 2016, Minister Swaraj inaugurated the exhibition “Rise of Digital India” at the Bandaranaike Memorial International Conference Hall (BMICH).

1.5.B Working visit of President of Sri Lanka to India, 13-14 May 2016

President of Sri Lanka Maithripala Sirisena paid a working visit on 13 and 14 May 2016 to India. He addressed the valedictory session at the Vaicharick Mahakumbh, which was held as part of the Simhastha Mahakumbh in Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh, on May 14.

President Sirisena was accompanied by PM Modi to the VaicharickMahakumbh and released the 'Simhastha Declaration' in Ninora village in Ujjain. The Sri Lankan President also visited the world famous Sanchi Stupa as well as attended a function by the Mahabodhi Society of Sri Lanka during which he unveiled a statue of AngarikaDharmapala. The President also visited Delhi, where Prime Minister Modi hosted dinner in his honour.

1.5.C Summary of Remarks by Prime Minister at the inauguration of Duraipah Stadium (June 18, 2016), Sri Lanka.

Dedicating the renovated Duraipah Stadium to the people of Sri Lanka, along with President Sirisena. Mentioning the stadium as a symbol of optimism and economic development. Mentioning about the rich contacts that has grown in history, culture, language, art, and geography in between India and Sri Lanka, Prime Minister stated that India strongly believes that its economic growth must drive and bring benefit to its neighbours. This is what makes India's enduring ties with Sri Lanka relevant to the present, as also to the country's future. India's desire is to see an economically prosperous Sri Lanka. Mentioning the role Sri Lanka played in strengthening the International Day of Yoga by making Duraipah Stadium a part of it.

1.5.D Visit of Prime Minister of Sri Lanka to India, October 4-6, 2016

The Prime Minister of Sri Lanka H.E. Ranil Wickremesinghe led a delegation for the India Economic Summit on 6 October 2016. Prime Minister of Sri Lanka attended the Opening Plenary of the India Economic Summit along with Mrs. Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of State (IC) for Commerce and Industry. During the visit, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka met President of India H.E. Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, EAM Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Home Minister, Minister for Road Transport and Highways and Shipping, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas and National Security Adviser.

2 EAST ASIA/ASEAN

The year 2016 was very eventful for this region as several bilateral visits were exchanged by the leaders of India and the countries of the East Asia/ASEAN. This has helped to consolidate the overall efforts made over the years to forge friendly and mutually beneficial ties between the said countries of the region. In particular, the following noteworthy events may be highlighted below:

2.1 Brunei

2.1.A Visit of the Vice President of India to Brunei

Vice-President of India, Shri M. Hamid Ansari, paid an official visit to Brunei Darussalam from February 1-3, 2016 at the invitation of His Royal Highness (HRH) Crown Prince of Brunei, Haji Al-Nabillah. This was the first high level visit from India since the establishment of

diplomatic relations between the two countries in 1984. A number of agreements were signed during the visit on the following areas:

- i. MoU in Health Cooperation with the objective to establish cooperation in the field of health included areas such as health promotion and disease prevention, exchange of doctors, other professionals and experts, exchange of information on health, medical and health research development, regulations of pharmaceuticals, medical devices and cosmetics, and to promote business development in these areas.
- ii. MOU on Defence Cooperation aimed to enhance cooperation between India and Brunei in various defence fields.
- iii. MOU on Cooperation in Youth and Sports Affairs provided a framework for exchanges of sports persons and sports teams; facilitate the exchange of expertise in coaching, sports talent identification, sports management and administration and exchange of information in the field of youth affairs.

2.1.B Address by Vice President at the University of Brunei

In his address at the University of Brunei, Shri Ansari, emphasised on the importance that India's relations with Brunei. He said that energy trade is an area where India and Brunei have strong complementarities. At present India imports crude oil worth US \$1 billion from Brunei. Though India is the third largest importer for Brunei, the total import from Brunei is only a fraction of India's global crude imports of more than US \$112.748 billion in 2014-15. India is keen to work with the Government of Brunei in setting up a fertilizer plant that would make use of the hydrocarbon resources available in Brunei for producing fertilizers to meet agricultural requirement in India. He welcomed investments from Brunei in India's infrastructure and manufacturing sectors, particularly because India has undertaken several initiatives like 'Make in India', 'Digital India' and Smart cities. In his address, Shri Ansari also extended his gratitude to Government of Brunei for the support extended to the 10,000 expatriate Indian communities in Brunei who are contributing to its economy. To augment people to people contacts, he insisted on enhancing cooperation in exchanges of students, teachers and researchers from the academic institutions as well as to expand mutual tourism by enhancing connectivity and streamlining visa and travel document requirements. He also underlined some other areas of mutual cooperation such as information technology, maintaining the safety of sea-lanes and maritime security deepening cooperation in the defence sector, including training of defence personnel in various fields and coastal security and disaster preparedness and relief.

2.2 Cambodia

2.2.A Second India-Cambodia Joint Commission Meeting (July 08, 2016) :

The second India-Cambodia Joint Commission Meeting was held in New Delhi on 8 July 2016. This was chaired on the Indian side by

Hon'ble MOS General (Retd.) V.K. Singh and on the Cambodian side by H.E. Mr. Long Visalo, Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Kingdom of Cambodia.

2.3 Indonesia

2.3.A Dr. V.K. Singh's visit to Indonesia

Summary of the Statement by Dr. V.K. Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs at the 16th Meeting of Council of Ministers of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) in Bali, Indonesia (October 31, 2016)

Mentioning the role of Indonesia, he stressed on the need of the IORA Concord and an Action Plan. He stressed that the IORA agenda encompasses both the strategic security and developmental priorities in the region. Ministry of Culture and the Archaeological Survey of India will be in touch with IORA Members on Project Mausam, which seeks to emphasize the manifestations of cross-sectoral connectivity in the Indian Ocean Rim for purposes of World Heritage nomination by UNESCO.

2.3.B President of Indonesia's visit to India (11-13 December 2016)

The President of Republic of Indonesia Mr. Joko Widodo made an official visit to India from 11 to 13 December 2016 at the invitation of Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi. This was President Joko Widodo's first State visit to India.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo held a meeting with President of the Republic of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee on 12 December 2016 and also met Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and the Vice President of India Shri M. Hamid Ansari.

In his address welcoming Indonesian President, the Indian Prime Minister Mr. Modi expressed his condolences on the loss of life due to the earthquake in Aceh. Both the leaders agreed to build a strong economic and development partnership that strengthens the flow of ideas, trade, capital and people between our two countries. Indian Prime Minister and Indonesian President agreed to:

- Encourage Indian companies to work closely with Indonesia in the fields of pharmaceuticals, IT & software, and skill development.
- Move on infrastructure development two-way investment flows leveraging in respective capabilities. In this regard, the CEOs' Forum should take the lead in identifying new avenues of wider and deeper industry to industry engagement.
- Implement early the India-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement in Services & Investment, and finalization of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership would be important steps in this regard.

- Improving direct connectivity and people to people contacts is well-known. In this respect India welcomed Garuda Indonesia's decision to commence direct flights to Mumbai.

2.3.C Joint Statement during the State visit of President of Indonesia to India, December 12, 2016

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and President Joko Widodo agreed to hold annual Summit meetings, including on the margins of multilateral events.

The two Leaders welcomed the submission of a Vision Document 2025 by the India-Indonesia Eminent Persons Group (EPG) that had begun their work earlier in the year.

- *Defence and Security Cooperation*

As strategic partners and maritime neighbours, the two leaders emphasised the importance of further consolidating the security and defence cooperation between the two countries. It was also decided to enhance cooperation in combating terrorism, terrorist financing, money laundering, arms smuggling, trafficking in human beings and cyber crime.

- *Comprehensive Economic Partnership*

In the field of Economic Partnership, both the countries recognized the importance of a predictable, open and transparent economic policy framework to facilitate greater two-way trade and investment. Prime Minister Modi invited Indonesian business to avail of the opportunities presented efforts to transform India through innovative. The Joint Statement also covered energy related issues, such as clean, affordable and renewable energy that is important for both the countries. In order to meet energy mix demand in the future, both Leaders encouraged renewal of the MoU on Cooperation in the Field of Oil and Gas.

The two countries encouraged promotion of direct shipping links, private sector investment in port and air-port development projects, including through Public-Private Partnerships or other concession schemes.

- *Cultural and People-to-People Links*

The Leaders committed to build upon the close historical and cultural links between the two peoples under the Cultural Exchange Programme 2015-2018.

- *Cooperation in Facing Common Challenges*

Both the Leaders emphasized “zero tolerance” against acts of terror and called upon all countries to work towards eliminating terrorist safe havens and infrastructure, in disrupting terrorist networks and financing channels, and stopping cross-border terrorism. Further, Prime Minister Modi and President Widodo reiterated their commitment to respecting freedom of navigation and over flight, and

unimpeded lawful commerce, based on the principles of international law, as reflected notably in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

2.3.D Statement by India and Indonesia on Maritime Cooperation, December 12, 2016

Maritime Cooperation between the two countries was discussed during Indonesian President's visit to India in December 2016. Both Leaders stressed on several aspects of the maritime cooperation that include:

- Maintaining a maritime legal order based on the principles of international law, as reflected notably in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)
- Need to combat, prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing.
- Conclude a Memorandum of Understanding on Maritime Cooperation between Indonesia and India in order to further strengthen and accelerate maritime cooperation inter alia in maritime safety and security, and promotion of maritime industries, as one of the important pillars towards enhancing the bilateral relationship.

2.4 Lao PDR

2.4.A Opening Remarks by the Minister of State for External Affairs Dr. V. K. Singh at the 7th Mekong-Ganga Cooperation Finance Ministers Meeting in Vientiane, Laos, July 24, 2016

The Ministerial Meeting was organised by the Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) Chair, Lao People's Democratic Republic, which was attended by Minister of State for External Affairs Dr. V. K. Singh. He announced that India will train one representative each from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Vietnam and Thailand in museology and conservation techniques, under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme of Government of India. Dr Singh announced 50 new scholarships for MGC countries in areas such as culture, tourism, engineering, management teachers' training, film directing, sound, lighting and stage.

2.5 Vietnam

2.5.A Visit of Prime Minister of India to Vietnam on September 03, 2016

Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid an Official Visit to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam from 02 - 03 September 2016; officially elevating the current Strategic Partnership to Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. The two Prime Ministers agreed to assign the two Ministries of Foreign Affairs to be the focal points, in collaboration

with other ministries and agencies of both sides, to build the Plan of Action to bring the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership to reality in all areas of cooperation. The Joint Statement between India and Vietnam laid down the following key points.

Political relations, defense and security - Prime Minister Modi announced a grant of US\$ 5 million for the construction of an Army Software Park at the Telecommunications University in NhaTrang. The Prime Ministers welcomed the signing of the MOU on Cyber Security between Ministry of Public Security of Vietnam and Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of India and the transfer of equipment to the Indian funded Indira Gandhi High-Tech Crime Laboratory. They agreed to an early conclusion of the MOU for cooperation between the National Security Council Secretariat of India and the Ministry of Public Security of Vietnam.

Economic relations, trading and investment: Achieve the trade target of US\$15 billion by 2020; including but not limited to: utilizing established mechanisms such as the Joint Sub-Commission on Trade, intensifying the exchanges among states of India and provinces of Vietnam, strengthening exchanges of delegation and Business-to-Business contacts, regular organization of trade fairs and events such as the India-CLMV Business Conclave and Vietnam – India Business Forum. Prime Minister Modi sought facilitation of the Government of Vietnam for major Indian investments such as Tata Power's Long Phu-II 1320MW thermal power project for achieving contractual conclusion.

- **Energy:** The Prime Ministers urged both sides to actively implement the Agreement signed in 2014 between PetroVietnam (PVN) and ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) on cooperation in new blocks in Vietnam.
- **Connectivities:** They urged airlines of both sides to soon open direct flights between major cities of Vietnam and India. They sought accelerating the establishment of direct shipping routes between the sea ports of Vietnam and India.
- **Science and Technology:** The Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at signing of the Inter-Governmental Framework Agreement between the two countries for Exploration of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes and urge both sides to soon conclude the Implementing Arrangement between the Indian Space Research Organisation and Vietnam Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment on Establishment of Tracking and Data Reception Station and Data Processing Facility in Vietnam under the India-ASEAN Space Cooperation.
- **Training:** Vietnam welcomed the offer to train 15 Vietnamese diplomats at the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, New Delhi and 25 Vietnamese students of Vietnam National University Faculty of Oriental Studies at the Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore. Vietnam welcomed India's assistance under the framework of Mekong

- Ganga Cooperation, especially the Quick Impact Projects Fund (QIPF).

- **Health, Culture, Tourism and People-to-People Links:** Both sides welcomed the conclusion and signing of the MOU on health cooperation. India announced the offer of special annual scholarships for Vietnamese students for advanced Buddhist studies at Masters/Doctoral level courses and annual scholarships of one year duration for study of Sanskrit in Indian institutes for the members of the Buddhist Sangha in Vietnam.
- **Regional and international cooperation:** The Prime Ministers agreed to strengthen cooperation in UN, NAM, WTO, ASEAN and related forums including ARF, ADMM Plus, EAS, ASEM and as well as other sub-regional cooperation mechanisms.

2.5.B Agreements Signed:

The following Agreements were signed in the presence of the two Prime Ministers:

- Framework Agreement on Cooperation in the Exploration and Uses of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes;
- Protocol for Amending the Agreement on Avoiding Double Taxation;
- Program of Cooperation in UN Peacekeeping Matters;
- Protocol between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Vietnam and the Ministry of External Affairs of India on Celebrating 2017 as the "Year of Friendship";
- MOU on Health Cooperation;
- MOU on Cooperation in Information Technology;
- MOU on Cooperation between the Vietnam Academy of Social Sciences and the Indian Council of World Affairs;
- MOU on cooperation in Cyber Security;
- MOU between the Bureau of Indian Standards and Directorate for Standard, Metrology and Quality for Cooperation in the Fields of Standardization and Conformity Assessment;
- MOU on Establishment of the Centre of Excellence in Software Development and Training;
- Technical Agreement on Sharing of White Shipping Information;
- Contract for Offshore High-speed Patrol Boats.

2.5.C PM Modi attended the 14th ASEAN-India Summit and the 11th East Asia Summit in Vientiane, Lao PDR, September 8th 2016

In the 14th ASEAN India Summit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated that ASEAN is at the core of efforts to address the traditional and non-traditional security challenges in the Asia Pacific region. Securing the seas is, therefore, a shared responsibility. India supports freedom of navigation, over-flight and unimpeded commerce, based on the principles of international law, as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. And, India remains ready to play its part in partnership with ASEAN.

Natural Disasters are a common challenge. Their management is India's joint priority. India wants to pursue an active agenda of engagement in this field and would host the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in November. And, it is also ready to enhance cooperation in Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Exercises, as well as in capacity building for disaster management personnel. A balanced and ambitious Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership will be a step in the right direction.

Enhanced physical and digital connectivity between India and ASEAN could boost economic engagement, fuel commerce and investment, speed up development partnership, and strengthen people to people contacts. For this, India is committed to the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity, which Prime Minister proposed for the establishment of a Joint Task Force on Connectivity to carry forward the exploratory work on the extension of India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway to Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam. Seamless digital connectivity between India and Southeast Asia is a shared objective.

For this, India have already shared several proposals, involving setting up of a regional high-capacity fibre-optic network, supplemented by a national rural broadband network and digital villages in remote areas. Science and Technology is a crucial element of our developmental engagement. Prime Minister Modi welcomed the concept of Inclusive Innovation Platform for utilization of the enhanced S&T Development Fund. India is working with Vietnam to establish the India-ASEAN ground station to provide Indian remote-sensing satellite data for the entire ASEAN region. As part of India's commitment to an Asia-Pacific free of Malaria by 2030, Prime Minister Modi proposed a Flagship ASEAN-India Programme for Combating Malaria.

In the *11th East Asia Summit*, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated the need for all parties to show utmost respect for the UNCLOS. The region being India's maritime neighbour, the economic and security needs of the region rely heavily on developments in its maritime domain. Indeed, building co-operative maritime partnerships should be a priority area for EAS engagement. Through sharing experiences and building partnerships for the protection of marine resources, prevent environmental degradation, the true potential of the blue economy can be tapped.

2.6 Myanmar

2.6.A Statement by Prime Minister during the visit of President of Myanmar to India, 29 August, 2016

Both sides concluded useful discussions on the whole range of bilateral engagement. They recognised that their security interests are closely aligned. India's nearly 2 billion dollar development assistance is touching the lives of the common man of Myanmar. Both sides expressed their determination to deepen their cooperation in

agriculture, banking, power, and energy. The MoUs on Cooperation in Renewable Energy and on Traditional Systems of medicine will operationalize mutual cooperation in these areas. They also agreed to work towards a long-term and a mutually beneficial arrangement for trade in pulses.

2.6.B Visit of State Counsellor of Myanmar to India, October 19, 2016

Summary of Press Statement by Prime Minister during the visit of State Counsellor of Myanmar, October 19, 2016

While welcoming Her Excellency Daw Aung San Suu Kyi on her first State Visit to India, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated the closeness the Myanmar leader was with India, and expressed India's gratitude for Myanmar participation at the BIMSTEC and the BRICS-BIMSTEC outreach Summit in Goa.

Prime Minister Modi identified some sectors like agriculture, infrastructure, industry, education, capacity building and the like. From the mega connectivity projects like Kaladan and Trilateral Highway, to projects in the fields of human resource development, healthcare, training and capacity building, India continues to share its resources and expertise with Myanmar. India's nearly US Dollars 1.75 billion of development assistance is centered on people, being in line with the priorities of Myanmar government and its people. Both the leaderships agreed to enhance their engagement in several areas including agriculture, power, renewable energy and power sector. India will develop a Varietal Development and Seed Production Centre in Yezin in Myanmar to enhance the quality of seeds, enhancing trade in pulses, enhance power supply from Moreh in Manipur to Tamu in Myanmar, partner to pilot LED electrification project at a site designated by the Government of Myanmar. The MOU on Cooperation in the Power Sector would help create the framework for advancing linkages in this important sector. In the cultural sphere, India offered assistance in restoring pagodas damaged in the recent earthquake in Myanmar.

List of agreements/MOUs signed between Government of India and Government of Myanmar, October 19, 2016

- MoU between Financial Regulatory Department of Myanmar and Insurance Institute of India for designing an academic and professional building programme for insurance industry of Myanmar
- MoU on Cooperation in the field of Power Sector
- MoU on Banking Supervision between RBI and Central Bank of Myanmar

2.6.C Summary of the India-Myanmar Joint Statement during the visit of State Counsellor of Myanmar to India, October 19, 2016

Both sides condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Both sides also agreed that terrorism is first and foremost a violation of human rights and that there can be no justification for extending

support, financing, provision of material resources or training to terrorists who destroy innocent lives.

Both sides underlined their mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity. Both sides agreed that the border guarding forces on both sides would further coordinate and exchange information towards securing the common borders. Both sides also agreed to expedite discussions regarding the relevant border segments.

Both sides also agreed to coordinate, through diplomatic channels, the setting up of immigration facilities at the Tamu-Moreh and Rhi-Zowkhathar border crossing points.

Both sides agreed to remove impediments to trade and commerce to enable bilateral trade and investment to reach its full potential. It was agreed to hold early meetings of the Joint Trade Committee (JTC), Joint Working Groups on Border Trade and Border Haats, and on Railways and Shipping. Myanmar side reiterated its intention to invite Indian companies to participate in competitive tenders for petrochemical and petroleum products, marketing infrastructure and the setting up of LPG terminals.

Both sides expressed satisfaction over the signing of an MoU between India and Myanmar on Cooperation in the field of Power.

India agreed to support Myanmar in creating police training infrastructure and to share expertise in developing training manuals, including in forensics and cyber-security.

The India side agreed to Myanmar's request to provide more diplomatic trainings related to the capacity building of Myanmar Foreign Service officers and to assist Myanmar in its ongoing efforts for the development of a diplomatic academy in Yangon.

The two sides agreed to set up an Eminent Persons Group. Both sides underlined the need for early reform of the UN Security Council.

2.7 Singapore

2.7.A Visit of PM of Singapore to India, 04 October, 2016

- *Summary of Press Statement by Prime Minister of India during the visit of Prime Minister of Singapore to India (October 04, 2016)*

Commending the role of Prime Minister Lee in strengthening India - Singapore bilateral relationship, Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid his tributes to Lee Kuan Yew and former President S. R. Nathan. While stressing on the Strategic Partnership with "Renewed Spirit, New Energy" that was developed last year, Prime Minister Modi reiterated the benefits this partnership aims to bring, combining the strengths of Singapore with the scale of India; and dynamism of Singapore with vibrancy of Indian States. Two MOUs focused on skill development were signed: one, to set up a Skill Development Centre for India's North Eastern States in Guwahati; and the other with the National Skill Development Council. He also welcomed the inauguration of the Centre of Excellence for Tourism Training in Udaipur, in cooperation with the State Government of Rajasthan. Rajasthan is also partnering with Singapore in the fields of urban development and waste management.

Both the Prime Ministers agreed to greater business exchanges and collaborations. The MOU on Intellectual Property, will facilitate greater business to business exchanges and collaborations. Both leaderships also welcomed the issuance of corporate Rupee bonds in Singapore. Defence and security cooperation remained to be a key pillar of the strategic partnership. As two maritime nations, keeping the sea lanes of communication open, and respect for international legal order of seas and oceans is a shared priority. Both the nations cooperation in the framework of ASEAN, East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Regional Framework is aimed at building an open and inclusive architecture for regional cooperation, in an atmosphere of trust and confidence. Rising tide of terrorism, especially cross-border terrorism, and the rise of radicalization are grave challenges to both the countries security.

- *List of MoUs signed during the visit of Prime Minister of Singapore to India (October 04, 2016)*
 - 1) MoU on collaboration in the field of Technical and Vocational Education and Training. National Skill Development Corporation and ITEES Singapore.
 - 2) MoU on collaboration in the field of Technical and Vocational Education and Training. Government of Assam and ITEES Singapore.
 - 3) MoU in the field of Industrial Property Cooperation. DIPP and Intellectual Property Office Singapore.
- *India-Singapore Joint Statement during the visit of Prime Minister of Singapore to India (October 06, 2016)*
- Both Prime Ministers noted with satisfaction the good exchange of regular high level visits and consultations between India and Singapore which have served to strengthen all-round cooperation under the pillars of the India-Singapore Strategic Partnership.
- Both Prime Ministers reaffirmed the strong cooperation in the area of smart cities and urban solutions.
- The Prime Ministers also reaffirmed their commitment to cooperate in skills development through knowledge sharing and capacity building.
- The two Prime Ministers appreciated the significant progress made in defence cooperation. They welcomed the inaugural India-Singapore Defence Ministers' Dialogue held in Singapore on 3 June 2016.
- The two Prime Ministers also noted the convening of the first Defence Industry Working Group in May 2016, the continued progress in cooperation in defence R&D and technology, regular joint military exercises and training between the Armies, Air Forces and Navies, service-to-service cooperation, naval ship visits, and the sharing of White-Shipping Information.
- The two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at the ongoing cooperation to address common security concerns.
- Prime Minister Modi welcomed the listing of Masala Bonds on the Singapore Exchange.

- To support growing economic links, the Prime Ministers also recognised the importance of exploring the expansion of air connectivity to support new and commercially viable air links between and beyond both countries, and to broaden cooperation in the aviation, maritime and logistics sectors, including through capacity building and the sharing of best practices.
- The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed the significance of parliamentary exchanges between the two democracies.
- The two Prime Ministers hailed the growing cooperation between India and Singapore in space technology and stressed on the need for furthering cooperation in R&D.
- Both sides reiterated their support for security, safety and freedom of navigation and over flight, and unimpeded commerce, in accordance with international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS.
- The two Prime Ministers recognized terrorism to be the single most threat to peace and stability and reiterated their strong commitment to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations.
- India welcomed the realization of the ASEAN Community and expressed full support for ASEAN's centrality in the evolving regional structure. Singapore welcomed and highlighted the vital role that India played in the regional architecture, especially through its participation in and support for ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM Plus), East Asia Summit (EAS), and Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

2.8 Thailand

2.8.A Visit of Vice President of India to Thailand, February 3-5, 2016

Vice-President of India, Shri M. Hamid Ansari, visited Thailand on February 3-5, 2016. During the visit, Shri Ansari delivered a lecture at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok on the theme “India, Thailand and ASEAN: Contours of a Rejuvenated Relationship”.

2.8.B Key Points of Remarks by Vice President Shri Hamid Ansari at the banquet hosted by Prime Minister of Thailand during his visit to Thailand

- Cooperation, both bilaterally and in the ASEAN rubric, encompasses diverse areas of mutual interest including Trade and Investment, Science and Technology, Education, and Cultural Exchanges.
- As maritime neighbours, there is a shared interest in the security of international sea lanes of communication and commerce.

Key points shared by the Vice President at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok were:

- Vice President identified tremendous potential in trade and investment, defence cooperation through technical, human resource development, capacity building and contributing to the development of Thai capacities, both physical and human.
- Recognizing that ASEAN is a natural partner for India's engagement in the Asia Pacific region, Shri Ansari pointed to the various policies like

the Look East Policy and the Act East Policy for balance, peace and stability in the region.

- He put special emphasis on India-ASEAN cooperation areas like infrastructure, manufacturing, trade, skills, urban renewal, smart cities and Make in India programmes, connectivity projects, cooperation in Science and Technology and people-to-people contact to be the springboard for regional integration and co-prosperity.
- Identifying future areas of cooperation, Shri Ansari mentioned that India is planning to enhance the ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund from the current US\$ 1 million to US\$ 5 million; setting up an ASEAN-India Innovation Platform to facilitate commercialization of low cost technologies, technology transfer and collaborative R&D projects. Also, India is implementing US\$ 21.53 million project on Establishment of a Tracking and Data Reception Station and Data Processing Facility for ASEAN at Ho Chi Minh City, upgrading of the existing station at Biak, Indonesia and training ASEAN Personnel in Space Science & Technology in Dehradun in India.
- In terms of connectivity, he reflected upon the finalization of negotiations on the India-Myanmar-Thailand Motor Vehicles Agreement and ASEAN-India Maritime Transport Cooperation Agreement and other major projects which include the Kaladan Multi-modal Transit Transport Project and Rhi-Tiddim Road project. He also said that India has committed a Line of Credit of US \$ 1 billion to promote projects that support physical and digital connectivity between India and ASEAN. To enhance connectivity, India and ASEAN need to focus on an extension of the trilateral Highway to Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam as well as the Mekong-India Economic Corridor, which is expected to connect the industrial and freight corridors in India with the production networks in the Mekong region through the Chennai-Dawei sea link; and the setting up of information highways or i-ways between India and ASEAN as part of India's digital connectivity initiatives. Mutual cooperation in non-traditional threats such as, extremism, terrorism, piracy, smuggling, transnational crimes and drug-trafficking was also highlighted

2.8.C Summarised Excerpt of Press statement by Prime Minister during the visit of Prime Minister of Thailand to India (June 17, 2016)-

While welcoming the Thailand leadership, Prime Minister Narendra Modi stated about the historical people to people contacts between the two nations. He stated that the close strategic partnership helps both the nations to secure their citizens from such threats, which even included the fields of cyber security, narcotics, transnational economic offenses and human trafficking.

Due to the closeness of land and maritime frontiers, both India and Thailand agreed to forge a closer partnership in the fields of defence and maritime cooperation. They also forged closer cooperation in trade and commerce, including the avenues of manufacturing and investment linkages. Information Technology, pharmaceuticals, auto-components, and machinery are some other areas of promising collaboration. Such

collaboration has brought the promise of a balanced Comprehensive Economic and Partnership Agreement as a shared priority.

Connectivity through air, land and sea links would facilitate the smooth flow of goods, services, capital and human resources between the two economies. Henceforth, the completion of India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral highway; and early signing of the Motor Vehicles Agreement between the three countries were prioritized. Connectivity is also an area of priority for India's development. Improving access to Southeast Asia from the Northeastern States. Next year, to commemorate the seventy years of establishment of diplomatic relations, Festival of India in Thailand, and Festival of Thailand in India will be celebrated.

The Indian Constitution is also being translated into Thai language celebrating one hundred and twenty-fifth birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the architect of Indian Constitution. To encourage Thai tourists visiting Buddhist sites in India, India will soon facilitate double entry e-tourist visas for citizens of Thailand.

2.8.D Excerpt (Key Points) - India-Thailand Joint Statement during the visit of Prime Minister of Thailand to India, June 17, 2016

The first India-Thailand Business Forum came up with recommendations to expand and deepen business and investment opportunities between the two countries which were held on 17 June 2016.

- Economic Relations: The two leaders agreed to encourage more investments from both investors in India and Thailand. Both sides will also be renegotiating a new Bilateral Investment Treaty. Both leaders welcomed investments by Thai companies in infrastructure development to develop the Buddhist Circuit and to construct five high-end hotels.
- Connectivity: Both leaders noted with satisfaction the progress in regional connectivity efforts such as the India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and agreed to expedite the completion of the project as well as to expedite negotiations on the India-Myanmar-Thailand Motor Vehicles Agreement. The two leaders also welcomed Thailand's readiness to commence the negotiation with India on the Air Service Agreement. Both Prime Ministers welcomed the proposed India - Myanmar - Thailand Friendship Car Rally which will be organized in November 2016.
- Security and Defence: Both sides agreed to work towards the completion of the negotiation for the signing of the White Shipping Agreement between the two countries. Thailand expressed an interest in the Indian defence industry and its experience and expertise in the field of defence R&D and production. Both sides agreed to explore key areas of future engagement based on mutually identified areas of cooperation. The Prime Ministers noted the ongoing negotiation of the MoU for cooperation between Thailand Computer Emergency Expert Team (Thai CERT) and Electronics Transaction Development Agency (ETDA) and Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DEITY) of India.
- Science and Technology: The leaders agreed to convene the next meeting of the Joint Committee on Cooperation in Science & Technology in

2016 in New Delhi with the objective of finalising and concluding the Programme of Cooperation (PoC) for the period of 3 years beginning in 2017. India offered Thailand indigenously developed GPS Aided Geo Augmented Navigation or GAGAN services, which provides advanced navigation and location assistance and information facilities in the Aviation, Maritime and other domains.

- Culture, Education, and People-to-People Exchanges: The two Prime Ministers announced that the 'Festival of India' in Thailand and the "Festival of Thailand" in India, which are named "Sawasdee India Year" and "Namaste Thailand Year" respectively, will be held simultaneously in 2017 to commemorate this occasion.
- Regional Cooperation: The two leaders expressed their desire to further enhance the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership. With a view to underscore the significance of sub-regional frameworks, the Prime Ministers viewed that developing the Mekong-India Economic Corridor would complement ASEAN well.
The two sides expressed hope to expedite the finalization of the RCEP negotiation by the end of 2016, while encouraging the convening of regular core meetings of BIMSTEC to maximize the utilization of the body.
- Multilateral Cooperation: The two leaders emphasized the importance of an early reform of the United Nations Security Council so that it reflects the contemporary realities and functions in a more accountable, representative and effective manner.

Thailand welcomed the launch of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and both sides agreed to explore the possibility to cooperate in the area of solar energy.

The following agreements were signed during the visit:

- 1) Executive Programme of Cultural Exchange (Extension of CEP) for 2016-2019.
- 2) Memorandum of Understanding between Nagaland University, India and Chiang Mai University, Thailand

Both sides also agreed to pursue negotiations on the following MoUs/ Agreements.

1. Memorandum of Understanding to Prevent/ Counter Smuggling and Circulation of Fake Indian Currency Notes
2. Memorandum of Understanding on Combating Human Trafficking
3. Memorandum on Understanding between India and Thailand on Cooperation in the fields of Information and Communications Technology and Electronics
4. Memorandum of Understanding on White Shipping Information
5. Memorandum of Understanding between Central Drug Standards Control Organization (CDSO) of India and Thai Food and Drug Administration
6. Agreement between India and Thailand on Juridical and Judicial Cooperation in Civil and Commercial Matters for the Service of

Summons, Judicial Documents, Commission, Execution of Judgments and Arbitral Awards (MLAT on Civil and Commercial Matters)

7. Revision of Air Services Agreement
8. Programme of Cooperation (PoC) on Science and Technology,
9. India Thailand Free Trade Agreement
10. Bilateral Investment Treaty (BIT)
11. Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation in Controlling Narcotic Drugs, Psychotropic Substances, their Precursors and Chemicals and Drugs Abuse
12. MoU between Thailand's Computer Emergency Response Team (Thai CERT), Electronics Transaction Development Agency (ETDA) and the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeiTY)

2.8.E Gen(Dr.) V. K. Singh's visit to Bangkok (October 10, 2016)

Summary of the Statement by Gen(Dr.) V. K. Singh(Retd.), Minister of State for External Affairs at the 2nd Summit of the Asia Cooperation Dialogue, Bangkok

He stated the need to stand united against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. He stated that the global fight against terrorism should not only seek to disrupt and eliminate terrorists, terror organizations and networks, but also identify, isolate and penalize States who encourage support and finance terrorism, provide sanctuary to terrorists and terror groups, and falsely extol their virtues.

He further stated that only through inter-connectivity, can the the 21st century be truly an Asian Century. India has offered a billion US dollars to ASEAN countries for connectivity projects including digital connectivity. He appreciated the initiative of establishing a Permanent Secretariat. He congratulated the United Arab Emirates on assuming the Chair of ACD.

2.9 Papua New Guinea

President Shri Pranab Mukherjee, paid a two day State Visit to Papua New Guinea from 28- 29 April 2016.

His Excellency the Governor General received President Pranab Mukherjee at Government House.

2.9.A Excerpts of the Speech delivered by President at the Papua New Guinea Business Council (April 29, 2016)

He stated that, the challenge for Papua New Guinea is how to best utilise these abundant natural resources for value addition, generating employment and economically empowering her people.

The bilateral trade between India and Papua New Guinea for the year 2014-15 stands at US\$209.48 million. The balance is in favour of

Papua New Guinea. There are mutual complementarities in many fields between India and Papua New Guinea. Close co-operation could bring opportunities, growth and progress as well as prosperity to our people.

2.10 New Zealand

2.10.A President's visit New Zealand 30 April to 2 May 2016

President of India Pranab Mukherjee paid a visit to Papua New Guinea and New Zealand from April 28 to May 02, 2016. On second-leg of his trip, he reached New Zealand on 30 April 2016.

It was the first visit of President of India to New Zealand. The President noted that India has much in common with New Zealand including similarity of political systems, strong commitment to democracy and human values.

During the visit, an Air Services Agreement was signed. An MoU on an ICCR Chair of Indian Studies in the University of Victoria was also signed. The New Zealand Government announced a new scholarship scheme for Indian students. The President made an address at the Auckland University of Technology and invited academicians from the universities of New Zealand to participate in the next Festival of Innovation to be held in March 2017 at Rashtrapati Bhawan, New Delhi. He also addressed business leaders and the Indian community in New Zealand and invited them to participate in India's growth story.

2.10.B Speech by President Pranab Mukherjee at the Banquet hosted by Governor General of New Zealand, April 30, 2016

In 2013, bilateral trade crossed one billion US dollars. The present level of trade and investment needs to be vigorously advanced in order to realise its substantial potential.

New Zealand has made tremendous progress in dairy development, food processing, communications and information technology, clean energy and water, disaster management, biotechnology, healthcare and services, to mention a few. India would very much like to enhance its bilateral co-operation in these areas, learn from the successful experience and practices of New Zealand and collaborate in creating new and innovative products and technology.

India looks forward to new partnerships with New Zealand in areas of common interest. India would like to invite investors and entrepreneurs from New Zealand to join Indian counterparts in the "Make in India" initiative of the Government.

Both countries are active participants in regional and international fora and have worked together in close cooperation on matters of shared interest and concern. They both recognize the imperatives of strengthening the UN system and other international organizations. And would like to see them reformed so that they remain relevant and effective in addressing the challenges that confront the world today.

2.10.C Visit of Prime Minister of New Zealand to India, October 26, 2016

Summary of Press Statement by Prime Minister during visit of Prime Minister of New Zealand to India.

Both had detailed and productive discussions on all aspects of bilateral engagement and multilateral cooperation. Prime Minister Modi mentioned food processing, dairy and agriculture, and related areas in their supply chain as some of the areas of particular potential for bilateral cooperation. New Zealand's strength and capacity in these sectors can combine with India's vast technology needs to build partnerships that can benefit both the societies, agreeing to continue to work closely towards an early conclusion of a balanced and mutually beneficial Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement.

He mentioned the close cooperation on global and regional issues, which have been enhanced even during the East Asia Summit process. The reform of international governance institutions is a shared priority for both. Both the Prime Ministers agreed to strengthen security and intelligence cooperation against terrorism and radicalization, including in the domain of cyber security.

- **List of Outcomes from the visit of John Key Prime Minister of New Zealand to India, October 26, 2016**

Arrangement between the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India and the Ministry for Primary Industries of New Zealand regarding Food Safety Cooperation.

MoU between the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports of the Government of the Republic of India and Sport New Zealand of the Government of New Zealand on Cooperation in the field of Youth Affairs and Sports.

Third Protocol to the Convention between the Government of Republic of India and the Government of New Zealand for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income.

Establishment of a Bilateral Ministerial Dialogue between two Foreign Ministries.

Establishment of Annual Foreign Ministry Consultations at Senior Officials Level.

Cooperation and Dialogue on Cyber Issues.

- **India - New Zealand Joint Statement during visit of Prime Minister of New Zealand to India, October 26, 2016**

The two Prime Ministers noted the strong diaspora connections between India and New Zealand, with Indians now making up around four percent of New Zealand's population.

The two Prime Ministers underlined the fact that India and New Zealand are both maritime nations with a strong interest in the Asia-

Pacific and Indo-Pacific regions being stable and prosperous, including by ensuring the safety and security of sea lanes and freedom of navigation. Accordingly, the two Prime Ministers agreed to further strengthen the political, defence and security relationship enjoyed by India and New Zealand.

In order to drive this enhanced political-security relationship, the two Prime Ministers agreed that India and New Zealand would:

Establish a Bilateral Ministerial Dialogue through annual meetings, either in India, New Zealand or on the margins of regional or global gatherings;

Hold annual Foreign Ministry Consultations at the senior officials level;

Promote cooperation and dialogue between the two countries on cyber issues;

Explore prospects for information sharing in support of our mutual interests in maritime security;

Continue negotiations for a Customs Cooperation Arrangement to facilitate information sharing and to provide a framework for the exchange of new customs procedures and techniques;

Undertake defence education exchanges, by placing Indian and New Zealand defence personnel on each other's defence courses and staff colleges; and

Encourage naval ship visits to each other's ports, with the next visit of an Indian vessel to coincide with the Royal New Zealand Navy's 75th anniversary commemorations in November 2016.

New Zealand welcomed India's entry into the Missile Technology Control Regime, which would strengthen global non-proliferation objectives.

The Prime Ministers acknowledged the strong and growing education and migration links between New Zealand and India, noting the opportunities in New Zealand for Indian students seeking high value, high quality education programmes which can provide them genuine pathways to fill skill demands in New Zealand, and the strong international linkages between institutions of New Zealand and India. The Prime Ministers recognised the importance of active oversight and regulation to ensure all students are provided high-quality education experiences and underlined the need for on-going coordination between agencies in New Zealand and India to ensure that the existing linkages continue to expand to mutual benefit. The Prime Ministers welcomed the signing this year of a Cultural Cooperation Arrangement, to facilitate the promotion of range of cultural activities between India and New Zealand in such areas as literature, dance, film, music and visual arts; and the signing of an amendment to the existing Sports Cooperation Arrangement to facilitate greater bilateral youth exchanges.

The two Prime Ministers welcomed the growing flows of tourists between India and New Zealand, and undertook to work towards agreeing amendments to the New Zealand-India Air Services Agreement consistent with air services policy changes made by the Government of India earlier this year.

The two Prime Ministers agreed that the commercial and trading relationship between India and New Zealand was strong, noting that two-way trade was now worth US\$1.8 billion in goods & services annually, an increase of 42 percent in the past five years.

Committed to continue to work towards a high-quality, comprehensive and balanced bilateral Free Trade Agreement which would deliver meaningful commercial outcomes to both sides;

Vowed to ensure that India and New Zealand contribute to a high-quality, comprehensive outcome to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership negotiations, of which both countries are parties;

Announced amendments to the bilateral Double Taxation Agreement to bring its tax cooperation provisions into line with international best-practice; and

Announced the conclusion of a Food Safety Cooperation Arrangement to encourage greater coordination between New Zealand and Indian food safety authorities, and supporting more efficient trade in food products.

Greater involvement by New Zealand scientific and commercial entities in Swachh Bharat, including the Clean Ganga initiative, which harnessed New Zealand's expertise in the clean technology and renewable energy sectors.

2.11 Fiji

2.11.A Private visit of Prime Minister of Fiji to India 19 May 2016

- Prime Minister of Fiji Rear Admiral (Retd.) Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama paid a private visit to India on 19 May 2016. He met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and discussed India-Fiji ties. PM Modi expressed his condolences for the loss of life in Fiji due to the Category 5 Cyclone Winston, which struck Fiji in February 2016.
- Prime Minister Bainimarama thanked the Prime Minister for the US\$ 1 million assistance and 45 tonnes of relief material provided by India in the immediate aftermath of the cyclone.

3 CENTRAL ASIA

India and Central Asian countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have been increasing their bilateral and multilateral engagements over the years, following their independence from the former USSR, in early 1990s. On the

completion of two decades of its relations with Central Asia and to further deepen the engagement with the 'extended neighbourhood', India announced the 'Connect Central Asia' policy in 2012 during the first India-Central Asia Dialogue held in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic.

3.1 Kyrgyzstan

3.1.A President of Kyrgyz Republic's visit to India (18-21 December 2016)

The President of the Kyrgyz Republic, Mr. Almazbek Sharshenovich Atambayev, undertook a State visit to India from December 18-21, 2016. President Atambayev led a high-level delegation comprising of Ministers, senior officials and business leaders from the Kyrgyz Republic. The visit of President Atambayev was his first visit to India in his capacity as President. Issues that pose a common challenge to both the countries, such as terrorism, extremism and radicalism were discussed. India and Kyrgyz Republic have been holding joint military exercises on counter-terrorism annually. Apart from cooperative engagement in the defence field, the Kyrgyz-India Mountain Bio-Medical Research Centre figured in the talk as an excellent example of successful collaboration.

In the field of economic cooperation, both the leaders agreed on the need to connect economically and facilitate greater people-to-people exchanges. The importance of industry and business to play a leading role on both sides in exploiting opportunities in healthcare, tourism, information technology, agriculture, mining and energy was stressed. The year 2017 is the 25th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kyrgyzstan.

3.1.B Joint Statement during the State visit of President of Kyrgyzstan (20 December 2016)

A Joint Statement was issued after President of Kyrgyzstan and Prime Minister of India, which covered bilateral issues in the field of political, economic, cultural, scientific and technical etc. Some of the major issues that figured in the Joint Statement such as:

Bilateral relations

Cooperation in the field of Defence: The two sides expressed satisfaction with the development of cooperation in the defence sphere, which reflects the high level of mutual trust between the two countries. The "Khanjar" series of India-Kyrgyzstan military exercises has become an annual event. "Khanjar-II" exercises were held in March 2015 in Kyrgyzstan, "Khanjar III" in March-April 2016 in Gwalior, India. The "Khanjar-IV" exercises are scheduled to be held in Kyrgyzstan in February-March 2017. The third Joint India-Kyrgyz Army Mountaineering Expedition was conducted in August-September 2016.

India and Kyrgyzstan are jointly constructing the Kyrgyz-Indian Mountain Training Centre in the city of Balykchi, in Issyk-Kul District of Kyrgyzstan. This Centre will provide instruction and training for personnel of the Armed Forces of the Kyrgyz Republic as well as host Kyrgyz-Indian joint mountain training exercises.

Economic cooperation, Scientific, Technical and Cultural Cooperation: It was agreed to develop a comprehensive five-year Road-Map that will help enhance the level of trade and investment between both the countries. A Bilateral Investment Treaty has been initiated during the visit. The Kyrgyz side highlighted opportunities available for Indian entrepreneurs as a result of their joining the Eurasian Economic Union (EaEU). The International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and Chahbahar Port was mentioned as vital projects in enhancing trade and connectivity between India-Kyrgyzstan bilateral relations. The Joint Statement mentioned several projects including the Kyrgyz-India Mountain Bio-Medical Research Center, successful completion of the Second Phase Laboratory at the Suez High Pass, India's contribution in setting up a Telemedicine Network in Kyrgyzstan, growing links between private hospitals in the health sector, training under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme as shining examples of India-Kyrgyzstan relationship. Both the leaders agreed for the liberalization of visa procedures to enhance cooperation in areas including science and technology and trade and economy.

Cooperation at Regional and Global Levels: Kyrgyz reiterated support for the rightful claim of India for Permanent Membership in an expanded UN Security Council. Both the countries called for the adoption by the United Nations of the draft Comprehensive Convention on Combating International Terrorism. The two leaders welcomed the ratification of the Paris Agreement of the UNFCCC by a number of countries, including India.

3.2 Tajikistan

3.2.A President of Tajikistan's visit to India (14-18 December 2016)

The President of the Republic of Tajikistan paid a State visit to India from 14-18 December 2016. The Tajik President had meetings with President Shri Pranab Mukherjee, Vice President Shri M. Hamid Ansari and Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. The Tajik President visited Kerala in the first leg of his visit five-day trip.

Welcoming the visiting President, Prime Minister Modi talked about the gamut of bilateral relations both countries share, including the strategic partnership, that is built on a foundation of mutual respect, trust and shared interests in regional security and development. In the delegation level talk, both leaders discussed the threat from terrorism that poses a threat to not just to both the countries, but the entire region.

In the field of Economic Cooperation it was agreed on the need to increase the scope and scale of economic engagement, especially trade and investment traffic. Several other fields such as hydel-power, Information Technology, Pharmaceuticals, surface connectivity including transport infrastructure and connecting it through road and rail network to Afghanistan, Tajikistan and Central Asia linking it with through Chahbahar port in Iran were identified as priority areas.

3.2.B List of Agreements/MOUs exchanged during visit (17 December 2016)

1. Memorandum of Understanding between the Committee of television and radio under the Government of Tajikistan and the PrasarBharati, India.
2. Protocol amending the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan and the Government of India for the avoidance of double taxation and prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income.
3. MoU between Financial Intelligence Unit of India and the Financial Monitoring Department under the National Bank of Tajikistan concerning cooperation in the exchange of financial intelligence related to money laundering, related crimes and financing of terrorism.
4. Announcement of initiation of Bilateral investment treaty between the two sides

3.2.C Key highlights of the Joint Statement signed during the State visit of President of Tajikistan(17December 2016)

A Joint Statement was issued after President of Tajikistan and Prime Minister of India held wide-ranging talks on bilateral, regional and international issues, which laid down the following key points:

The two leaders reviewed the bilateral defence and security cooperation and decided to further extend and expand existing cooperation. They welcomed the successful conclusion of the Foreign Office Consultations on 17th November 2016 and the meeting of the Joint Working Group on Defence Cooperation on 2nd November 2016 and agreed that this kind of consultations along with Joint Commission of Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technical Cooperation, Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism and regular consultations between National Security Council must continue for mutual benefit.

The two leaders expressed satisfaction at the excellent cooperation between India and Tajikistan on multilateral issues and mutual support for the initiatives of the two countries in the United Nations and other international forums including for comprehensive reforms of the UN structures.

4 WEST ASIA/ NORTH AFRICA

A number of high-level bilateral visits, both political and economic, took place between India and some countries of West Asia. Besides visits of the Vice President to Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia and Indian Foreign Minister to Israel, Palestine, Bahrain and Minister of State to Syria, UAE, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself visited four important countries of West Asia, UAE, Qatar, Iran, Saudi Arabia and signed important agreements/MoUs/pacts. These MoUs/agreements are in the fields of security, defence, energy, maritime, diaspora, counter-terrorism, de-radicalisation as well as de-motivating youth by jointly developing counter-narratives to violent ideologies pursued for political objectives by vested groups.

Two significant visits from West Asian countries, one from Egypt by its President Abdul Fatah Al Sisi and second by UAE's Crown Prince and Defence Minister also took place to India.

One of the unique features of India's growing engagements with West Asia in 2016 has been the identification of India's growing profile and its capacity to positively contribute to the peace and stability of West Asia in general and the Gulf in particular. During interactions at various levels, it was also evident that now the West Asian countries have acknowledged that the destinies of the two regions, West Asia and South Asia, are linked to each other and the cascading effects of one on other cannot be stopped unless a joint policy is evolved and in this India's role is crucial.

4.1. Bahrain

4.1.A. Visit of External Affairs Minister to Bahrain (23-24 January 2016)

External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj paid an official visit to Bahrain from 23-24 January 2016 and attended the First Ministerial Meeting of the Arab-India Cooperation Forum.

Main points of the Remarks by External Affairs Minister at the First Ministerial Meeting of Arab-India Cooperation Forum (24 January, 2016)

She expressed her happiness to be in Manama for the First Ministerial Meeting of the Arab-India Cooperation Forum. Highlighting the high level interaction between India and the region, she said the year 2016 started with EAMs visit to Palestine, which was a follow up by President Shri Pranab Mukherjee's visit to Palestine in October 2015. Prime Minister Modi made a visit to the UAE in August 2015 and it was the first visit of an Indian Prime Minister to UAE after 34 years. Smt. Swaraj said that India had the honour of receiving Arab leaders from Algeria, Comoros, Djibouti, Egypt, Mauritania, Morocco, Somalia, Sudan and Tunisia during the 3rd India Africa Forum Summit held in New Delhi three months ago. And her visit reflects India's continued strategic engagement with the Arab world.

Today the Arab world is collectively India's largest trading partner with bilateral trade crossing US\$ 180 bn. India source 60% of its oil and gas requirements from West Asia, making this region a pillar of our energy security. The Maghreb region is a major source of phosphates and other fertilizers which contributes significantly towards our food security. The new and emerging areas of our cooperation include agricultural research, dry land farming, irrigation and environmental protection. In all of these India would be happy to share its experience with Arab partners.

Smt. Swaraj said that India is ready to partner in areas such as Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), automobiles and Small and Medium Enterprises, biotechnology and space. The Sovereign Wealth Funds of Gulf countries can be profitably employed in India's burgeoning infrastructure sector. The next India – Arab Partnership Conference in Oman this year can be a real game changer in terms of deepening our economic partnership.

Beyond Government to Government interactions, the bedrock of the relationship was provided by people to people ties. Over 7 million Indians reside in the region. She mentioned that a vast number of people in the Arab world enjoy Indian films, listen to Indian music and relish Indian cuisine. She was confident that the 3rd India-Arab Cultural Festival in India would further promote the cultural contacts and cooperation.

India and the Arab world face common challenges and have similar opportunities in their quest for peace, prosperity and stability. Through the Manama Declaration and the Executive Program for 2016-17, both of them took an important step towards addressing those challenges and utilizing those opportunities.

4.2. Algeria

4.2.A. Vice President Shri Hamid Ansari's visit to Algeria – Summary of Press Statement by Vice President at Presidential Palace, Algiers, Algeria (October 19, 2016)

Appreciating the hospitality of the Algerian government, Vice President Ansari met President Bouthflika and discussed on various topics of mutual interest with the Algerian leadership. Discussion stressed on sectors such as defence and security, hydrocarbon resources, peaceful uses of atomic energy, space, fertilizers and regular exchange of visits at the political level as well as fighting the menace of terrorism. Vice President extended India's invitation to the Prime Minister of Algeria to visit India.

4.3. Egypt

4.3.A. Visit of President of the Arab Republic of Egypt H.E. Mr. Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi to India, 01-03 September, 2016

President of the Arab Republic of Egypt H.E. Mr. Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi, paid a State Visit to India from 01-03 September, 2016. The President

was accompanied by a high-level delegation and a business delegation.

President Al-Sisi and Prime Minister Modi decided to intensify the bilateral relationship based on the three pillars of closer political and security cooperation, deeper economic engagement, and scientific collaboration and wider cultural and people-to-people contacts.

- Political And Security Cooperation – Appreciated the engagement that has taken place in the years, both at political leadership and official levels in between the two countries; the recent exchanges on security cooperation and counterterrorism at the level of NSA, and welcomed the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation between the two National Security Councils; defence cooperation through regular exchanges, meetings of Joint Defence Committee, visit of Egyptian delegation to DefExpo 2016 and various high level exchanges; seeking a comprehensive and permanent solution to the Arab Israeli conflict; peace in Syria and Iraq; India's sending food grains to Egypt in periods of exigency; assisting each other during evacuations of citizens from conflict zones; working together for the comprehensive reform of the United Nations; and tackling the adverse impacts of climate change.
- Economic Engagement and Scientific Collaboration – Welcomed the Indian investment in Egypt which is around US\$ 3 bn; inviting more economic ventures in each others economies; appreciated the outcomes of the Third Joint Trade Committee meeting and sought the fast implementation of the recommendations of the India-Egypt Joint Business Council; enhancing bilateral cooperation in the field of science & technology; in space, satellite technology, tele-medicine and tele-education.
- Cultural Exchanges And People-To-People Contacts – To strengthen civilizational ties, enhance cultural and academic exchanges; the first Indian Chair in Ain Shams University, Cairo; initiate "India by the Nile Festival" and "Egypt by the Ganga Festival" in 2017; signing of the Agreement on Maritime Transport between India and Egypt, and; invited President of India and Prime Minister Modi to visit Egypt, which was accepted.

4.4. Morocco

4.4.A. Vice President Shri Hamid Ansari Visited Morocco from May 30- June 01, 2016

Summarised address by Vice President-"Accommodating Diversity in a Globalising World: The Indian Experience" at the Mohammed V University in Rabat during his visit to Morocco (June 01, 2016)⁵

Even in distant India, the contribution of Moroccan intellectuals to modern thought and challenges is known and acknowledged. Names

⁵ https://www.mea.gov.in/Speeches-Statements.htm?dtl/26861/Address_by_Vice_PresidentquotAccommodating_Diversity_in_a_Globalising_World_The_Indian_Experiencequot_at_the_Mohammed_V_University_in_Rabat_during_his

like Abdullah Al-Arui and Abid al-Jabri readily come to mind; so do the contributions of feminist writers like Fatima Mernisi and Fatima Sadiqi. While drawing attention to some terminological questions, he noted that the terms 'Arab' and 'Islam' are used together or interchangeably. But are the two synonymous? Is Arab thought synonymous with Islamic thought? Is all Arab thought Islamic or vice versa? Above all, can all Islamic thinking be attributed to Arabs?

West tends to create this impression of a powerful, irrational force that, moves whole societies into cultural assertiveness, political intransigence and economic influence. The underlying basis for this is presumptions of Muslim cultural homogeneity and continuity that do not correspond to social reality. An overwhelming number of Muslims of the world are non-Arabs and live in societies that are not Arab. Equally relevant is the historical fact they contributed to and benefited from the civilisation of Islam in full measure. This trend continues to this day.

The experiences and trends of thinking of the non-Arab segments of large Muslim populations in the world assume an importance that cannot be ignored. These segments include countries with Muslim majorities principally Indonesia, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Iran, and Turkey as also those where followers of the Islamic faith do not constitute a majority of the population India, China, and Philippines.

Speaking about the role of Sufi movements and 'zawiyas' in the history of Morocco he stated that there is room for comparative studies of Sufi practices in Morocco and India. It is this backdrop that has impacted on modern India and its existential reality of a plural society on the basis of which a democratic polity and a secular state structure was put in place. The framers of our Constitution had the objective of securing civic, political, economic, social and cultural rights as essential ingredients of citizenship. Given the segmented nature of society and unequal economy, the quest for substantive equality, and justice, remains work in progress and concerns have been expressed from time to time about its shortfalls and pace of implementation. The corrective lies in our functioning democracy, its accountability mechanisms including regularity of elections at all levels from village and district councils to regional and national levels, the Rule of Law, and heightened levels of public awareness of public issues.

4.4.B. Official Spokesperson's response to a question on Morocco's initiative to rejoin the African Union (August 05, 2016)

In response to a question on Morocco's initiative to rejoin the African Union, the Official Spokesperson said: "India welcomes Morocco's initiative to re-join the African Union. India enjoys close relationship with all African nations including Morocco. India has always stood for African unity that includes the entire African continent. India's invitation to all 54 countries of the African continent to the third India-African Forum Summit was an affirmation of this policy. India hopes that Morocco's re-joining the AU would strengthen Africa's

unity and allow the AU to play a constructive role in the affairs of its member countries."

4.5. Tunisia

4.5. A. Vice President Shri Hamid Ansari visited Tunisia from June 02-03, 2016

During the visit the Vice president gave Keynote Address at Tunisian Institute of Strategic Studies in Tunis on June 03, 2016.⁶ Some of the key highlights of the speech are:

While discussing the subject of India and the world, Vice President Shri Hamid Ansari narrated the nature of the disorderly world of today. A world where human survival is at stake; a world both at risk of explosion and implosion. Though during the post Cold War era a new paradigm was drawn which not only spoke about states, but as well as the wellbeing of man, on the basis of human security.

Although Interstate conflicts have admittedly declined, the experience of the past quarter of a century shows the manner in which the expectations of a more comprehensive corrective have been belied. He outlined :

- There has been a phenomenal increase in lower intensity civil conflicts;
- There has been an increase in violence against unprotected civilians;
- Some of these conflicts have spilled across State boundaries and their principal victims are civilians;
- They have dislocated human populations and are endangering human security;
- They tend to undermine the nation State, and are creating friction between neighbouring countries.

This is the global landscape in which India has endeavoured in recent decades to address its developmental challenges and its role in the world. Some of its salient features are:

- 25 years of economic liberalization, beginning in 1991, have transformed India's economy. The average annual growth rate of 7% has created wealth allowing millions of Indians to take part, and to benefit from, a globalised world. Despite this, about one-third of our population lives in extreme poverty and India faces formidable challenges of education, training, human and infrastructure development.
- Total global trade of India grew from US \$ 37.3 billion in 1991 to US \$ 758.5 billion in 2016, a 20 fold growth in the last 25 years. There has been a phenomenal increase in India's industrial and agricultural outputs. A business friendly India is today one of the leading recipients of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in a range of sectors.

⁶ <http://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visit-detail.htm?26866/Keynote+Address+by+Vice+President+at+Tunisian+Institute+of+Strategic+Studies+in+Tunis+June+03+2016>

- The availability of additional resources has allowed India to invest more in education and welfare of its citizens, which in turn has provided India with a wealth of scientific and entrepreneurial talent.
- Strong growth has added to India's maritime and strategic capacity. Its defence capabilities have increased; so has its capacity to provide overseas security and humanitarian support to its friends and those in need.
- The agenda of global issues, and of multilateral diplomacy, remains a matter of perennial interest to India.
- West Asia and North Africa is not an unfamiliar region to India. Historical ties, cultural bonds, shared interests and concerns characterize our relations. There is a considerable potential for expanding trade in the areas of automotive components, automobiles, engineering products, IT, pharmaceuticals, bio-technology and healthcare sectors.
- There are also areas of common concern. Terrorism has emerged as a principal global challenge. International terrorism can only be defeated by organized international action. There is a need to restructure the international legal framework such as by adopting a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism to deal with the challenges of terrorism.
- Relations between India and Tunisia have been friendly and free of discord. They share common principles and have a similar approach on many issues. India had extended strong support to the Tunisian struggle for freedom, and today, India stands ready again to provide all possible support as you embark on a path of freedom and democracy.
- Tunisia can also be a hub for India's trade with both Europe and Africa. Tunisia can leverage Indian expertise and proven capabilities in production of pharmaceuticals, especially generic medicines at affordable cost, advancement in healthcare sector, science & technology and provision of high quality education at reasonable cost to its advantage.

4.6. Iran

The year 2016 was marked by further deepening of India-Iran relations through the high level visit to Iran by Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi in May, preceded by the visit of India's External Affairs Minister to Iran in April.

4.6.A. Visit of External Affairs Minister to Iran (April 16-17, 2016)⁷

External Affairs Minister Smt Sushma Swaraj visited Tehran on 16-17 April 2016 at the invitation of her counterpart Dr. Javad Zarif, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran. EAM called on Hon'ble President of Iran Dr.

⁷ <http://mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/26630/visit+of+external+affairs+minister+to+iran+april+16+17+2016>

Hassan Rouhani, met Dr. Ali Akbar Velayati, Advisor to Supreme Leader and held delegation level talks with Mr JavadZarif.

She expressed the hope that the two sides will sign at an early opportunity the bilateral contract on Chabahar Port, and also the trilateral Agreement involving India, Iran and Afghanistan on Trade and Transit Corridor through the Chabahar port. Iran supported India's desire to join the Ashgabat Agreement. Both sides highlighted the importance of International North South Transport Corridor. The Iranian side welcomed the prospects for participation of India in railway projects, such as Chabahar-Zahedan, which will enhance regional connectivity.

India welcomed the outcome in cooperation in energy sector from the recent visit of Minister of State (IC) Petroleum and Natural Gas to Iran, including the exploration and development of Farzad B and participation of India in setting up fertilizer projects. The concerned companies have been directed to complete their contractual negotiations on Farzad B in a time bound manner. Iranian side had earlier communicated their gas pricing formula and welcomed Indian investment in the Chabahar SEZ.

EAM also emphasized the need for early finalization of trade related agreements including on Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement, Bilateral Investment Protection And Promotion Agreement and an early launch of negotiations on Preferential trade Agreement. She conveyed that India was ready to repatriate the oil payments to Iran through the mutually workable banking channels as per the understanding reached between the relevant authorities of the two countries.

Both sides took note of the good cooperation between the National Security Council structures of the two countries and agreed to intensify this engagement.

Given the civilizational links between India and Iran, both sides agreed to promote and strengthen the existing cultural exchanges, inter- alia, by observing Weeks of Iran and India in each other's country, publication of manuscripts, organizing conferences and events related to language, literature and religion. They also agreed to positively consider the establishment of a Hindi Chair in Tehran University sponsored by ICCR and to renew the Cultural Exchange Programme.

4.6.BPM Modi's visit to Iran, 22-23 May 2016

Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid a visit to Iran 22-23 May 2016. He called on the Supreme Leader Grand Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on 23 May, and held talks with President Hassan Rouhani. During the visit, documents were signed on:

- i. India-Iran Cultural Exchange Programme
- ii. MoU between the Ministry of External Affairs of India and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran on Policy Dialogue between Governments and interaction among think tanks.

- iii. MoU between Foreign Service Institute, MEA, and the School of International Relations, Iran's Foreign Ministry.
- iv. Implementation of Protocol between Ministry of Science and Technology and Ministry of Science, Research and Technology on cooperation in the fields of science and technology.
- v. MoU between Indian Council for Cultural Relations and Islamic Cultural and Relations Organization of Iran.
- vi. Bilateral contract on Chabahar port for port development operations between IPGPL (India Ports Global Private Limited) and Arya Bandar of Iran.
- vii. MoU between EXIM Bank and Central Bank of Iran on projects in Iran.
- viii. MoU between ECGC (Export Credit Guarantee Corporation Limited) of India and the Export Guarantee Fund of Iran.
- ix. MoU between NALCO (National Aluminum Company Limited) and the (IMIDRO) Iranian Mines and Mining Industries Development and Renovation Organization.
- x. MoU between IRCON and CDTIC (Construction, Development of Transport and Infrastructure Company of Iran).
- xi. MoU for cooperation between National Archives of India and the Nation Library and Archives Organization of Iran.

While speaking at the Chabahar connectivity event on 23 May 2016 Prime Minister Modi noted that the 'trade and transit routes should only be starting point for our journey to greater connectivity'. He outlined that the full spectrum of connectivity agenda between Iran, Afghanistan and India should cover, culture to commerce, traditions to technology, investments to IT, services to strategy, and people to politics.

Prime Minister Modi and President Rouhani were united in their determination to build a strong, contemporary and cooperative relationship that draw upon the strength of the historical and civilization ties between the two countries, leverages their geographical proximity, and responds to the needs of an increasingly inter-dependent world.

Both sides decided to give full play to the strategic location and unique role of Iran and India for promoting multi-modal connectivity within and across the region. They hoped that India's participation in developing Chabahar port will open a new chapter in bilateral cooperation and regional connectivity, and encourage more maritime links and services between the two countries, details of which will be worked out by authorities concerned.

4.7. Israel

4.7.A Visit of External Affairs Minister to Israel (17-18 January 2016)

External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj paid an official visit to Israel from 17-18 January 2016. She was accompanied by Secretary (East) and other officials from MEA. This was the first visit of EAM to

Israel and comes after the State visit of The President of India to Israel in the month of October 2015. India and Israel share close and multifaceted relationship.

During the visit EAM hold discussions with the Israeli leadership and review entire gamut of India Israel bilateral relations. The two sides share firm belief in the values of democracy and free market economy. India and Israel also share close relation in the fields of agriculture, science & technology and education. EAM also interacted with the Indian community in Israel during her visit. The visit augmented India's bilateral relations with Israel and further strengthened the linkages between the two sides.

India's relations with Israel are part of its engagement with the broader West Asia region and are independent to its relations with any country in the region.

4.7. Remarks by External Affairs Minister at Indian Community Reception in Tel Aviv (18 January 2016)

EAM Mrs. Sushama Swaraj mentioned that India and Israel have walked a long distance together in the short time since the full establishment of diplomatic ties in 1992. She said that India's interactions at the political level are also increasing. Next year will mark the 25th anniversary of the full establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries.

She pointed out the need for many more exchanges between our civil societies, parliamentarians, opinion makers and women. The economic relationship is the key to developing our bilateral ties. She said that the two countries should move from a trade based relationship to one that is based on investment, manufacturing and services.

4.8 Palestine

4.8.A Visit of External Affairs Minister to Palestine (17 January 2016)

External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj visited the State of Palestine on 17 January 2016. EAM was accompanied by Secretary (East) and other officials from MEA. This was the first visit of EAM to West Asia region and Palestine is the first destination in the region which in itself reflects the importance India holds for Palestine in its engagement with the countries of the region.

During her visit EAM met with the Palestinian leadership and reviewed India Palestinian bilateral relations. India shares traditionally close relations with the State of Palestine and contributing actively through capacity building and human resource development initiatives with Palestine. The visit also reaffirmed India's continued political, diplomatic and developmental support to Palestine. EAM also inaugurated the Palestine Digital Learning & Innovation Centre in Ramallah.

4.8.B Main points of Remarks by External Affairs Minister at inauguration of India-Palestine Digital Learning and Innovation Centre (January 17, 2016)

She expressed her happiness to inaugurate the India-Palestine Digital Learning and Innovation Centre and said that it was yet another example of India's commitment to help its brothers and sisters in Palestine. She mentioned about her discussion with President Abbas and Foreign Minister Riyad Al Malki on a wide range of bilateral, multilateral and regional issues. She informed that on the lines of this Centre at Al-Quds University, India was committed to build another Centre for Excellence in ICT and Innovation in Gaza city. She also talked about developing a Techno-Park in Ramallah.

She stated that India is working towards deeper economic engagement and to further increase academic collaboration between India and Palestine. She emphasised to further intensify cultural contacts and people-to-people exchanges, which are the bedrock of our relationship. Over the years hundreds of Palestinian students have studied in the best of Indian institutions. We must harness their experience in furthering our friendship.

4.8.C MOU signed between India and Palestine for setting up of Palestine-India Techno Park in Ramallah, October 31, 2016

India and Palestine signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for setting up of Palestine-India Techno Park in Ramallah on 31 October, 2016. During the visit of Hon'ble President of India to Palestine in October, 2015, the announcement for setting up of park was made. Government of India has announced grant of US\$ 12 million for setting up the Park with payment of US\$ 3 million each on half-yearly basis for 2 years. Palestinian side has made the land available for the project. Once completed, the Technopark will serve as an IT hub in Palestine with complete IT facilities offering a one-stop solution to all IT-related service requirements, providing state-of-the-art technology, hosting IT companies and foreign companies benefitting local business, Universities and other institutions.

The assistance is part of Government of India's strong commitment to support Palestinian cause. The project will help job creation, business and other opportunities for young Palestinians.

4.9 Qatar

4.9.A Prime Minister of India visited Qatar on June 04-05, 2016. The Joint Statement signed during the visit outlined the following key points:⁸

⁸<http://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visit-detail.htm?26870/IndiaQatar+Joint+Statement+during+the+visit+of+Prime+Minister+to+Qatar>

- Both leaders appreciated the well-functioning bilateral institutional mechanisms in the fields of trade and investment, energy, defence and manpower and emphasized that the sectoral Joint Working Groups should continue to meet regularly to further strengthen cooperation between the two countries. The two sides agreed to constitute an inter-ministerial High Level Joint Committee to regularly review all bilateral matters, as well as regional and global issues of mutual interest.
- The Indian side appreciated Qatar's participation in the International Fleet Review and DEFEXPO in India in February and March 2016, respectively, and the increasing visits of Qatari delegations to India's Naval and Coast Guard establishments. The Qatari side thanked India for its high-level participation, along with an indigenously designed and built guided missile frigate of the Indian Navy during DIMDEX in March 2016, and the regular goodwill visits of the ships of Indian Navy and Coast Guard. The Qatari side expressed appreciation for India's offer to conduct special training programmes for the personnel of Qatar Armed Forces and Coast Guard in India and in Qatar.
- Both leaders reaffirmed that terrorism could not and should not be associated with any religion, civilisation or ethnic group.
- The two leaders highlighted the need to isolate the sponsors and supporters of terrorism and agreed that urgent action against all such entities, which support terrorism and use it as an instrument of policy, must be taken.
- The two sides discussed ways and means to further promote cooperation in cyber security.
- The Qatari side welcomed the participation of Indian companies in the infrastructure development projects in Qatar in preparation for the FIFA 2022 World Cup and the development plans under "Vision 2030 for Qatar".
- They deliberated upon the importance of cooperation between Qatar Investment Authority and National Infrastructure and Investment Fund set up by the Government of India. The two leaders welcomed the signing of the framework agreement for participation of the Qatari institutional investors in the National Infrastructure and Investment Fund.
- The two sides expressed satisfaction at the growing bilateral trade in the energy sector with Qatar being the largest supplier of LNG and LPG to India.
- The Indian side highlighted the interest of its energy companies to pursue opportunities of mutual interest in Qatar, with Qatar Petroleum and other companies, in order to jointly explore new fields as well development of discovered oil and gas assets and exploit the existing resources of natural gas and crude oil in Qatar.
- The Indian side invited Qatar to invest in India's exploration & production sector by bidding for the exploration blocks in India under the new "Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing" Policy and "Discovered Small Fields" Policy.

- The Indian side invited Qatar to participate in the second phase of the strategic reserves storage facility being created in India.
- The two leaders deliberated upon the need for strengthening bilateral cooperation in the financial services sector, including banking, insurance and capital markets. They decided to expand cooperation between the financial institutions of the two countries like Securities and Exchange Board of India and the respective Central Banks.
- Both leaders welcomed the signing of an MoU on bilateral Cooperation in the Field of Health between the Government of the State of Qatar and the Government of the Republic of India.
- The Qatari side appreciated the initiative taken by Prime Minister Modi leading to the formation of International Solar Alliance. They acknowledged the importance of this Alliance in advancing new solar technologies worldwide.
- Prime Minister Modi expressed appreciation to the Qatar Museums for its decision to celebrate Qatar-India Year of Culture in 2019. Both leaders welcomed the signing of the Agreement of Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Custom Matters; the MoU on Tourism Cooperation; and the First Executive Programme for the MoU in the field of Youth and Sports between the Government of the State of Qatar and the Government of the Republic of India.
- The two leaders noted that people-to-people contacts were at the heart of India-Qatar relations and both sides would continue to nurture these relations. Both leaders welcomed the signing of the MoU for Cooperation in Skill Development and Recognition of Qualifications.
- Prime Minister Modi expressed his sincere gratitude to His Highness the Emir for the warm welcome and gracious hospitality. He invited His Highness the Emir to pay an official visit to India at mutually convenient time, which was gladly accepted.

4.9.B Prime Minister of Qatar's visit to India (2-3 December 2016)

- On the invitation of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the Prime Minister and Minister of Interior of the State of Qatar, HE Sheikh Abdullah Bin Nasser Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, accompanied by accompanied senior Ministers, along with a high-level delegation undertook an official visit to India from 2-3 December, 2016.
- The two Prime Ministers held a delegation level meeting and reviewed the state of bilateral relations and exchanged views on ways and means to further expand and consolidate the close, multi-faceted relationship between the two countries, underpinned by age-old trade and people-to-people contacts.
- Both sides also agreed to increase the level of participation in infrastructure development projects on either side and undertook to exchange information on available investment opportunities in a regular and timely manner.
- Stress was given to take full advantage of the opportunities available, particularly in the area of infrastructure, special

economic zones, civil aviation, energy, petrochemicals, health and pharmaceuticals, information technology, education, tourism and agriculture. It was also emphasised to take practical steps to build on the framework provided by the Agreement on Defence Cooperation signed in November 2008 by enhancing cooperation in the fields of specialized training, exchange of information and joint production of defence equipment.

- The visit provided another opportunity for the two sides to exchange views on regional and international issues of mutual interest, with particular reference to the security situation in West Asia, Middle East and South Asia.

4.9.C Agreements/MOUs

- Three Agreements/MOUs were signed, including the Agreement for Exemption of Visa Requirement for Holders of Diplomatic, Special and Official Passport Holders, and MOUs on Technical Cooperation in Cyber Space and Combating Cyber Crime; and between the Supreme Committee for Delivery & Legacy of Qatar and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) in addition to a Letter of Intent for e-visas for tourists and businessmen. Separately, an MoU between Qatar Ports Management Company ("Mwani Qatar") and Indian Ports Global Private Limited was concluded.
- During the visit, Prime Minister of Qatar called on Hon'ble President Shri Pranab Mukherjee.
- The Home Minister of India, Shri Rajnath Singh, called on the Prime Minister of Qatar during the visit. The two sides resolved to work closely to combat terrorism and radicalization. They discussed cooperation on counter-terrorism, intelligence sharing and countering terror-financing and money laundering, apart from other transnational crimes.
- The visit of the Prime Minister of Qatar to India further reinforces the tradition of regular visits at the highest levels, and the extensive exchange of views between the leadership of the two countries, as we seek to build a strong partnership for the 21st century.

4.10 Saudi Arabia

4.10.A Official visit of Foreign Minister of Saudi Arabia to India (March 07-08, 2016), March 07, 2016

At the invitation of Hon'ble External Affairs Minister Smt Sushma Swaraj, H.E. Mr. Adel bin Ahmed Al-Jubeir, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia paid his first official visit to New Delhi on 7-8 March, 2016.

During the visit, the two ministers discussed the entire gamut of bilateral relations as well as regional and international issues of mutual interest. Being the fourth largest partner with bilateral trade reaching US\$ 40 billion in 2014-15. Saudi Arabia is also

India's largest crude oil supplier accounting for about one-fifth of our total imports.

Indians form the largest expatriate community in Saudi Arabia and their positive contribution in the progress and development of their host country is well recognized. There are over 2.96 million Indian nationals presently working in Saudi Arabia.

4.10.B Official Visit of Prime Minister to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (April 2-3, 2016), March 22, 2016

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid an official visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 2-3 April, 2016 at the invitation of King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud.

This was the highest-level visit from India to Saudi Arabia after the visit of the then Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to Riyadh in 2010.

During the visit, Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi held discussions with King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest.

4.10.CA Joint Statement signed during the visit outlined the following key points.

- Both leaders expressed satisfaction at the regular exchange of high-level visits between the two countries, underlining that the Delhi Declaration (2006) and the Riyadh Declaration (2010) elevated the mutually beneficial bilateral relations to the level of 'Strategic Partnership'. The two leaders agreed to enhance cooperation to strengthen maritime security in the Gulf and the Indian Ocean regions, vital for the security and prosperity of both countries. They further agreed to promote bilateral collaboration for humanitarian assistance and evacuation in natural disasters and conflict situations.
- The two leaders expressed strong belief in combating terrorism, both at the bilateral level and within the multilateral system of the UN.
- The two sides welcomed the signing of an MOU on cooperation in exchange of intelligence related to money laundering, related crimes and terrorism financing.
- The two leaders directed their relevant agencies to coordinate efforts to counter radicalization and misuse of religion by groups and countries for inciting hatred, perpetrating and justifying terrorism for pursuing political aims.
- Both leaders welcomed the meeting of Saudi India Business Council in New Delhi in December 2015 and agreed that Council was a useful platform for furthering trade and economic cooperation.
- Both leaders welcomed the signing of the framework agreement between the General Investment Authority in Saudi Arabia and

Invest India aimed at facilitating investments by the private sectors in the two countries.

- The two leaders welcomed the signing of an agreement on labour cooperation for recruitment of General Category Workers. Both sides also welcomed the establishment of a Joint Working Group on Consular issues under the umbrella of the India-Saudi Arabia Joint Commission to discuss consular issues on a regular basis.

A list of agreements and MoUs were signed between the two countries on April 3, 2016. They were on:

- Agreement on Labour Co-operation between the Ministry of Labour of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India for Recruitment of General Category Workers.
- Technical Cooperation Program between the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and the Saudi Standards, Metrology and Quality Organization (SASO).
- Executive Program for Cooperation in the Field of Handicrafts between the Export Promotion Council for Handicraft (EPCH) in the Republic of India and Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage.
- MoU between Financial Intelligence Unit - India and the Financial Intelligence Unit-Saudi Arabia concerning Cooperation in the Exchange of Intelligence related to Money Laundering, Terrorism Financing and Related Crimes
- Framework for Investment Promotion Cooperation between Invest India and the Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (SAGIA).

4.11 Sultanate of Oman

4.11.A Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar Visits Oman 20-22 May 2016

Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar paid an official visit to the Sultanate of Oman from 20 to 22 May 2016.

During the visit, the Defence Minister met Deputy Prime Minister Sayyid Fahd bin Mahmoud Al Said, Minister of Royal Office Lt Gen. Sultan bin Mohammed Al Nu'amani and held bilateral talks with Minister Responsible for Defense Affairs Bader Bin Saud Bin Harib Al Busaidi. During the meetings all aspects of bilateral defence cooperation including enhanced military to military exchanges were discussed. Both sides also exchanged views on regional developments of mutual interest.

The Minister visited the Military Technology College and the Sultan's Armed Forces Museum in Muscat. He also attended a reception at Sultan Qaboos Port to mark the goodwill visit to Oman of INS Delhi, INS Deepak and INS Tarkash.

Four MoUs were signed: on defence cooperation:

- i. MoU on between the Ministry of Defense of Sultanate of Oman and Ministry of Defence of Republic of India;
- ii. MoU between the Royal Oman Police (Coast Guard) and the

- Indian Coast Guard in the field of Marine Crime Prevention at Sea;
- iii. MoU between the Government of the Sultanate of Oman and the Government of the Republic of India on Maritime Issues; and
 - iv. Protocol between the Government of the Sultanate of Oman represented by Royal Air Force of Oman and the Government of India represented by the Indian Air Force on Flight Safety information Exchange.

India and Oman noted that defence cooperation is a key facet of their bilateral strategic partnership, which is based on historical ties as well as mutual trust and shared interests. It was agreed that the two sides would further expand and consolidate their ongoing bilateral defence cooperation.

4.12 Syria

4.12.A Visit of Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic to India (11-14 January 2016)

H.E. Mr. Walid Al Moualem, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Syrian Arab Republic paid an official visit to India from 11th to 14th January 2016.

4.13 Turkey

4.13.A Minister of State for External Affairs Gen. V. K. Singh attended the the Senior Officials Meeting of the Heart of Asia Istanbul Process held in Itanbul on April 26, 2016. In teh inaugural address he highlighted the following:

- The theme of the 2016 Heart of Asia process is "Addressing Challenges, Achieving Prosperity". As participating countries of the Heart of Asia Process, India along with the other nation is aware that the situation in Afghanistan, owing to its location at the Heart of Asia, has enormous bearing on regional peace, security and economic growth.
- India feels honoured to be an active participant in the Heart of Asia Process and also to be the lead country for the Trade, Commerce and Investment Opportunities CBM of the Heart of Asia process. This CBM is aimed at more regional economic interaction and cooperation. The objective is to create conducive conditions for Afghanistan to thrive on trade and not depend on aid.
- The region has to be the centrepiece of all efforts to enhance trade, commerce and investment among regional countries. Better connectivity can enable more investment and private sector participation. It can help fully harness Afghanistan's trade and transit potential.

4.14 United Arab Emirates (UAE)

4.14.A Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces Visit to India

At the invitation of Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of the Republic of India, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces paid his first state visit to India from February 10-12, 2016. A number of agreements were signed during the visit in the following areas:

- MoU on Technical Cooperation in Cyber Space and Combating Cyber Crime between the Ministry of Interior of the UAE and the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of India.
- MoU on Establishing a Framework for Facilitating the Participation of UAE institutional investors in Infrastructure Investments in India between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the UAE.
- General Framework Agreement on Renewable Energy Cooperation to provide for bilateral cooperation through extensive projects, investments, cooperation in R & D in renewable and clean energy.
- MoU between Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the UAE Space Agency on Cooperation in the Exploration and use of Outer Space for Peaceful Purposes. The MoU establishes a framework for cooperation in space science, technology and applications including remote sensing; satellite communication and satellite based navigation.
- MoU for bilateral cooperation between Insurance Regulatory Authority of India (IRDA) and the Insurance Authority of UAE. The MoU aims at promoting cooperation between the concerned authorities in the field of insurance supervision through a framework for cooperation and by increasing mutual understanding through the exchange of regulatory and relevant supervisory information to ensure compliance with their respective laws and regulations.
- Executive Programme for Cultural Cooperation (EPCC) between India and UAE. The Cultural Exchange Programme 2016 – 2018 follows from the existing bilateral cultural agreement (1975) and provides for a range of cultural exchange activities under the new EPCC.
- Letter of Intent between the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), the Government of India, and The National Qualifications Authority (NQA), Government of UAE on Cooperation for skill development and recognition of qualifications. The Letter of Intent provides collaboration on skill developments and mutual recognition of qualifications.
- MoU between Dubai Economic Council (DEC) and Export-Import bank of India. The MoU provides for both parties to exchange information on trade and business opportunities and to further the

goal of facilitating procurement of Indian goods and services by Dubai Government.

- MoU on Indian Rupee (INR)/UAE Dirham (AED) Bilateral Currency Swap Arrangement between Reserve Bank of India and Central Bank of the United Arab Emirates. This MoU promotes bilateral financial relations through currency swap arrangement between the RBI & Central Bank of UAE.

4.14.B Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar Visits UAE 22-23 May 2016

Minister of Defence Manohar Parrikar visited UAE from 22 to 23 May 2016. He had meetings with Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of UAE Armed Forces Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, and Minister of State for Defence Mr. Mohammed Ahmad Al Bowardi. He discussed with them bilateral defence cooperation and regional and international issues of mutual interest. An MoU on the Mutual Protection of Classified Information was signed between both the sides. The Minister also held interaction with the Indian community in the UAE.

4.14.C Official visit of M.J. Akbar, Minister of State for External Affairs to United Arab Emirates (18-20 October, 2016)

Shri M.J. Akbar, Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs had his first official visit to the United Arab Emirates from 18-20 October, 2016.

During the visit, he met his counterpart UAE leadership and held official discussions covering the entire gamut of bilateral, regional and international matters of mutual interest. In addition, he participated in the second edition of the India-UAE Economic Forum in Dubai from 19-20 October as keynote speaker.

India enjoys close and multifaceted bilateral ties with UAE, anchored on regular high-level visits and extensive people-to-people contacts. The recent visits of Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi to UAE in August 2015 and His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi to India in February 2016 have elevated this relationship to a comprehensive strategic partnership.

Our well-balanced bilateral trade amounting to US\$ 50 billion in 2015-16, make UAE our third largest trading partner. UAE is among the largest investors in India in terms of foreign direct investments. It contributes significantly to India's energy security and is the fifth largest supplier of crude oil to India in 2015-16.

About 2.6 million strong and vibrant Indian community forms the largest expatriate group in the UAE. Their positive and well-appreciated contribution in the development of their host country has been an important anchor of our excellent bilateral engagement.

This visit will provide a useful opportunity to further cement our mutually beneficial bilateral ties with UAE.

4.14.D Remarks by M. J. Akbar, Minister of State for External Affairs at India-UAE Business Forum, Dubai (October 20, 2016)

It is a privilege to address the intellectual and business elite of India and UAE at our Economic Forum. India and UAE are united by a bridge as ancient as sea trade, as steadfast as our values, as powerful as our heritage and as vibrant as our friendship. Together, we can add a new dimension to our region's economy and help turn the 21st century into an Asian era.

The transformative visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to UAE in August last year cemented the foundations of this new future. This special and strategic relationship will take another quantum leap forward when His Highness the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan comes to Delhi in January next year as Chief Guest of our Republic Day celebrations.

Our leaders set a target of \$75 billion for investment; it is our responsibility to turn that soaring vision into reality within a visible timeframe.

5. AFRICA

The year 2016 saw Africa taking centre stage in India's diplomacy. The series of high level visits undertaken by the President, the Vice President and the Prime Minister of India to different regions of Africa added a new impetus to the relations. The visits covered 12 countries in different regions of Africa. The President Mr Pranab Mukherjee made a tour to Anglophone and Francophone West African and Southern African countries, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire and Namibia. The Vice President Mr Hamid Ansari visited the Arab and West African countries, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Nigeria and Mali. The Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi took a trip to Eastern and Southern African Indian Ocean littoral countries, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania and Kenya. This unprecedented diplomatic outreach indicated India's commitment to have a sustained interaction with Africa in follow up to the successful organization of the Third India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-III) in New Delhi in October, 2015. It is significant to note that most of these visits undertaken were after a long hiatus. Particularly, in the case of West and North African countries it is seen that despite the growing economic relations, high level visits from both sides remained the missing link in the relations. In this context the visits by the President and Vice President to the countries in the West and North African region assumed immense significance.

5.1 Ghana

Visit of President Pranab Mukherjee to Ghana

President Pranab Mukherjee visited Ghana on June 12-14, 2016. It was the first ever State Visit by a President of India. The President of India was received on his arrival by H.E. Mr.

Kwesi Bekoe Amissah-Arthur, Vice-President of the Republic of Ghana, Hon. Hanna Serwaah Tetteh, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Ghana and other Ministers, senior leaders and officials of the Government of Ghana. He was accorded a 21 gun salute, and inspected a guard of honour.

During the visit President Mukherjee unveiled a bust of Mahatma Gandhi in the University of Ghana and also planted a sapling at the Flagstaff House, the Ghanaian Presidential Complex which is an iconic building constructed with Indian assistance as a mark of his first visit to the Country. He addressed the India-Ghana Joint Business Forum, and a gathering of students and faculty at the University of Ghana, Legon. He also interacted with the Indian Community in Ghana at a reception hosted in his honour by the High Commissioner of India, H.E. Shri K. Jeeva Sagar.

Three MoUs were signed and they are :

- Exemption from visa requirement for holders of diplomatic and official passports
- Establishment of a Joint commission.
- Memorandum of understanding between the Foreign Service Institute, Ministry of External Affairs, the Republic of India and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, the Republic of Ghana

5.1.A In his address at the State Banquet hosted by the President of Ghana, University of Ghana, and India-Ghana Joint Forum some of the key points President Mukherjee underlined are the following :

The India-Ghana brotherhood is nurtured by the shared aspirations of their peoples and guided by the vision of their Founding Fathers.

India, as a victim of terrorism for over three decades, shares Ghana's concern that this has become a global menace. India stands in solidarity with Ghana as it confronts this challenge.

India's capacity-building programmes - Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC) and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) Scholarships scheme - have become household names across Africa. Every year, 250 Ghanaian government and semi-government officials receive training in India while about 20 scholars pursue full-time under-graduate, Masters and Ph.D programmes on scholarships. The Government of India has decided to increase seat allocations for Ghana to 300 ITEC slots and increase the number of annual scholarships under other Indian schemes to forty.

'Brand India' is a trusted name today across the developing as well as the developed world because it adds value to the resources of the host countries; it works and grows together with the local companies; it brings appropriate technologies which create jobs and has the adaptability to absorb local talent; it rejuvenates and invigorates local industry without constraining their growth in any way.

5.1.B India and Ghana signed a Joint Statement during President Mukherjee's visits and the major highlights spelt out are: ⁹

- The two leaders underlined the need for regular and consistent high-level interaction between the Governments of Ghana and India and welcomed the setting up of an institutional framework in the form of a Joint Commission to periodically review various aspects of the multi-dimensional relationship. Both sides agreed that mutually convenient dates for the first meeting of the Joint Commission .
- The two leaders expressed satisfaction that bilateral trade and investments have been steadily growing; however, these were still below the existing potential. India's cumulative investments in Ghana till date have exceeded US\$ 1 billion, whereas bilateral trade crossed US \$ 3 billion in 2015-16. The Indian President suggested a target of US\$ 5 billion by the year 2020.
- The Government of Ghana placed on record its sincere gratitude for India's support for major socio-economic projects such as the Komenda Sugar Plant and Elmina Fish Processing Plant.
- The Government of India announced an increase in ITEC slots from 250 to 300 and ICCR full time scholarships from 20 to 40, each year.
- Both leaders noted that international terrorism is a scourge, a threat to the entire civilized world. The two leaders called for expanding bilateral co-operation in the field of defence and security.
- The President of India appreciated the role played by the vibrant Indian community in Ghana in strengthening the bilateral relationship, and conveyed his appreciation for the warmth, goodwill and support extended to the Indian Diaspora by the Government and people of Ghana

5.2 Cote d'Ivoire

Visit of President Pranab Mukherjee to Cote d'Ivoire

The President of the Republic of India His Excellency Mr. Pranab Mukherjee paid a first ever Presidential visit to Côte d'Ivoire from 14-15 June 2016, at the invitation of the President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, His Excellency, Mr. Alassane Ouattara.

⁹<http://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visit-detail.htm?26915/Joint+Statement+between+India+and+Ghana+during+Presidents+visit+to+Ghana>

President Mukherjee was conferred with the National Order of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, the highest order of the country. President Mukherjee was also handed over the symbolic Key to the Abidjan city and conferred honorary citizenship of Abidjan.

5.2.A In his address at State Banquet on June 14, 2016, President Mukherjee outlined the following key points.¹⁰

The bilateral trade is steadily increasing and is expected to touch one billion US dollars in the next few years.

Both recognize the imperatives of strengthening the UN system and other international organizations. In this context, India stands ready to shoulder greater responsibilities in the specialized organs of the United Nations, particularly its Security Council.

Both Ivory Coast and India share common concerns in our fight against international terrorism and have been co-ordinating closely in regional and multilateral fora on this and other key issues including disarmament, climate change and sustainable development.

5.2.B Both sides signed a Joint Statement signed and some of the major highlights of the Joint Statemnet are :¹¹

President Mukherjee and Mr. Alassane Ouattara laid down a target of doubling the trade turnover from current level by 2020. The two leaders agreed on the importance of an early meeting of the Joint Commission to expand bilateral trade and economic ties and to achieve the desired target of US \$ 2 billion bilateral trade by 2020.

The leadership of Côte d'Ivoire appreciated India's assistance in the development of Côte d'Ivoire through the concessional Lines of Credit . India has extended Lines of Credit amounting to US \$ 136.2 million in diverse fields such as agro-processing, transport, rural electrification and transmission, fisheries etc. Another Line of Credit of US \$ 102 million for development of low-land agriculture is being processed by both the countries.

5.3 Namibia

Visit of President Pranab Mukherjee to Namibia

President Pranab Mukherjee visited Namibia on June 16, 2016. It was the first visit by President of India since 1995. They discussed the need to expand cooperation in renewable energy, agriculture, capacity

¹⁰<http://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visit-detail.htm?26912/Banquet+Speech+by+President+during+his+visit+to+Cote+dIvoire+June+14+2016>

¹¹<http://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visit-detail.htm?26932/Joint+Statement+between+India+and+Cote+d+Ivoire+during+Presidents+visit+to+Cote+dIvoire>

building, development cooperation and multilateral issues such as UN reforms, terrorism, climate change and sustainable development. President Mukherjee raised the issue of supply of Uranium to India and was assured by President Geingob that Namibia would explore ways to supply the same. It was agreed that a technical team from both sides would meet at the earliest to discuss the way forward. He also addressed the Namibia University of Science & Technology where he highlighted India's achievements in the field of education, economy, agriculture and science & technology.

He announced an increase of ITEC slots from 125 to 200, a grant of US\$ 20,000 for the Indira Gandhi Maternity Clinic, assistance of 1000 tonnes of rice for mitigating the drought situation as well as 100 tonnes of essential medicines.

Two MOUs were signed in the presence of President Mukherjee between the Namibia Institute of Public Administration and Management (NIPAM) and Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIMA) and on the establishment of a Centre of Excellence in Information Technology in Namibia.

5.4 Nigeria

Visit of Vice President of India to Nigeria

Mr. M. Hamid Ansari, Honorable Vice President of India, visited Nigeria from 26 to 29 September 2016. The two Vice Presidents, addressed jointly the India-Nigeria Joint Business Forum at Abuja hosted by the High Commission of India together with the apex chambers of commerce from India (CII and ASSOCHAM) and their counterparts from Nigeria. Vice President Osinbajo hosted an official dinner in honour of the visiting Vice President of India. A joint statement was signed by both leaders.

Both Vice Presidents reiterated that the Abuja Declaration for Strategic Partnership of 2007 continues to provide the framework for deepening the bilateral ties.

The Vice President of India conveyed the important role of Nigeria in India's energy security. Both leaders agreed to strengthen the existing cooperation in oil and gas sector, and in particular to explore Government to Government agreements on oil and gas purchase from Nigeria.

The Government of Nigeria conveyed appreciation for India's concessional loan of US\$100 million extended earlier for three power

projects in Nigeria. Both sides agreed to complete relevant process for early disbursement of the concessionary loans.

The Vice President of India encouraged Nigeria to take advantage of the US \$ 10 billion concessional loan offered by India for African countries during the Third India-Africa Forum Summit in sectors of interest to it.

The two Vice Presidents welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Bureau of Indian Standards and Standards Organisation of Nigeria. Representatives of both countries also signed a letter of Intent directing their officials to continue negotiations on the following Agreements/MOUs:

- (i) Renewable Energy;
- (ii) Transfer of Sentenced Persons;
- (iii) Customs cooperation; and
- (iv) Health cooperation.

Both sides agreed to explore the possibility of entering into a Visa Waiver Agreement for diplomatic passport Holders.

Both leaders underlined the need for regular interaction of leaders and senior officials of both countries, and recognized the need to hold the next Joint Commission Meeting at a mutually convenient date in early 2017.

5.5 Mali

Visit of Vice President of India to Mali

Vice-President, Shri M Hamid Ansari, accompanied by Smt. Salma Ansari, visited Republic of Mali from 29-30 September, 2016 at the invitation of Mr. Modibo Keita, Prime Minister of Republic of Mali. He was accompanied by Shri Arjun Ram Meghwal, Minister of State for Finance and four members of Parliament, senior officials and media.

In the bilateral talks Mr Ansari and Mr Keita covered the entire gamut of bilateral relationship. A Memorandum of Understanding on Standards and a Cultural Exchange Programme (CEP) were signed. Condemning destruction of historical sites, India announced a cash assistance of US\$ 500,000/- towards revival of world heritage site of Timbuktu. India also announced gifting of vehicles and IT equipment to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, gifting of ambulances for general public use and assistance for setting up of English Language Learning

Lab. India's assistance was gratefully acknowledged. Both sides agreed to further strengthen bilateral relations building on the historical and cultural links, and learning from each other in the spirit of South-South cooperation.

5.6 Mozambique

Visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Mozambique

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Republic of Mozambique in Maputo on July 07, 2016. During this visit, both sides explored the possibilities of having more frequent people to people exchanges. He offered the use of Indian training institutions for capacity building of the staff of the Assembly of the Republic, through training scholarships offered by Government of India. Both leaders agreed that these opportunities of enhancing exchange should be developed further through diplomatic channels. Three MOUs/Agreements were signed during the visit (i) MoU between India and Mozambique on drug demand reduction and prevention of illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals and related matters. (ii) MoU between Government of India and Government of Mozambique in the field of Youth Affairs and Sports and (iii) Long-term agreement for purchase of pulses from Mozambique.

5.7 Kenya

Visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Kenya

PM Narendra Modi paid a State Visit to Kenya on 10th to 11th July 2016, which was the first Prime Ministerial visit after 35 years.

The following bilateral instruments were concluded during the visit:

- i. MoU on Defence Cooperation.
- ii. MoU on Cooperation in the field of National Housing Policy Development and Management.
- iii. Agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with Respect to Taxes on Income
- iv. MoU between Bureau of Indian Standards and Kenya Bureau of Standards
- v. Agreement on Exemption of Visa for holders of Diplomatic Passports
- vi. Line of Credit Agreement for US\$ 15 million to IDB Capital Limited, for development of small and medium enterprises [SMEs]

- vii. Line of Credit Agreement for US\$ 29.95 million to the Government of Kenya for upgrade of Rift Valley Textiles Factory [RIVATEX]

As part of defence cooperation Prime Minister Narendra Modi handed over 30 field ambulances to the Kenya Defence Forces. The Kenyan side noted India's offer of an LoC for acquisition of defence equipment.

On Development Assistance, India proposed to extend Lines of Credit (LoC) for Geothermal Projects and for agricultural mechanisation. The Kenyan President lauded the signing of US\$ 29.95 million LOC to upgrade of Rift Valley Textiles Factory (RIVATEX) and the US\$ 15 million LOC to IDB Capital Limited, for development of small and medium enterprises [SMEs]. He also appreciated the power transmission line projects being executed by Indian companies under a Line of Credit of US\$ 61.6 million.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the gifting of a telecobalt cancer therapy machine – the Bhabhatron II; a donation of essential/ARV medicines and medical equipment and capacity building/training programmes in the health sector. The Indian side assured that positive consideration will be given to extend a LoC for the establishment of 100 bed Cancer Hospital in Kenya.

President Uhuru Kenyatta requested India to consider expanding training and capacity building programmes in areas such as medicine, pharmacy, dentistry and ICT which are relevant to Kenya's national development priorities.

President Uhuru Kenyatta congratulated India or its leadership role in the launching of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) on 30th November 2015.

5.8 Tanzania

Visit of Prime Minister Modi to Tanzania

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Tanzania on July 10, 2016. During his visit he held official talks with President Magufuli. The Joint Communiqué issued during the visit stated the following key points.

Both sides expressed satisfaction at the conclusion of bilateral agreements that covered fields of water, small scale industries, development partnership and economic cooperation. Those agreements are :

- (i) MoU on Cooperation in the field of water resource management and development between the two countries
- (ii) MoU on Visa waiver agreement for Diplomatic/Official passport holders between the two countries.
- (iii) Agreement on Joint Action Plan (JAP) between National Small Industries Corporation of India (NSIC) and Small Industries Development Organization Tanzania (SIDO).
- (iv) MoU between the Government of Tanzania and the Government of India for Establishment of Vocational Training Centre at Zanzibar.
- (v) LOC of US \$92 million for rehabilitation and improvement of water supply system in Zanzibar

The two leaders recognized positive developments in terms of bilateral trade, investment and appreciated the contribution of the Indian duty free tariff preference scheme towards boosting considerably Tanzania's exports to India in recent years.

The two Leaders commended the recent completion of Upper Ruvu potable water supply project that was executed with support from India through concessional credit, which will more than double the supply of clean water to the city of Dar es Salaam and its surroundings. They welcomed the extension of Indian concessional credit facility for the water supply project in Zanzibar. They commended the establishment of IT Resource Centre at Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science & Technology, Arusha achieved with grant from the Government of India. They also appreciated the cooperation in hydrography in terms of developing navigational charts and capacity building.

Prime Minister Modi announced the donation of a radiation therapy machine, 'Bhabhatron II' to Bugando Medical Centre, Mwanza by India that was being installed currently and committed to further gifting of essential medicines, ambulances, and medical equipment to Tanzania.

5.9 South Africa

Visit of Prime Minister Modi to South Africa

PM Modi visited South Africa from 7 to 9 July 2016. During the visit, the following Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding were signed by the two sides: (i) MoU on ICT, (ii) Programme of Cooperation in Arts and Culture, (iii) MoU on Tourism and (iv) MoU on Grass Root Innovation (S&T)

The joint statement signed stated the following key points. They hailed Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between South Africa and India. Both countries further committed to elevate efforts in achieving the goals set out in the Declaration noting that in 2017 the twentieth commemoration of the signing of the Red Fort Declaration will be celebrated.

South Africa welcomed the e-Tourist visa facility extended to South Africa. Prime Minister Modi appreciated South Africa for extending 10-year BRICS multiple entry Business Visa to business persons from BRICS countries.

Underscoring IBSA as an effective Forum, embodying the democratic-spirit of three large democracies from the global-South, they reaffirmed their strong commitment to further consolidate the IBSA process. Both leaders agreed that South Africa will host the 8th Trilateral Commission Meeting, and the 6th IBSA Summit will be hosted by India next year.

6. INDIAN OCEAN ISLAND STATES

6.1. Maldives

Mr. Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom, the President of Republic of Maldives visited India to meet President Pranab Mukherjee at Rashtrapati Bhavan April 11, 2016.

The agreements/MoUs that were signed between the two countries were:

- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Maldives for Avoidance of Double Taxation of income derived from International Air Transport.
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Maldives for the Exchange of Information with respect to Taxes.
- Bilateral Agreement related to Orbit Frequency Coordination of "South Asia Satellite" proposed at 48oE.
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Maldives for

Cooperation in the area of conservation and restoration of ancient mosques and joint research and exploratory surveys in Maldives.

- Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Maldives on cooperation in the field of Tourism.
- Action Plan between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Maldives for Defence Cooperation.

7. LATIN AMERICA/CARIBBEAN

7.1 Brazil

7.1.A Official Visit of President of Brazil to India, October 17, 2016

H.E. Mr. Michel Temer, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, was on an official visit to India on 17 October 2016 at the invitation of H.E. Mr. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India. He was accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Jose Serra, Minister of Agriculture Mr. Blairo Maggi, Minister of Industry, Foreign Trade and Services Mr. Marcos Pereira and large official and business delegations. The major highlights of the joint statement signed were:

- The leaders agreed to maintain close cooperation and coordination on global issues.
- They underscored the need for urgent reform of the United Nations. In this context, they welcomed the creation of a Group of Friends on Security Council Reform.
- The leaders stressed the need to further diversify the trade basket. In this connection, they expressed satisfaction at the progress made at the recently held meeting of the Trade Monitoring Mechanism (TMM). India apprised Brazil of the liberalized FDI policies & 'Make in India' initiatives inviting more investments from Brazil. The Brazilian side, on its turn, presented the "Project Grow", proposing new rules, improving the governance and approving some projects as national priority, which brings new opportunities for Indian investments in Brazil. The two leaders agreed to pursue the establishment of business friendly visa procedures based on reciprocity, in order to facilitate bilateral trade and investment.
- The two sides also agreed to explore areas where there is immense potential of benefit to both countries, such as production of pulses in Brazil and Brazilian investments in the poultry sector in India. They also welcomed with satisfaction the willingness on both sides to reach an understanding on sanitary and phytosanitary measures, especially in the pork and apples markets. They agreed that opportunities should be explored for promoting investment cooperation in food

processing, including in mega food parks and cold chain infrastructure.

- The two sides agreed to further explore cooperation in the domain of energy. Brazil's expertise in ethanol was acknowledged. The two sides also emphasized the importance of cooperation in the oil and gas sector.
- The leaders appreciated that the Joint Commission on Science and Technology to be held in 2017 would signal continuous cooperation.
- India and Brazil decided to join forces with a view to the development of five chemical medicines and five biological products to treat diseases, including hepatitis C, tuberculosis, cancer and HIV. Both countries also decided to intensify the successful cooperation between their regulatory agencies in order to streamline procedures related to registration and trade of pharmaceutical products and medical devices produced by both countries.
- They agreed to expand cooperation beyond data sharing for mutual benefits and training on space technology applications in various aspects.
- India and Brazil underlined their shared commitments to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and reaffirmed the right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
- President Michel Temer expressed his condolences to the Indian Government and the families of the victims of the Uri attack, and stated that Brazil strongly condemns terrorist attacks of all forms.
- The two countries also remain committed to international cooperation on Climate Change as evidenced in India's International Solar Alliance initiative and Brazil's Biofuture Platform.
- Reaffirmed their commitment to build a people-centred, inclusive, and development-oriented Information Society. India and Brazil have great interest in deepening the bilateral cooperation in ICT, cyber security and digital economy related matters.

7.1.B List of MoUs signed between India and Brazil

October 17, 2016

1. Genetic Resources, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, Natural Resources and Fisheries
 2. Pharmaceutical Products Regulation
 3. Cattle Genomics and Assisted Reproductive Technologies
- Investment Cooperation and Facilitation Treaty

8. NORTH AMERICA

8.1 Mexico

At the invitation of His Excellency Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President of the United Mexican States, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, paid a working visit to Mexico on 8th June 2016, with the objective to continue the dialogue held by the two leaders on the margins of the 70th regular session of the United Nations General Assembly on 28th September 2015. The visit was followed by the visit of the Foreign Minister of Mexico to India in March 2016. This is a positive sign of the growth in the bilateral relations between India and Mexico.

8.1.A Minister of Foreign Affairs of Mexico visited India from 11-12 March, 2016

The Foreign Minister of the Government of Mexico, H.E. Ms Claudia Ruiz Massieu Salinas, visited India on 11-12 March 2016 and had a substantive bilateral meeting with Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Hon. External Affairs Minister of India. During their meeting, the External Affairs Minister and the Mexican Foreign Minister undertook a comprehensive review of the entire gamut of bilateral relations including political, commercial & trade, financial, technical and other areas to further broaden and strengthen cooperation. The Ministers expressed satisfaction at the progress in bilateral relations and agreed to exchange high level visits in the near future. They also discussed important regional and international issues of mutual interest. She also interacted with the private sector in a business event organized with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and delivered a lecture in the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) on the subject 'Mexico in the international context and its relations with India'.

8.1.B Visit of Prime Minister to Mexico (June 08, 2016)

Both leaders had a detailed exchange of views on the regional issues of mutual interest, including the political and economic developments in Latin America, the CELAC and the Pacific Alliance, as well as the current situation in the Asia-Pacific region.

They underscored the increasing importance of diversifying the economic exchanges to promote trade; stressed the necessity of developing a greater connectivity and encouraging cooperation in the infrastructure sector, among small and medium enterprises, pharmaceutical products, energy, automobile sector, Information and

Communication Technology, agriculture, food processing and in other related sectors.

The two sides agreed to explore ways and means to boost the objectives of the International Solar Alliance.

Both sides stressed the importance of promoting increased exchanges between the peoples of the two countries for better understanding and strengthening of bilateral links in the areas of culture, education and tourism.

Both leaders welcomed the opportunities offered by the convergence between the National Digital Strategy of Mexico and the Digital India Initiative, which share common objectives; welcomed collaboration in space science, earth observation, climate and environmental studies, and the efficient use of space-related resources available in India as well as in Mexico for remote sensing, advance warning for disaster prevention and launch of satellites between the Mexican Space Agency (AEM) and the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).

Considering that both countries have huge diaspora communities abroad, the Leaders agreed on exchanging views, information and share best practices with respect to the participation of networks, organizations and individuals in their diasporas in the development of communities of their origin and their residence, as well as for the welfare and protection of their respective nationals in foreign countries.

They pledged to continue promoting the shared goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation as solutions with multilateral perspective, as well as to continue promoting cooperation on international security issues.

They reiterated their strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reaffirmed the importance to have an effective multilateral system, with the United Nations at its core, and agreed on the importance of continuing supporting the progress in the process of comprehensive reforms of the United Nations Security Council.

9. MAJOR POWERS

9.1 China

Both India and China continued high-level visits and exchanges at bilateral as well as multilateral level in year 2016. President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Narendra Modi met three times respectively on the

sidelines of the SCO summit in Tashkent, G20 Summit in Hangzhou and BRICS summit in Goa (kindly see multilateral section of the report for details). President Mukherjee made a successful visit to China. Chinese foreign Minister Wang Yi visited India. Further, Fourth India-China Strategic and Economic Dialogue in New Delhi proved to be an important exercise.

9.1.A President Pranab Mukherjee's visit to China, 24-27 May 2016

Ten MoUs providing for enhanced faculty and student exchanges as well as collaboration in research and innovation were concluded between the higher education institutions of the two countries.

In his speech at the Peking University, President Mukherjee outlined a vision of a “people-centric partnership” with China and suggested eight steps to realize this goal; i. Enhancing mutual trust and mutual respect, ii. Expanding youth exchanges, iii. Promoting greater cooperation and co-production of audio-visual media, iv. Fostering greater intellectual and cultural exchanges, v. Expanding tourism contacts, vi. Encouraging greater civil society interaction on developmental challenges, vii. Stronger cooperation in multilateral fora, and viii. Broader trade and investment ties.

9.1.B Visit of Foreign Minister of China to India

Foreign Minister of China Mr. Wang Yi visited India on August 13, 2016. During the visit, the two sides discussed various issues of mutual interest including the multilateral meetings viz., G-20 Summit being held in China and BRICS Summit being held in India. On the issue of India's membership to NSG, the Chinese side explained their perspective and both sides agreed to continue discussions so that narrow down the areas of divergence on the issue.

9.1.C 4th India-China Strategic Economic Dialogue, October 13, 2016

The 4th India-China Strategic Economic Dialogue was held in Delhi, India on October 7th, 2016 under the theme "Development, Innovation and Cooperation for Mutual Benefit". The Mechanism of India- China Strategic Economic Dialogue (Hereinafter referred to as the "SED") was established in December 2010. During the 4th SED, the two sides exchanged views on global economic trends and the macro-economic situation of both countries and held in-depth discussions on enhancing bilateral cooperation.

The dialogue was carried out around five working groups and produced the followings concrete outcomes:

Working Group on Policy Coordination

NITI Aayog proposed closer interaction between NITI Aayog and NDRC on understanding China's huge success in development of coastal manufacturing zones, and learn from the above success.

Working Group on Infrastructure

The two sides reviewed achievements in areas such as feasibility study of raising speed of existing railways, feasibility study of high-speed railway, personnel training, and study on railway station redevelopment which have been under discussion since the 3rd SED.

Working Group on High-tech

Both sides focused on the development of information technology service industry and the current situation of software industry policies of the two countries, discussed the cooperation on tablet display, Solid state-light, rare earth industry technology and the necessity to meet the market demand.

In addition, an Action Plan on "Digital India" and "Internet Plus" between the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of India and National Development and Reform Commission of China was agreed, so as to foster cooperation between two sides was agreed upon. It was also noted that under the existing NASSCOM and Hainan MoU, a China-India Technology Park in Hainan Province is being established thereby creating potential opportunities for about 2000 highly skilled Indian IT professionals.

Working Group on Resource Conservation and Environmental Protection.

It was recognized that the disposal of municipal solid waste leads to valuable loss of urban land. Both sides agreed that the waste to energy plants present a possible solution to this problem.

Working Group on Energy

The two sides agreed for cooperation in renewable energy promotion, both in manufacturing and generation of wind and solar energy.

Agreed Documents.

In the presence of the meeting representatives, the two sides signed two intergovernmental documents for cooperation, one minutes of the SED and 18 documents for cooperation between enterprises.

9.2 European Union

A series of high level visits between India and Europe took place in 2016. French President Francois Hollande visited India in January 2016 as the Chief Guest at Republic Day celebrations. France took the initiatives to enhance bilateral cooperation in areas of defence, security, urban development, energy, etc. The 13th India-European Union Summit was held on 30 March 2016 in Brussels, after four years. India and the EU endorsed the Agenda for Action 2020. They adopted a joint declaration on counter terrorism. The Joint Declaration on a Clean Energy and Climate Partnership and the Joint Declaration on Indo-European Water Partnership were also adopted by India and the EU at the summit. Prime Minister Narendra Modi also paid an official visit to Belgium on 30 March, 2016. India and Belgium held a bilateral summit.

The Prime Minister of Finland, JuhaSipilä, visited India from in February 2016. He participated in the inauguration of the 'Make in India' Week held in Mumbai. India and Finland discussed to increase economic relations, cooperation in fight against international terrorism and regional issues. Prime Minister of Sweden Stefan Lofven visited India in February, 2016. Prime Minister Lofven participated in Make in India week. Both countries agreed to dialogue for enhancing cooperation in defence sector.

9.2.i India and EU (India- EU Summit)

9.2.i.A Prime Minister Modi visited Belgium to attend the 13th EU-India Summit, Brussels, 30 March 2016

The EU was represented by Donald Tusk, President of the European Council, and Jean-Claude Juncker, President of the European Commission and India was represented by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The leaders reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen the EU-India Strategic Partnership based on shared values and principles. The leaders endorsed the "EU-India Agenda for Action-2020" setting out a concrete road-map for the EU-India Strategic Partnership for the next five years.

The leaders welcomed the European Investment Bank's (EIB) commitment to supporting long-term investment in infrastructure crucial for environmentally sustainable social and economic development in India. They welcomed a total loan of € 450 Million as a participation in the construction of the first metro line in the city of Lucknow, with the signature by the EIB and the Government of India of a first tranche of € 200 Million.

Advancing Foreign Policy, Human Rights and Security Cooperation

The EU and India renewed the 2010 'Joint Declaration on International Terrorism' and decided to step up cooperation to counter violent extremism and radicalisation, the flow of Foreign Terrorist Fighters, sources of terrorist financing and arms supply.

The EU and India agreed to continue to exchange views on proliferation challenges. The EU and India welcomed the agreement facilitated by the EU High Representative on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) regarding the Iranian nuclear issue.

Growth and jobs through fostering trade and economic cooperation

The leaders acknowledged that trade in services is important not only for developed countries, but is rapidly emerging as a critical vehicle for developing countries for realizing development gains, including poverty reduction, and as the new frontier for enhancing their participation in international trade.

They encouraged EU and Indian businesses, including SMEs to deepen and support "Skill India".

The leaders welcomed the successful EU-India ICT dialogue and ICT business dialogue. They encouraged increasing links between the 'Digital India' initiative and the EU's 'Digital Single Market' through enhanced cooperation in cyber security, ICT standardisation, Internet Governance, research and innovation, (e.g. language technologies, establishment of a network of EU and Indian innovative start-up companies).

The EU and India aim to intensify their cooperation in frontier areas of S&T and in addressing current global challenges including health, and welcomed the setting up of mechanisms for jointly financing research and innovation projects.

The leaders committed to further strengthen the current EU-India dialogues in a wide array of sectors including pharmaceuticals, trade & industry issues, agriculture, fisheries, food and feed safety. They underlined the value of ongoing engagement on multilateral, macroeconomic and financial matters. The EU and India looked forward to the start of implementation, of their Horizontal Aviation Agreement.

Global Prosperity for coming Generations

Both sides welcomed the adoption of the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development and of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Both sides recognised the need to ensure coherence and mutually reinforce the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 adopted in March 2015 which underpins a risk-informed and resilient sustainable development agenda.

They called for an early meeting of the EU-India Energy Panel in order to continue joint activities in priority areas. They also welcomed the 'Joint Declaration between India and the EU on a Clean Energy and Climate Partnership'.

Enhancing citizens' involvement in the Strategic Partnership

The EU and India highlighted the importance of contacts between their citizens. They welcomed the establishment of a Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility.

9.2.i.CEU-India Agenda for Action-2020

The agenda further builds upon the shared objectives and outcomes of the Joint Action Plans of 2005 and 2008.

- ***Foreign Policy Cooperation***

Strengthen foreign policy cooperation, in areas of mutual interest such as Asia, Africa, the Middle East/West Asia, Europe, and other relevant areas including through regular dialogue at appropriate levels of the Ministry of External Affairs and the European External Action Service.

- ***Security Cooperation***

Strengthen cooperation and work towards tangible outcomes on shared objectives of non-proliferation & disarmament, counter-piracy, counter-terrorism (including counter radicalisation) and cyber security.

- ***Human Rights***

Reaffirm commitment to the EU-India Human Rights Dialogue as a key tool to promote shared human rights values and forge mutual understanding within the Strategic Partnership.

- ***Trade and Investment, Business & Economy***

Continue engagement at multilateral level, both sides remain engaged to discuss how to deepen their bilateral trade and investment relations in order to fully reap the benefits, including through negotiations on the Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement.

Strengthen cooperation in the area of pharmaceuticals, in particular in the context of regular meetings of the EU-India Joint Working Group on

pharmaceuticals, biotechnology and medical devices. In the context of India's 'Make in India' Initiative, strengthen exchanges and create favourable circumstances for investment, including public-private partnerships.

Global Issues/sector policy cooperation

➤ Climate Change

Develop cooperation on the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement including on Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) implementation. Recalling the Dubai Pathway on Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) adopted by the Parties to the Montreal Protocol in 2015, explore possibilities of cooperation.

➤ Energy

Under the aegis of the EU-India Energy Panel and its working groups, expand energy cooperation including on renewable energy, energy efficiency, smart grids, clean coal technology, energy security, and energy research & innovation and explore possibilities for joint initiatives supporting the “Sustainable Energy for All” objectives, launched by the UN Secretary General.

➤ Environment

Having regard to, inter alia, the 'Clean India', 'Clean Ganga' and 'Make in India' initiatives, step up exchanges including through the Joint Working Group on Environment and the multi-stakeholder Environment Forum in areas such as clean air, waste, chemicals, water, biodiversity, soil and land, including in an urban context.

Establish and implement an Indo-European Water Partnership (IEWP), enable more coherent and effective cooperation between the EU and India on water issues, notably in the context of India's 'Clean Ganga' flagship programme to rejuvenate the river and in achieving the objectives of India's National Water Mission.

- **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

Establish an EU-India dialogue to share experiences on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

- **Urban development**

Referring to the '100 Smart cities' flagship programme and EU urban policy development experience, enhance EU-India cooperation on Urban Development with increasing involvement of Indian States and cities, EU Member States and regions/cities and the EU's Committee of Region, building on regular dialogue on issues such as infrastructure, energy, sanitation and water management.

- **Research & Innovation**

Pursue India-EU Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation, based on the outcomes of the 10th India-EU Science & Technology Steering Committee Meeting held at New Delhi on November 23, 2015.

Work towards reciprocal access of researchers in selected EU Horizon 2020 & Indian programmes.

Finalise and start implementing the EURATOM-India agreement for research and development cooperation in the field of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

- **Information and communications technology (ICT)**

Create synergies between the "Digital India" initiative and the EU's "Digital Single Market", in particular by cooperating on economic and regulatory issues (e.g. market access), ICT standardisation, Internet Governance, research and innovation as well as innovative start-up companies ("Startup Europe India Network") and by making good use of the annual Joint ICT Working Group and Business Dialogue.

Work towards finalisation of a Joint Declaration for cooperation on the next generation of global communication networks (5G), including under the India-EU Joint ICT Working Group.

- **Transport**

Strengthen cooperation and dialogue on transport policy, covering, inter alia safety, legal and regulatory issues and infrastructure. On civil aviation, implement the EU-India horizontal agreement (signed in 2008) and enhance cooperation including on aviation safety.

- **Space**

Enhance space cooperation including earth observation and satellite navigation for the strengthening of interaction between the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System and EU's Galileo as well as joint scientific payloads.

- **People-to-people**

Migration and Mobility

Resume regular meetings of the High Level Dialogue and in this framework, implement the EU-India Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility (CAMM).

Education & Culture

Strengthen dialogue and cooperation on education including through India's GIAN programme and EU's Erasmus+ programme; sharing of best practices including on mobility and multilingualism; organisation of EU-India Higher Education Fairs; and working on issues such as access, quality, learning outcomes and benchmarking.

- **Parliaments, Civil society and Local/Decentralised Authorities**

Hold regular meetings on mutually convenient dates between delegations of the Indian Parliament and the European Parliament on reciprocal basis.

Promote regular dialogue between, Indian and EU civil society organisations, think tanks, local and decentralised authorities.

- **Institutional architecture of the EU-India Strategic Partnership**

Merge the EU-India Security Dialogue and Foreign Policy Consultations into “Foreign Policy and Security Consultations” (FPSC) and maintain the four security working groups, which will report to the FPSC.

9.2.i.D India-Eu Joint Declaration On The Fight Against Terrorism

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, President Donald Tusk and President Jean- Claude Juncker strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in Brussels and many parts of the world and reaffirmed their determination to jointly combat terrorism in all its forms. Condemning the recent terror attacks in Brussels and Paris, Pathankot and Gurdaspur, and recalling the November 2008 terror attacks in Mumbai, the Leaders called for the perpetrators of these attacks to be brought to justice. Leaders called for decisive and united actions to be taken against ISIL (Da'esh), Lashkar-e-Tayibba, Jaish-ei-Mohammad, Hizb-ulMujahideen, the Haqqani Network and other internationally active terrorist groups such as AlQaeda and its affiliates.

Considering the urgent need to establish a comprehensive international legal framework to address the global menace of terrorism, the Leaders called for early adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism in the United Nations. They also resolved to work together to drive forward international efforts in forums like the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and the Global Counter Terrorism Forum (GCTF).

9.2.i.E Joint Declaration between the European Union and The Republic of India on Clean Energy and Climate Partnership

Recognizing the common interest to promote clean energy generation and increased energy efficiency for climate action, including through related global support to developing countries, and as reflected in the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions submitted by India, the EU and the other Parties to the Paris Agreement;

- the positive contribution that clean energy generation and increased energy efficiency can make to global energy security;
- the need to develop international technology partnerships for transfer, development and implementation of climate friendly energy technologies, as highlighted in India's submitted Intended Nationally Determined Contribution, and the need to strengthen cooperative action;
- the potential offered by the development of smart grids and the initiatives for an International Solar Alliance (ISA) and Mission Innovation, which are welcomed by the European Union; - the need to

scale up climate change finance mobilised for developing countries' mitigation and adaptation actions, including the goal of jointly mobilising USD 100 billion annually by 2020 from a wide variety of sources, public and private, bilateral and multilateral, including alternative sources of finance, in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation.

➤ **Areas of Cooperation**

India and the EU endeavour to encourage and promote following cooperation:

- To work towards the establishment of a Clean Energy and Climate Partnership (hereafter “The Partnership”), bringing together representatives of relevant stakeholders, including interested EU Member States, European and Indian institutions, businesses and civil society.
- To exchange views on policy and regulatory approaches, governance, best practices, business solutions, market access and joint research and innovation opportunities in the field of clean energy, clean coal technologies, energy efficiency and climate change in India and in the EU, taking account of lessons learnt in the implementation of the EU's and India's climate and energy policies.
- To exchange experiences, views and positions on implementing the INDC's and related mitigation and adaptation initiatives.
- To develop EU-India cooperation on smart grids and to explore possibilities for the EU to work together with India to further the objectives of the International Solar Alliance, Mission Innovation.
- To explore possibilities to cooperate in the context of the Montreal Protocol on substances that deplete the ozone layer in view of the 2015 Dubai Pathway on hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

Both sides endeavour to establish an India-EU climate change dialogue, to support the dialogue by working groups and events on areas of mutual interest and to further the objectives of the Convention and the Paris Agreement. The Partnership should elaborate an action-oriented work programme contributing to achieving its objectives.

9.2.ii Belgium

9.2.ii.A Visit of Prime Minister Modi to Belgium (March 30, 2016)

The 13th India-EU Summit aims to deepen the India-EU Strategic Partnership and advance collaboration in priority areas for India's growth and development.

9.2.ii.B India-Belgium Joint Statement during the visit of Prime Minister to Belgium

Leaders welcomed the 70th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Belgium in 2017 as an occasion to commemorate and commit to further strengthening of bilateral relations.

The Prime Ministers welcomed the inception of an institutionalized political dialogue between India and Belgium. Prime Minister Michel reiterated the support of Belgium for India to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. India and Belgium underlined their shared interest in strengthening global non-proliferation objectives. In this regard, Belgium welcomes India's aspiration to become a member of the four multilateral export control regimes, namely, Nuclear Suppliers Group, Missile Technology Control Regime, Australia Group and Wassenaar Arrangement. India and Belgium agreed to work together for India to become a member of these regimes.

Taking note of the federal structure in both countries, the two Leaders encouraged mutually beneficial partnerships and cooperation, including at the level of the States and the Union Territories of India, the Regions and Communities of Belgium.

➤ Security Cooperation

The two Prime Ministers agreed for the need for enhanced bilateral and international cooperation to prevent and combat violent extremism and terrorism, including early adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and strict compliance with all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions designating terrorists and terrorist groups. The two.

➤ Economic cooperation

Recognizing the importance of the diamond sector in bilateral trade and the ongoing cooperation in the framework of the Kimberley Process, they resolved to further consolidate this mutually beneficial partnership. The Leaders recognized the key role of the services

sector in the two economies, and encouraged partnerships between services sector industries particularly in the areas of Information Technology, Biotechnology, Pharmaceuticals and Renewable Energy. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the conclusion of the amending protocol that makes the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) more comprehensive and contemporary.

➤ **Energy, Ports and Information Technology**

The two Prime Ministers welcomed the progress under the MoU on renewable energy between the competent Belgian authorities at federal and regional levels and the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy of India, and the inaugural meeting of the Joint Working Group on 14 March 2016 identifying smart cities, waste to energy, small wind turbines, water purification technologies involving renewable energy and zero emission buildings as priority areas for joint collaboration.

The Leaders took positive note of the active cooperation in Science & Technology and welcomed the technical activation of an optical infrared telescope in Devasthal in India, jointly developed by ARIES (Aryabhata Research Institute of Observational Sciences) of India and the Belgian company AMOS (Advanced Mechanical and Optical Systems) as a concrete demonstration of successful collaboration. The two leaders also welcomed the upcoming signature of the finalized Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Biotechnology of India and the Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO) for cooperation in the field of Biotechnology.

Noting the longstanding cooperation between the two countries in the Ports sector, they welcomed the imminent extension of the agreement between the Government of Flanders and the Ministry of Shipping for another two years, as well as the ongoing collaboration between the Port of Antwerp and the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust to develop a Joint Training Center under the MoU signed in February 2015.

They also welcomed the ongoing negotiations to cooperate in the area of Information Communication Technology and Electronics (ICT&E) across a broad spectrum of domains including e-Governance/mobile Governance, cybersecurity, institutional framework between major research institutions, education and training in ICT and looked forward to early conclusion of an agreement.

➤ **People to people ties**

Affirming the importance of cooperation in the field of education, the two Prime Ministers welcomed the numerous projects in collaborative research, student mobility and exchange of faculty between higher educational institutions of Belgium and India. They looked forward to further strengthening of the academic engagement between institutions on both sides.

They welcomed the e-Tourist visa facility extended by India to Belgian nationals to promote tourism.

9.2.iii Czech Republic

9.2.iii.A Visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic (18-20 December 2016)

The Czech Minister of Foreign Affairs Lubomir Zaoralek visited India from 18 to 20 December 2016. This was the first visit by Czech Foreign Minister after 2013. Minister Zaoralek was accompanied by senior officials of Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a high-level business delegation representing various trade, industrial and financial sectors.

Relations between India and Czech Republic have traditionally been warm and friendly. During this year, there have been exchange of Ministerial visits from both sides, with Minister of Railways of India visiting Czech Republic in October 2016 and Czech Defence Minister visiting India in March 2016.

The entire gamut of bilateral relations as well as important global and regional issues of mutual interest was discussed with Minister of State for External Affairs M.J. Akbar during their talks.

India and Czech Republic share a robust economic ties, with annual bilateral trade being US \$ 1.2 billion. There is a mechanism of Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation co-chaired by Minister of State for Commerce and Industry of India and Minister of Trade and Industry of Czech Republic from the respective side, for discussing the ways and means of strengthening economic ties. Defence cooperation is an important component in India-Czech ties. There is a mechanism of India-Czech Joint Defence Committee meetings that met last in November 2016.

Both the countries have a Cultural Exchange Programme and an Education Exchange Programme and engage regularly in

discussions on cooperation in Science & Technology and Research & Development. Minister Zaoralek and Minister M.J. Akbar discussed in detail the possibility of further cooperation in these crucial sectors of mutual interest.

9.2.iv Finland

The Prime Minister of Finland, Mr. JuhaSipilä, visited India from February 12-14, 2016. At the end of the visit, a Joint Statement was signed on February 13, 2016. Key points of the Joint Statement are:

The Prime Minister of Finland reiterated the support of Finland to India to become a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council

In their joint effort to strengthen global non-proliferation objectives and the multilateral export control regimes, Prime Minister Sipilä took a positive view on India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group and Missile Technology Control Regime. The Prime Minister of India thanked Finland for its support for India becoming an observer in the Arctic Council.

Condemning terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reiterating zero tolerance for this menace which seriously undermines international peace and security, growth and development, both sides emphasized the importance of ratification and implementation of all UN legal instruments to counter terrorism and encouraged enhanced efforts towards making progress on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. They also noted with concern mass migration of people in distress in conflict and volatile regions, especially in Africa and the Middle East.

They welcomed the prospect of resumption of talks on the India-EU Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA).

They recognized that there are more than 100 Finnish companies established in India and some 25 Indian companies in Finland.

Many of the Finnish companies in India have manufacturing plants in the country and engaged in the renewable energy and clean-tech segments, making them 'Make in India' companies.

The Prime Minister of Finland welcomed the efforts of the Indian Government and Prime Minister Modi himself in outreach to the business sector and linking with it in a meaningful manner through several initiatives including Ease of Doing Business..

The Prime Minister of Finland highlighted Finland's capacities in the civil nuclear energy field. Finnish companies and relevant

government agencies can offer solutions related to safety and security ecosystems in nuclear power plants.

Both Prime Ministers agreed on other areas of cooperation like innovation and transforming ideas into internationally marketable products, between universities and institutes of higher learning, and digitization. Both the leaders appreciated the on-going cooperation in the areas of science, technology and innovation which had emphasis on Energy Research projects encompassing solar, hybrid and smart grid systems. DST-TEKES together also promote and support business led collaborative R&D on clean tech, biomedical devices and electronic system & design manufacturing. Both sides acknowledged the relevance of promoting technology based start-ups.

The two leaders noted that about 20000 Finnish tourists visit India every year and the facility of eTourist visa to Finnish nationals as also Indian investment in Finland in this sector is going to further facilitate people to people exchanges.

The two sides appreciated recent conclusion of an MoU between Civil Aviation authorities on code shares, intermodal services, routing flexibility, open sky on cargo and on domestic code-sharing; the finalization of the text of the agreement on gainful employment by dependent family members of the diplomatic staff; noted ongoing negotiations on waiver of visas for diplomatic passport holders and the decision to move forward with a bio-refinery project for production of fuel grade Ethanol, acetic acid, furfural and bio-coal from bamboo in Assam.

9.2.v France

9.2.v.A President Francois Hollande of the French Republic visited India from 24-25 January 2016

Mr. Francois Hollande, President of the French Republic paid an official visit to India from 24-26 January 2016. The State Visit of Mr. François Hollande to India and his presence as the Chief Guest at India's 67th Republic Day celebrations was a special occasion for India to warmly receive a trusted and valued friend. This was President Hollande's second State Visit to India and the fifth time that a French Head of State or Government has been invited as the Chief Guest on India's Republic Day celebrations, making France the country that has been extended this honour the highest number of times so far. As a symbol of friendship and trust between the two countries, India honoured France in its 67th Republic Day Parade through the participation of a French military

contingent, making France the first country to receive such an honour. The visit took place nine months after Prime Minister Modi's successful visit to France in April 2015.

9.2.v.B List of Agreements/MOUs signed during the State Visit of President Francois Hollande of the French Republic to India (25 January 2016)

14 agreements were signed during the State Visit of President Francois Hollande of the French Republic to India. The main points are as follows:

1. MoU between India and France on purchase of 36 Rafale Aircrafts.
2. ISRO and CNES Implementation Arrangement on hosting Argos-4 Payload onboard India's Oceansat-3 satellite.
3. ISRO and CNES Implementation Arrangement on a future joint Thermal Infrared earth observation mission.
4. Shareholding Agreement on JV between Alstom and Indian Railways for production of 800 electric locomotives in Madhepura Bihar.
5. Agreement between Indian Railways and SNCF, French Railways for joint feasibility study for the renovation of Ludhiana and Ambala railway stations.
6. MOU between Food Safety & Standards Authority of India and ANSES in food safety.
7. Declaration of Intent for conducting next round of Namaste France (Indian festival) in 2016 and Bonjour India (French festival) 2017.
8. Cultural Exchange Programme for the period 2016-2018.
9. MoU for Industry Sponsored Ph.D Fellowship between IIT Mumbai and Thales SystemesAeroportes.
10. Agreement of Cooperation between CNRS, TB, UBO, UBS,ENSTA Bretagne,ENIB (French Universities) and IIT Mumbai in the field of Higher Education & Research

9.2.v.C India-France Joint Statement on the occasion of the State Visit of President Francois Hollande of the French Republic to India (25 January 2016)

The main points of the Joint Statement by India-France are as follows:

Strategic Partnership

India and France reiterated the need for urgent reform of the United Nations, including its Security Council, through an expansion in both categories of membership, to make it more representative of the contemporary world. France reaffirmed its support for India's

candidature for a permanent membership of the UN Security Council. France and India share common concerns and objectives in the field of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In order to strengthen global non-proliferation and export control regimes, France and India committed to continue to work jointly towards India's accession to the multilateral export control regimes, namely, the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Australia Group, and the Wassenaar Arrangement.

Security

India and France reiterated their commitment to counter terrorism and welcomed the separate joint statement on Counter-terrorism cooperation issued by the two sides. The President of France and the Prime Minister of India agreed to intensify cooperation between the Indian and French security forces in the fields of homeland security, cyber security, Special Forces and intelligence-sharing to fight against criminal networks and tackle the common threat of terrorism. The leaders also welcomed the first-ever bilateral dialogue on Maritime Security in the Indian Ocean Region held on 14-15 January in Paris which paved the way for enhanced cooperation in maintaining the safety of sea-lanes for trade and communications, countering the threat of piracy and maritime terrorism, maritime domain awareness and fostering trade and economic links in the Indian Ocean Region.

Defence

The Leaders noted with satisfaction, that the bilateral Agreement on Defence Cooperation concluded in 2006 has advanced cooperation in defence cooperation, production, research and development and procurement of defence material. The two sides agreed that the Agreement on Defence Cooperation will be extended for another ten years. The Leaders stressed the importance of joint military exercises. They welcomed the successful air exercise Garuda in June 2014 and naval exercise Varuna in April 2015, in which the French carrier strike group participated. They welcomed the latest round of the Shakti exercise held in India from 6-20 January which brought out useful operational lessons for the two Armies, especially in countering terrorism.

The two Leaders underlined the long history of cooperation between France and India in the defence sector and acknowledged the strong commitment of French companies to manufacturing in India. They called for further intensification of cooperation in agreed areas,

including collaboration in defence technologies, research and development.

Nuclear energy

Both countries reaffirmed their commitment to responsible and sustainable development of civil nuclear energy with highest consideration to safety, security, non-proliferation and environmental protection. France reaffirmed its strong and long standing support for India's candidacy to the international export control regimes and in particular to the NSG. In pursuance of the 2008 Agreement on the Development of Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy between India and France, the two leaders encouraged their industrial companies to conclude techno-commercial negotiations by the end of 2016 for the construction of six nuclear power reactor units at Jaitapur, with due consideration to cost viability of the project.

Climate change

In the wake of the Paris Agreement adopted at the end of the COP-21, the bilateral cooperation between France and India is today, more than ever committed to meet the climate challenge.

Clean and sustainable development

Translating their shared commitment to clean energy and combating climate change into practical action, President Hollande and Prime Minister Modi jointly launched the new International Solar Alliance (ISA) initiative in Paris on 30 November 2015 on the sidelines of the COP 21. To advance this initiative, the two leaders jointly laid the foundation stone of the building for Headquarters of International Solar Alliance (ISA) and inaugurated the interim Secretariat of the ISA in Gurgaon, India, on 25 January 2016.

The two Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to cooperate towards clean and sustainable development and reaffirmed their valuable partnership in India's ambitious plans to develop Smart Cities. In this spirit, the two Leaders welcomed: the 3 MoUs signed in January 2016 between the Union Territory of Chandigarh, the State of Maharashtra, the Union Territory of Puducherry and the French Development Agency for extending technical assistance for the development of the 3 cities of Chandigarh, Nagpur and Puducherry respectively, as Smart Cities in India.

Transport

The two Leaders stressed the importance of clean transport and recalled the Protocol of Cooperation signed between the Indian Ministry of Railways and French National Railways SNCF in April 2015 in the field of Semi high speed rail and station development. Recalling the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of Indo-French space cooperation in 2015, the leaders welcomed the signing of two Implementing Arrangements between their Space Agencies for cooperation in definition studies on a future joint Thermal Infrared Earth Observation mission and hosting of the French instrument for data collection on India's Oceansat-3 satellite. They also welcomed the announcement of collaboration through the participation of the Centre National d'études spatiales (CNES) in future space and planetary exploration missions of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

Economic Co-operation

Reaffirming their commitment to facilitating a conducive environment for enhancing bilateral trade and investment, the leaders welcomed the convening of a dialogue on economic and financial issues at a higher level on cooperation in economy and finance. They also welcomed the convening of the India-France CEO's Forum within a span of 9 months. Recognizing the central role of food safety regulations in the field of preventive health care and in increasing investments and the prospects for enhanced cooperation in joint risk assessment, research activities and exchange of technical knowledge in the field of food safety, the two Leaders welcomed the signing of a MoU on Cooperation between Food Safety and Standards Authority of India and the Agence nationale de sécurité sanitaire de l'alimentation, de l'environnement et du travail (ANSES) of France in the field of food safety and standards. The two Leaders welcomed the conclusion of a MoU on Cooperation in urban development between Telangana and the Bordeaux Metropole in September 2015 and the Investment Road show held by Government of Karnataka in Paris and Toulouse in December 2015.

People-to-people contacts, Education, Skill development, Science & Technology

The Leaders lauded the robust people-to-people and tourism contacts between India and France, as well as the wide-ranging cultural, educational and scientific exchanges between the two countries. In the field of higher education in which hundreds of agreements between French and Indian institutions have already

been signed, the two Leaders welcomed the agreement signed between the Indian Institute of Science Education and Research Pune and the Ecole Normale Supérieure de Lyon. They also welcomed the agreement signed between the Indian Institute of Technology in Mumbai and French CNRS/Telecom Bretagne/Université de Bretagne occidentale/Université de Bretagne Sud/ENSTA Bretagne/ENI Bretagne.

The Leaders recognized with satisfaction, the role played by the Indo-French Centre for Promotion of Advance Research (CEFIPRA) over the last 28 years in promoting collaboration between the scientific communities of the two countries across the knowledge innovation chain. They encouraged CEFIPRA to expand its role by implementing bilateral programmes in partnership with various scientific agencies and industries, both in France and India. The leaders also welcomed the establishment of a Ministerial-level Joint S&T Committee to foster even closer Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation through multi-stakeholder participation from both countries.

Heritage, Culture, Sport

Prime Minister Modi and President Hollande welcomed the conclusion of the Cultural Exchange Programme between India and France for the period 2016-2018 and welcomed the Administrative Arrangement concluded between the Ministry of Culture and Communication of the French Republic, the Chairman of the National Library of France and the Ministry of Culture of India. The leaders warmly welcomed the "Namaste France" cultural festival to be hosted by India in France from 15 September to 30 November 2016 showcasing a variety of Indian cultural performances, exhibitions, fairs and workshops to highlight Indian cultural heritage and a reciprocal "Bonjour India" cultural festival of France in India in 2017.

9.2.v.D India-France Joint Statement on Counter Terrorism on the occasion of the State Visit of President Francois Hollande of the French Republic to India (25 January 2016)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Francois Hollande strongly condemned the heinous terrorist attacks that have struck many parts of the world recently and expressed their shared anguish and outrage at the loss of innocent lives in Paris, Bamako, Beirut, Tunis, San Bernardino, N'Djamena and the Lake Chad Basin Region, Kabul, Gurdaspur, Istanbul, Pathankot, Jalalabad, Jakarta, Ouagadougou and Charsadda.

Agreeing on the imperative of having a comprehensive approach to address terrorism, India and France resolved to step up their bilateral cooperation, under the supervision of annual strategic dialogues and joint working group on counterterrorism meetings, to counter violent extremism and radicalization, disrupt recruitment, terrorist movements and flow of Foreign Terrorist Fighters, stop sources of terrorist financing, dismantle terrorist infrastructure and prevent supply of arms to terrorists. Both leaders urged the international community to make concerted efforts to strictly comply with United Nations Security Council resolutions 1267, 1988, 1989, 2253 and other relevant resolutions designating terrorists and terrorist groups or condemning terrorist acts.

Deeply concerned about the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to terrorist groups, they urged all countries to fully abide by UNSCR 1540 as well as IAEA requirements, and ratify the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) including its 2005 Amendment as well as the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT), especially in the lead up to the Nuclear Security Summit of 1 April 2016.

Stressing that terrorism cannot be justified under any circumstance, regardless of its motivation, wherever and by whomsoever it is committed, both leaders asked for decisive actions to be taken against Lashkar-e-Tayibba, Jaish-e-Mohammad, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, Haqqani Network and other terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda. Condemning the recent terror attacks in Pathankot and Gurdaspur in India, the two countries reiterated their call for Pakistan to bring to justice their perpetrators and the perpetrators of the November 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai, which also caused the demise of two French citizens, and to ensure that such attacks do not recur in the future. President Hollande commended India for its stabilizing role in South Asia, in particular in Afghanistan, and its recent initiative to launch a comprehensive dialogue with Pakistan.

9.2.vi Hungary

9.2.vi.A Vice President's Visited Hungary October on 17, 2016. He gave a Lecture on 'Indian Democracy: Achievements and Challenges' at Corvinus University, Budapest, Hungary. Some Key points of his lecture

- Hungary's journey to modern democracy took several decades after 1956 and commenced only in 1990. As a form of government for the people and by the people, each nation's experience is *sui generis*.
- India commenced this journey many decades earlier and it may be of some use to share our perceptions, and experience, with this young audience.
- A word about the nature of Indian society is relevant to contextualize this discussion. Our population of 1.27 billion comprises of over 4,635 communities 78 percent of whom are not only linguistic and cultural but social categories. Religious minorities constitute 19.4 percent of the population. Much of this is reflective of our cultural past. Indian culture is syncretic in character and, as a historian put it, 'embraces in its orbit beliefs, customs, rites, institutions, arts, religions and philosophies belonging to different strata of societies in varying stages of development. It eternally seeks to find a unity for the heterogeneous elements which make up its totality.' It is a veritable human laboratory where the cross breeding of ideas, beliefs and cultural traditions has been in progress for a few thousand years. The national movement recognised this cultural plurality and sought to base a national identity on it.
- The superstructure of a democratic polity and a secular state structure, put in place in modern India, is anchored in the existential reality of a plural society.
- The first General election was held in 1951. 173 million citizens were qualified to vote; of these, 44.87 percent exercised their franchise. 1874 candidates belonging to different national and regional parties contested. More than six decades later in the 16th general election in 2014, the size of the electorate had increased to 814 million the voting percentage had gone up to 66.4 and of these, 67.9 percent were men and 65.6 percent women. The number of contestants was 8,251.
- The institutional structure for the preparations of electoral rolls and for the conduct of parliamentary and State assembly elections is the responsibility of the Election Commission, a constitutional body whose members hold office for six years and cannot be removed except by a process similar to that for the removal of a judge of the Supreme Court of India. Since 2004, votes are recorded through EVMs or electronic voting machines. These are manufactured in India and their accuracy and secrecy has been fully tested.
- India is unquestionably the world's the largest democracy. Its singular merit 'lies in its success in providing space for political contestation and an opportunity for the articulation of a variety of claims.' This has facilitated accommodation of group and regional demands in a

complex, quasi-federal, polity. Our people at all levels of society have imbibed the democratic process enthusiastically and, through amendments to the Constitution in 1992 extended it to municipalities and village councils or Panchayats.

- The democratic process has brought about a shift of political power from the middle and higher castes and classes of urban society to backward classes who are now the politically most influential ones in the country. They have won reservations for themselves in legislatures and government services as were accorded to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes after independence through Constitutional provisions. There are few examples in recent history of such a conspicuous shift of political power, involving such a huge mass of population, taking place in such a short period of time almost without any violence and in a democratic way. This is one more example of the miracles that democracy can create.
- The challenge of securing substantive equality for citizens, and thereby ensuring fraternity for the unity and integrity of the nation, remains work in progress.
- The mechanics of the functioning of our electoral system has been the subject of critical scrutiny for many years pursuant to a realization that aberrations have crept in. In 2011 the Supreme Court of India directed the Law Commission, an expert body charged with the responsibility of proposing legal reforms, to suggest correctives on two of the identified malpractices. Its report was followed by extensive National Consultations. Pursuant to it, the Commission gave another report focused on Election Finance, Regulation of Political Parties and Inner Party Democracy, Proportional Representation, compulsory Voting, the Right to Recall, Opinion Polls, Political Advertisements and several other matters pertaining to elections.
- A critical question about the First-Past-The-Post system of election relates to the representativeness of the elected representative. In the 2014 general election, only 117 of the 539 winning candidates in the House of the People secured 50% or more of the votes cast. This in the context of the overall national voting percentage of 66.4% makes evident the actual representativeness of the elected Member of Parliament. One study shows that it was 31percent. On the one hand, the FPTP system has the merit of being uncomplicated since it uses single-member districts and candidate-centred voting and gives to voters a clear choice between candidates and parties. For this reason, the Supreme Court characterized it as having ‘the merit of preponderance of decisiveness over representation.’ On the other hand, this system produces a discrepancy between voter-share in results. It also results in the exclusion of small or regional parties in

the legislature. This is accentuated by the unequal presence of the weaker sections especially women and minorities. At the same time, the FPTP 'has not been able to uphold majoritarianism in a multi-party system since the winning candidate often wins only about 20-30 percent of the votes.'

- Among other challenges in the path to a more comprehensive democracy is the question of gender balance. Women MPs constitute only 11 percent of the total in the House of People elected in 2014. Some but not all of the religious minorities are in the same position. Both require to be attended to through strategies of affirmative action. Though gender equality has been ensured through legislation in municipalities and village panchayats, the same has not yet been done for Parliament and State assemblies.
- Another paradox needs to be mentioned. Record shows that while the public participation in the electoral exercise has noticeably improved, public dissatisfaction from the functioning of elected bodies is breeding cynicism with the democratic process itself. The imperative for a corrective is evident to reinforce public confidence in the ability of the system to deliver, as intended.
- It is evident that the quest for improvements will continue with the growth of public awareness of the electoral process. The impulses and processes generated by these movements add vigour to Indian democracy.

9.2.vi.B List of MoUs signed during visit of Vice President to Hungary (October 15-17, 2016)

- Memorandum of Understanding of cooperation in the Field of Water Management between Ministry of Interior of Hungary and Ministry of Water Resources, RD & GR of India.
- Memorandum of Understanding between Indian Council of World Affairs, India and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary

9.2.vii Italy

9.2.vii.A Visit of External Affairs Minister to Italy (September 02-05, 2016)

Foreign Minister of Italy, Mr. Paolo Gentiloni, and the External Affairs Minister of India, Ms. Sushma Swaraj, held a meeting at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Italy on 4th September, during Minister Swaraj's visit to Rome for the canonisation of Mother Teresa in the Vatican.

9.2.viii Sweden

9.2.viii.A Joint Statement between India- Sweden during the visit of Prime Minister of Sweden to India

Prime Minister of Sweden H.E. Stefan Löfven visited India on February 13-14, 2016, with the largest business delegation that he has led to any country. Both sides noted that India's economic development and rise as a global power has created new opportunities to further deepen and extend partnership to foster economic growth and inclusive development in both countries as well as to meet global challenges. Prime Minister Löfven and the official delegation had a bilateral meeting with the Prime Minister of India during which the two leaders discussed the areas that held the highest potential for mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation. The Joint Statement released after the meeting, titled 'New Momentum, Higher Ambition' enumerates the points discussed by the two leaders and the steps they agreed to take to strengthen the relations between the two countries. These include the following:

- They welcomed the creation of an India-Sweden Business Leader Round Table during the visit.
- They endorsed the creation of a new Joint Working Group on Digital Technologies and Economy.
- The two Prime Ministers welcomed the launch of the Joint Working Group on Sustainable Urban Development under the MoU signed in 2015 and agreed to encourage their companies and government agencies to support the development of Smart Cities. They looked forward to the finalization of a Joint Action Plan, focusing on digital land management, solid waste management and urban transport. In the context of the MoU, the Swedish side also expressed interest in focusing on one or more cities for development as smart cities.
- They acknowledged the potential for successful collaboration in defence and agreed that under the rubric of Make in India, cooperation possibilities between their respective defence industries could be identified and taken forward appropriately, including in the field of aviation. They welcomed progress in the Joint Working Group under the MoU on Defence.
- Both sides recognized that enhancing awareness of each other's cultures boosts people-to-people ties and welcomed reciprocal festivals of 'Namaste Stockholm' in Sweden and Sweden-India Nobel Memorial Week in India.
- The two prime ministers recognized the common interest in preventing and countering terrorism and violent extremism and

the benefits of a closer dialogue and mutual exchange of information and good practices. They looked forward to an exchange of visits of their respective Special Envoys, with a view to explore agency level cooperation, capacity building, countering violent extremism experience sharing, and cooperation in developing an international framework against terrorism including elaborating and finalizing a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

- Both Prime Ministers agreed to a deeper bilateral dialogue on UN issues at both capital and UN-Mission-level.
- The two Prime Ministers also welcomed the adoption of the “Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development” and committed to supporting its implementation. They recognised the universal, indivisible and integrated nature of the Agenda 2030 which balances the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, the social and the environmental.
- The two Prime Ministers welcomed the Paris Agreement and its objective to hold the global temperature increase well below 2°C and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C. In this context, both sides welcomed the active ongoing collaboration under the Memorandum of Understanding on Sweden-India Renewable Energy Cooperation and the announcement by the Swedish Energy Agency to contribute US\$ 5 million towards funding research and pilot projects in India in 2016-2018.
- In their joint efforts to strengthen global non-proliferation and disarmament objectives, India and Sweden committed to work towards India’s further participation in the multilateral export control regimes.
- The Prime Ministers remained committed to promote human rights online, cyber security, combat cybercrime, and develop a common understanding on international cyber issues and support an open, inclusive, transparent and multi-stakeholder system of internet governance as well as the application of international law in cyberspace.

9.2.ix Switzerland

9.2.ix.A Visit of Prime Minister to Switzerland (June 5-6, 2016). In his Press Statement during his visit of Switzerland Prime Minister said :¹²

India and Switzerland have both been the voices of peace, understanding and humanitarian values in the world. In last seven decades, their friendship has consistently seen an upward trajectory. Today, they reviewed their multifaceted bilateral ties and also held detailed discussions with Swiss CEOs.

The economic links between their two countries are strong and vibrant. Many Swiss companies are household names in India. Ties of collaboration in trade, investment, science and technology and skill development benefit both their societies. India has affirmed its readiness to resume FTA talks with EFTA. The Indian economy has to be driven by smart and sustainable cities, robust farm sector, vibrant manufacturing and dynamic service sector. And, its engines to run on world class network of rail, roads, airports and digital connectivity. Where a home for everyone, and electricity in every home is a reality. And, its 500 million plus youth is skilled and ready to meet the global needs of manpower. They agreed to build on the Swiss Vocational and Educational Training system suited to India's needs. Reliance on renewable energy, rather than on fossil fuels would be their guiding motto.

India and Switzerland also share a commitment to reform international institutions in line with current global realities. We have both agreed to support each other for our respective bids for the non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council. I am also thankful to the President for Switzerland's understanding and support for India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group. Combating the menace of "black money" and tax evasion is also our shared priority. We discussed the need for an early and expeditious exchange of information to bring to justice the tax offenders. An early start to negotiations on the Agreement on Automatic Exchange of Information would be important in this respect.

Strong ties between the people of our two countries are an important base and benchmark of our linkages. Thanks to the Indian film industry, we are very familiar with the enchanting beauty of the Swiss landscapes. But, we are also keen to welcome larger number of Swiss

¹²<http://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visit-detail.htm?26871/Press+Statement+by+Prime+Minister+during+his+visit+of+Switzerland+June+06+2016>

visitors to India. For this, we have opened the facility of e-Tourist Visa for Swiss nationals earlier this year.

I am confident that our common commitments and values, people to people links and a strong and growing economic partnership will take our relations to new heights.

9.2.x Iceland

9.2.x.A Visit of Foreign Minister of Iceland to India: April 5, 2016

The Foreign Minister of Iceland, Mr. Gunnar Bragi Sveinsson, visited India from 03-09 April 2016. On 5 April, Foreign Minister Sveinsson and External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj held discussions in which they agreed on continuing to strengthen the bilateral economic relations between the countries, such as in the areas of renewable energy, particularly geothermal energy, tourism, start-ups and extended trade relations. They agreed that a Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement between India and the EFTA countries (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland) would facilitate more economic relations between the two countries. They, furthermore, exchanged views on important global issues such as climate change, United Nations reforms, and the global menace of terrorism. To further strengthen economic relations between the two countries the Ministers agreed to further mutual visits of business delegations between the two countries. The Ministers emphasised on the importance of continued scientific cooperation aimed at understanding better the implications of climate change for the ice covers and glaciers in the Arctic and Himalayan regions. The two Ministers reaffirmed that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable regardless of their motivations, whenever and by whomsoever committed. In this context they called for an early adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.

Both Ministers also underlined their shared interest in strengthening global non-proliferation objectives. In this regard, Iceland expressed its support for India's membership in the relevant multilateral export control regimes. During the visit, Foreign Minister Sveinsson had a meeting with Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of State (Independent charge) for Power, Coal and New & Renewable Energy. They discussed their mutual interest in promoting renewable energy and in cooperating in the area of geothermal energy, where Icelandic and Indian companies are exploring the possibilities of setting up joint ventures to harness geothermal energy in India.

9.3 Japan

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi visited Japan (10-12 November 2016). A total of 11 agreements including one on nuclear energy cooperation were signed. Prime Minister Modi delivered a banquet speech highlighting India's perception of Japan and the priority that India attaches to her relations with Japan. In the media statement, he said that Japan was a natural partner and that there was a vast scope to work for mutual benefit. At the CII-Keidanren luncheon, he invited Japanese businesses to invest in India's resurgence story.

9.4 Russia

Relations between Russia and India peaked for the year in October, when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Russian President Vladimir Putin for their annual summit on the sidelines of BRICS Summit held in Goa. Both the leaders declared in their Joint Statement pledging to pursue new opportunities to take their special and privileged relationship to unprecedented heights. The seriousness to optimise the relationship was also reiterated by Russia in its new 'Foreign Policy Concept' for 2016, where it says that it "is committed to further strengthening its special privileged partnership with the Republic of India based on the convergence of foreign policy priorities, historical friendship and deep mutual trust, as well as enhancing mutually beneficial bilateral ties in all areas." Another key issue that came up during the 17th India - Russia summit was the celebration of 2017 in a manner befitting the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations being established between the two countries.

9.4.A Russian President Vladimir Putin visited India for the 17th India-Russia Annual Summit on October 15 2016. The main points of the Joint Statement signed during the visit are:

President Putin and PM Modi reviewed the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership between India and Russia that is rooted in longstanding mutual trust, characterized by unmatched reciprocal support to each other's core interests and unique people-to-people affinities.

Prime Minister Modi reiterated that Russia will remain India's major defence and strategic partner, and the enduring partnership between them is an anchor of peace and stability in a changing world order. President Putin reaffirmed Russia's continued commitment to the Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership with India and noted the commonality of positions of both the countries on such issues as war on terrorism. Indian Side expressed its appreciation for Russia's unequivocal condemnation of the terrorist attack on army base in Uri.

Follow-Up on the previous Summits

The Leaders welcomed the significant progress made in bilateral relations since 2014, pursuant to the roadmaps set out in the Joint Statements issued during President Putin's visit to India in December 2014 and Prime Minister Modi's visit to Russia in December 2015. They expressed satisfaction at continued bilateral exchanges including high-level visits, institutional exchanges and other contacts over the past year that had further strengthened the India-Russia strategic partnership.

Economic Cooperation

The Leaders recognized the need to constantly reinvent methodologies to realize the target set at the Annual Summit in December 2014, to increase annual bilateral trade and investment and committed to working towards the objective.

The Sides welcomed the outcomes of the 22nd meeting of the Indian-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission (IGC) on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation held in New Delhi on 13 September 2016 and called for early finalization of new proposals identified during the IGC. They noted the creation of bilateral investment fund by National Infrastructure Investment Fund (NIIF) of India with Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF) to facilitate high-technology investments in Russia and India.

The Sides particularly welcomed the recent investment by India in the Russian oil sector and called on companies in both countries to finalize new and ambitious investment proposals in similar promising sectors such as pharmaceuticals, chemical industry, mining, machine building, implementation of infrastructure projects, cooperation in railway sector, fertilizer production, automobiles and aircraft construction as well as collaborative ventures in modernizing each other's industrial facilities. The Sides favourably assessed the ongoing cooperation between the railway organizations of the two countries and urged them to intensify it further.

They welcomed enhanced interactions between representatives of the business community of India and Russia including the CEOs level interaction particularly during large trade and business events in 2016 such as the Saint Petersburg International Economic Forum

(June 16-18), attended by Mr. Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, International Industrial Exhibition INNOPROM (July 11-14), attended by Mrs. Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Commerce and Industry, as well as Chief Ministers of the Indian states of Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh and the Eastern Economic Forum (September 2-3). They called for continuation of such interactions and noted that India's participation as a partner country in INNOPROM-2016 highlighted the INNOPROM as one of the most representative among international events in the field of industry, scientific and technological innovations. Both Sides noted with satisfaction successful visit of the Minister of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation Denis Manturov leading a business delegation to the states of Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and New Delhi from October 11-14, 2016 and noted huge potential for intensification of the Indian-Russian industrial collaboration. The Indian Side welcomed Russia's scheduled participation as partner country in International Engineering Sourcing Show 2017 in India underlining it would impart added momentum to bilateral economic links. Russia welcomed intentions of the Government of India to focus on the opportunities in the Far East of the Russian Federation, participate enthusiastically in the Eastern Economic Forum in 2017, organize a roundtable between the Governors of the Far East Regions of the Russian Federation and the Chief Ministers of different States of India, explore trade and investment opportunities in the agriculture, mining, shipping etc.

Both Sides welcomed initiatives to promote direct trade in diamonds between India and Russia and gave positive evaluation of the work of the Special Notified Zone (SNZ) at the Bharat Diamond Bourse, noting active support of this project from PJSC ALROSA, i.e. through holding regular rough diamond viewing.

Positively evaluating the initiatives like agreement of phytosanitary and veterinary authorities of both countries on mutual market access for agricultural and processed food products, including dairy products and bovine meat, the Sides agreed to continue ongoing consultations between their regulatory authorities and introduce measures to widen the range of such products for bilateral trade.

Both Sides welcomed progress in the implementation of Green Corridor project in accordance with the Protocol between the Central Board of Excise & Customs of India and the Federal Customs Service

of Russia on Cooperation in Exchange of Pre-arrival information for Facilitation of Trade and Customs Control on Goods and Vehicles moved between the two countries.

The Sides noted the progress in the work of the Joint Study Group to consider the feasibility of a free trade agreement between the Republic of India and the Eurasian Economic Union.

Taking into account the important role of banks in settlement of trade, the Sides expressed hope for the enhancement by commercial banks of the two countries of their partnership, including through the development of correspondent relations and increase in lending limits.

Recognizing the vital role played by connectivity in increasing trade between the two countries, the Leaders welcomed the increased emphasis on implementation of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC), which can play a key role in promoting economic integration in the region through reduction of time taken for the transit of goods.

India-Russia "Energy Bridge"

Both Sides noted with satisfaction that robust civil nuclear cooperation, collaboration in hydrocarbon sphere, long term LNG sourcing interest, work on the hydrocarbon energy pipeline and cooperation in renewable energy sector constitute a promising "Energy Bridge" between the two countries.

The two Sides reaffirm their intention to further expand cooperation under the "Strategic Vision to Strengthen Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy between the Russian Federation and the Republic of India" signed on December 11, 2014. In this context they noted with satisfaction a series of positive developments marked in their civil nuclear cooperation this year, including attainment of full power capacity of Kudankulam Unit 1, integration with electricity grid of Kudankulam Unit 2, commencement of the site work for Kudankulam Units 3 and 4, and the progress in discussions on the General Framework Agreement and the Credit Protocol for Kudankulam Units 5 and 6 with a view to conclude these documents before the end of 2016.

Both Sides appreciated the progress being made in the implementation of the Programme of Action for Localization between

Russia's Rosatom and India's Department of Atomic Energy with active engagement of Indian nuclear manufacturing industry for local manufacturing in India of equipment and components for upcoming and future Russian-designed nuclear power projects in the context of the serial construction in India of Russian-designed Units.

The Leaders of both countries highly appreciated the progress made by Indian and Russian oil companies since the last Summit with the Indian companies acquiring equity in "Tass-YuryakhNeftegazodobycha" and "Vankorneft" making it the largest equity oil acquisition hitherto by India. With the aim of further strengthening oil and gas cooperation the Russian Side expressed its interest in attracting Indian oil companies to participate in joint projects in the offshore-Arctic fields of the Russian Federation.

Both Sides reaffirmed their continued commitment to work together towards development of energy efficiency and renewable energy sources. In this context, they expressed readiness to strengthen and expand bilateral cooperation in the field of solar energy under the MoU signed on 24 December, 2015 between the Russian Energy Agency of the Ministry of Energy of the Russian Federation and the Solar Energy Corporation of the Republic of India on building solar power-stations in India.

The Sides emphasized the need to provide assistance to the power sector companies of both countries in the development of cooperation in the sphere of modernization of existing power plants and construction of new power plants in India.

Cooperation among States of India and Regions of Russia

Recalling the Joint Statement of December 11, 2014, the Sides welcomed the signing of the MoI between Maharashtra and Khanty-Mansiysk Autonomous Okrug - Ugra and between Maharashtra and Sverdlovsk Region. The Sides further committed themselves to mark the 50th anniversary of establishment of Sister-City relationship between Mumbai and Saint Petersburg, through year long celebrations in 2017.

Enhancing Science, Health, Technology and Education Links

The Sides welcomed MoU between the Department of Science and Technology of the Government of India and the FASO of Russia on

further development of bilateral interaction in scientific and technical sphere and in the field of innovations.

The Sides noted the expansion of cooperation in the field of education. The Sides noted the Network of Russian and Indian Universities' (RIN) intensive activity in promoting exchanges of students and faculty, development of curriculum, creation of joint laboratories, organization of scientific conferences and seminars as well as conducting joint scientific research and collaboration in commercialization of technologies developed in research institutions.

The Sides expressed satisfaction with the progress achieved in the MoU signed in December 2015 between Centre for Development of Advance Computing (CDAC), Indian Institute of Science (IISc) and Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU) for cooperation in high performance computing (HPC). The Indian Side conveyed its interest in expanding this cooperation with the Russian Side in a number of activities in supercomputing beyond envisaged in the MoU.

Recognizing the importance of the Arctic and given that Russia is a member of the Arctic Council and India is an observer since May 2013, the Sides agreed to facilitate scientific cooperation to study the challenges (like melting ice, climate change, marine life and biodiversity), facing the rapidly changing Arctic region.

The Sides welcomed interaction between India and Russia in the field of modern phytogenetics, which serves as the most important source of knowledge and constructive solutions for the provision of food security, and success of the First International Scientific Symposium "Genetics and genomics of plants for food security" in Novosibirsk in August 2016, as well as underlined the necessity of further enhancement of cooperation in this field.

Welcoming the declaration of June 21 as International Day of Yoga and noting successful organization of Yoga events in the year 2016, the Sides agreed to cooperate for promoting health and fitness through traditional Indian forms of Yoga and Ayurveda. The Sides will explore possibility of mutual cooperation in formulation of curriculum for Ayurvedic studies and development of regulations for quality control of Ayurvedic practices and medicines in Russia.

Space Cooperation

The Leaders welcomed signing of a MoU for setting up and utilizing ground stations in each other's territories to enhance the usefulness of their respective navigation satellite constellations of GLONASS and NavIC. The Sides also confirmed their commitment to elaborate within the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the UN Committee on Space a consolidated approach to the preparation of the set of guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and regulatory provisions on safety of space operations, as the most important component of the said document.

Defence Cooperation

The Sides expressed satisfaction at joint Indian-Russian exercises INDRA involving ground forces in Russia's Far East in 2016. They welcomed the visit of the Indian Minister of State for Defence in April 2016 and delegation of the National Defence College in May-June 2016 to Moscow. They underlined the need to expand training, joint exercises and institutionalized interactions between the Armed Forces of both countries.

The Sides positively evaluated the establishment of the Joint Venture for production of Ka-226T helicopters in India.

Security and Disaster Management

Recalling the visit of Russian Interior Minister Vladimir Kolokoltsev to India in September 2015, the Sides reaffirmed their intention to finalize an Agreement on Cooperation between the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation and a Joint Action Plan between the Narcotics Control Bureau of the Republic of India and the Ministry of the Internal Affairs of the Russian Federation, which would provide an enabling framework to further develop ongoing inter-ministerial interactions for exchange of best practices and expertise, conducting training courses in countering extremism and drug-trafficking.

Culture, Tourism and People-to-People Ties

The Sides reaffirmed their interest in the early signing of a Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 2016-2018 between the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation. Noting the success of the Festival of Russian

Culture in 2016, it was decided to have the Festival of Indian Culture in Russia in 2017.

The Sides welcomed steps aimed at concluding the Agreement to implement the decision to facilitate visa free entry, stay and exit of crew of aircraft of the designated aircraft companies as well as other aircraft companies performing charter and special flights in the respective territories of their countries on reciprocal basis.

The Sides noted the importance of interaction on issues related to migration and agreed to work towards improving the legal framework of cooperation in that sphere, in particular on the issuance of work permits and temporary residency permits for Indian nationals working in Russia through continued dialogue on these issues.

The two Sides expressed satisfaction with the pace of the implementation of the Treaty on Transfer of Sentenced Persons between the Republic of India and the Russian Federation which came into force in March 2015 and expressed hope that further results would be achieved in the coming times with the implementation of the bilateral Treaty on Transfer of Sentenced Persons.

The Sides expressed intention to exert efforts in order to strengthen cooperation in the consular sphere, including an exchange of experience in defending its citizens' and juridical entities' rights and interests in the territory of the state of residence, and to provide possible assistance to the consular missions of the state represented.

The two Sides expressed satisfaction on organization of Indian Film Festival in Moscow and Russian Film Festival in Mumbai in 2016..

Realizing the immense potential for collaboration in tourism sector and with an aim to encourage closer cooperation between tourism agencies of the two countries, the Sides agreed to celebrate 2018 as 'Year of Tourism between India and Russia'. They encouraged further collaboration between Ministry of Tourism of the Republic of India and Federal Agency for Tourism of the Russian Federation in enhancing bilateral cooperation, including establishment of direct links and contacts between Indian and Russian tourist associations, organizations, enterprises and companies.

70th Anniversary Celebrations of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations

The leaders called for grand celebrations in 2017 to mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Russia. They asked the concerned ministries and agencies to organize celebrations depicting width and depth of multi-faceted relations that the countries have spanning diverse fields including political, defence, energy, trade, economy, finance, investment, culture, education, think-tanks, science and technology, sports, youth, tourism, people-to-people etc. They welcomed elaboration of an Action plan towards this goal.

Global Order and World Peace

Russia reaffirmed its support for India's candidature for a permanent membership of a reformed and expanded UN Security Council.

The Indian Side highly appreciated the role played by Russia in India's accession to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

The Leaders expressed satisfaction over the development of cooperation in the BRICS grouping and underlined the importance of further strengthening BRICS strategic partnership. The Leaders expressed satisfaction at the momentum generated by the BRICS Business Council Meetings in 2016. They welcomed the progress in the functioning of the New Development Bank and its decision to disburse the first set of loans for projects in the area of green and renewable energy. Russia applauded the focus on enhancing people-to-people contacts during India's BRICS Chairmanship and organisation of events like BRICS Film Festival, BRICS Under-17 Football Tournament, BRICS Convention on Tourism, etc.

The Leaders expressed satisfaction over the development of BRICS economic cooperation. They appreciated the progress in the implementation of the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership adopted at the Ufa Summit in July 2015. The Sides also agreed to broaden cooperation through joint promotion of the Indian initiatives on eliminating non-tariff barriers in trade, increasing trade in services and structuring support and development of MSMEs in the BRICS format. The Russian side also appreciated the organisation of the 1st BRICS Trade Fair in New Delhi to further consolidate trade ties among BRICS countries. They also underlined the importance of the implementation of the BRICS Roadmap for Trade, Economic and Investment Cooperation until 2020 submitted by the Russian Side in

2015. It was agreed that close cooperation among the BRICS Contact Group on Economic and Trade Issues, the BRICS Business Council and the New Development Bank is crucial to enhance the BRICS economic partnership.

Having stressed the importance of cooperation between Russia, India and China (RIC) the Leaders welcomed the outcomes of the RIC Ministerial Meeting in Moscow on 18 April, 2016 as a tangible contribution to deepening mutual trust and coordination on international and regional issues.

Both Sides called for constructive international, regional and bilateral cooperation in order to help Afghanistan in addressing the domestic security situation, improving the capabilities of Afghan National Security Forces, strengthening counter-narcotics capabilities, ensuring socio-economic development, and enhancing connectivity.

The Leaders strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and emphasized the necessity of comprehensive international collaboration in order to ensure its eradication. They stressed the need to deny safe havens to terrorists and the importance of countering the spread of terrorist ideology as well as radicalization leading to terrorism, stopping recruitment, preventing travel of terrorists and foreign terrorist fighters, strengthening border management and having effective legal assistance and extradition arrangements. Furthermore, stressing the need to have a strong international legal regime built on the principle of 'zero tolerance for direct or indirect support of terrorism', both Sides called upon the international community to make sincere efforts towards the earliest conclusion of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT).

The Leaders reaffirmed the need to deepen bilateral cooperation in this field of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and welcomed the conclusion of the Indian-Russian Inter-Governmental Agreement for Cooperation in this regard.

Both Sides expressed concern over the continuing instability in South-Eastern Ukraine and supported a political and negotiated settlement of the issue through the complete implementation of the Package of Measures for the Implementation of Minsk Agreements of February 12, 2015.

The two Sides are convinced that the conflict in Syria should be peacefully resolved through comprehensive and inclusive intra-Syrian dialogue based on the Geneva Communiqué of June 30, 2012, and relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

Russia welcomed India's accession to the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation and the Missile Technology Control Regime. Russia welcomed India's application for membership in the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), reiterating its strong support for India's early entry into the NSG. Russia also supported India's interest in full membership in the Wassenaar Arrangement.

The Leaders stressed upon the need for preventing the weaponization of space. The Sides called for conclusion of a legally binding international agreement for the prevention of weaponization of outer space at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

The Sides reiterated their desire to further strengthen their consultations and coordination in various international organizations such as the Group of Twenty (G-20), East Asia Summits, Asia-Europe Meeting, ASEAN Regional Forum, ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus, the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia, and the Asia Cooperation Dialogue.

Bilateral Perspectives

Acknowledging the unique nature of strategic partnership between the Republic of India and the Russian Federation, the Leaders agreed to diversify stakeholders and further strengthen the existing mechanisms of cooperation to propel India-Russia partnership to a level that meets the aspirations of their people.

9.4.B List of 17 agreements/MOUs exchanged during India-Russia Annual Summit(October 15, 2016)

MoUs signed

- MoU between JSC United Shipbuilding Corporation and the Council for Economic Cooperation of Andhra Pradesh on studying perspectives for cooperation in shipbuilding, implementation of infrastructure projects, transfer of technologies and training foreign specialists.
- MoU between JSC "Rusinformexport" and the Ministry of Urban

Development of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, State Company National Buildings Construction Corporation Ltd., Government of Haryana on Cooperation in the implementation of "smart cities" program in India with the use of IT solutions of the Russian companies.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoU between Gazprom and Engineers India Limited on the joint study of a gas pipeline to India and the other possible areas of Cooperation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperation Agreement in the area of Education and Training between Rosneft Oil Company and ONGC Videsh Limited
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoU for setting up of Investment Fund between NIIF and RDIF.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoU for Cooperation between Indian and Russian railways in increasing the speed of trains between Nagpur- Secunderabad / Hyderabad
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signing of the shareholder agreement for establishing a Joint Venture to manufacture Ka-226T helicopter in India.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoU between ISRO and ROSCOSMOS on Mutual Allocation of Ground Measurement Gathering Stations for GLONASS AND NAVIC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoU between Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry of Republic of India on expansion of Bilateral Trade and Economic Cooperation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MoU between Department of Science & Technology (India) and FASO (Russia)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme of Cooperation in Oil and Gas Sector for the period 2017-18
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol for consultations between the Ministry of External Affairs & Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia for the period 2017-18.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement on cooperation in International Information Security
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signing of IGA to purchase/construct four additional 1135.6 frigates through partnership between Russian and Indian shipyard
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signing of IGA for the procurement of S-400 Air Defence System.

9.5 The United States of America

The India US relationship grows in strength from year to year. The US has supported India's bid for the NSG seat and has acknowledged the role India has played and will play in the future on the issue of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. The following visit took place in the past year.

9.5.A Visit of Prime Minister to USA for the Nuclear Security Summit (31 March - 01 April, 2016)

1. The Prime Minister attended the 4th Nuclear Security Summit on March 31 and April 1, 2016 at Washington D.C. The first Nuclear Security Summit was held in Washington D.C. (April 2010) followed by the Summits in Seoul (March 2012) and The Hague (March 2014).

The Nuclear Security Summit process has been instrumental in focusing leaders' level attention on the global threat posed by nuclear terrorism and urgent measures required to prevent terrorists and other non-state actors from gaining access to sensitive nuclear materials and technologies. The 2016 Summit took stock of the progress of the previous NSS Communiqués /Work Plan, outlining a future agenda. The Prime Minister also had bilateral meetings on the sidelines of NSS 2016.

9.5.B India's National Progress Report, Nuclear Security Summit 2016: April 02, 2016

The Prime Minister said that India will continue to accord a high national priority to national security through strong institutional framework, independent regulatory agency and trained and specialized manpower. The main points highlighted in the National Progress Report are as follows:

- India looks at nuclear technology and nuclear materials primarily as a resource for meeting a part of its requirements for electricity. It considers nuclear power as safe, reliable, affordable and environmentally friendly and is engaged in developing nuclear technologies for deployment.
- In tune with the security requirements as perceived by India, the nuclear security architecture in the country has been strengthened and India has also participated in strengthening security architecture at the global level.
- India is party to all the 13 universal instruments accepted as benchmarks for a State's commitments to combat international

terrorism. Being parties to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials (CPPNM) and International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, India supports efforts for promoting the universality of these two conventions.

- In respect of national framework, the Indian Atomic Energy Act, 1962 provides the legal framework for all aspects related to development of nuclear and radiation technologies including their security. India's export controls list and guidelines have been harmonized with those of Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) and India looks forward to strengthening its contribution to shared non-proliferation objectives through membership of the export controls regimes. Institutionally, the security of nuclear and radiological material in India is ensured through robust oversight by India's Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB), which deploys a large pool of highly trained and specialised manpower for this purpose. IAEA's peer review mechanisms like the Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) have acknowledged the strength of AERB's regulatory practices and capabilities. The National Investigation Agency (NIA) which acts as the central counter terrorism law enforcement agency has reference to the Atomic Energy Act, the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and the Weapons of Mass Destruction and their Delivery Systems (Prohibition of Unlawful Activities) Act. The Nuclear Controls and Planning Wing set up in the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) in 2013 implements India's commitment related to nuclear safeguards, export controls and nuclear safety and security. The National Disaster Management Agency (NDMA) responds to emergencies including radiological emergencies.
- India has set up at the Counter Nuclear Smuggling Team which response to threats involving use of nuclear and radioactive material for malicious purposes.
- To preclude the threat from the misuse of High Enriched Uranium (HEU), India is setting up a facility for the production of medical grade Mo-99 by the uranium fission route using Low Enriched Uranium (LEU) targets. India also observes the principle of "reprocess to reuse" whereby reprocessing of the spent fuel and commissioning of fast reactors are being synchronized to preclude any build-up of a plutonium stockpile.
- India's regulatory agency, the AERB, has instituted very robust regulatory mechanisms to ensure safety and security of radiation sources. Apart from publishing guides on security of radioactive sources and radiation facilities, AERB has developed a database of

radiation sources utilized in the country and recently instituted a very successful e-LORA (e-licensing of Radiation Applications) platform for complete automation and facilitate end-to-end licensing of facilities using radiation sources. AERB is also regularly conducting awareness programmes for various stakeholders/ law enforcement agencies for security of radiation sources throughout the country.

- A network of 23 Emergency Response Centres, spread across India has been developed for detecting and responding to any nuclear or radiological emergency, anywhere in the country. All major sea ports and airports of the country are being equipped with radiation portals & detection equipment to monitor all vehicular, passenger and cargo traffic.
- To counter cyber threats, a hierarchy of on-site Cyber security architecture has been deployed and also a number of sophisticated products and services like secure network access system (SNAS) have been developed and deployed for protection of the cyber infrastructure in the country.
- The Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP) established more than five years ago, has conducted more than 30 international and regional programmes involving more than 300 participants from around 30 countries covering important and emerging nuclear security topics.
- India has consistently supported the IAEA's central role in facilitating national efforts and fostering effective international cooperation to further strengthen nuclear security. Indian experts have been participating in various bodies established by the IAEA to draft and review documents related to nuclear security. IAEA has conducted the "Integrated Regulatory Review Service" (IRRS) review of India's regulatory agency, the AERB. India contributed 1 million dollars to IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund in 2013 and proposed to contribute a similar amount in 2016 as well.
- India fully supports the implementation of UNSC Council Resolution 1540, its extension resolution 1977, and the United Nations Global Counter Terrorism Strategy. Besides, India is also a Party to the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) and participates in all three working groups of the GICNT in the areas of Nuclear Detection, Nuclear Forensics, and Response and Mitigation.

9.5.C Visit of Prime Minister to USA (June 6-8, 2016)

Main highlights of the India-US Joint Statement during the visit of Prime Minister to USA (The United States and India: Enduring Global Partners in the 21st Century) (June 07, 2016)¹³

- They pledged to pursue new opportunities to bolster economic growth and sustainable development, promote peace and security at home and around the world, strengthen inclusive, democratic governance and respect for universal human rights, and provide global leadership on issues of shared interest remaining closely invested in each other's security and prosperity.

Advancing U.S.-India Global Leadership on Climate and Clean Energy

- The steps that the two Governments have taken in the last two years through the U.S.-India Contact Group, have laid a strong foundation for a long-term partnership between U.S. and Indian companies for building nuclear power plants in India. Both sides welcomed the announcement by the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd, and Westinghouse that engineering and site design work will begin immediately and the two sides will work toward finalizing the contractual arrangements by June 2017.
- Both countries are committed to working together and with others to promote full implementation of the Paris Agreement to address the urgent threats posed by climate change. The leaders reiterated their commitment to pursue low greenhouse gas emission development strategies in the pre-2020 period and to develop long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies. In addition, the two countries resolved to work to adopt an HFC amendment in 2016 with increased financial support from donor countries to the Multilateral Fund to help developing countries with implementation, and an ambitious phasedown schedule, under the Montreal Protocol pursuant to the Dubai Pathway. The leaders resolved to work together at the upcoming International Civil Aviation Organization Assembly to reach a successful outcome to address greenhouse gas emissions from international aviation.
- The leaders welcomed the signing of an MOU to Enhance Cooperation on Energy Security, Clean Energy and Climate Change, and an MOU on Cooperation in Gas Hydrates.
- Signing of an MOU to enhance cooperation on Wildlife Conservation and Combating Wildlife Trafficking.

¹³<http://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visit-detail.htm?26879/IndiaUS+Joint+Statement+during+the+visit+of+Prime+Minister+to+USA+The+United+States+and+India+Enduring+Global+Partners+in+the+21st+Century>

Clean Energy Finance

- The United States intended to be a member in the International Solar Alliance (ISA). To this end, and to strengthen ISA together, the United States and India jointly launched the third Initiative of the ISA which would focus on off-grid solar for energy access at the Founding Conference of ISA in September, 2016 in India.
- United States and India announced: the creation of a \$20 million U.S. - India Clean Energy Finance (USICEF) initiative, equally supported by the United States and India and continuation of successful cooperation with USAID on "Greening the Grid".

Strengthening Global Nonproliferation

- The leaders looked forward to India's imminent entry into the Missile Technology Control Regime. President Obama welcomed India's application to join the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), and re-affirmed that India is ready for membership. The United States also re-affirmed its support for India's early membership of the Australia Group and Wassenaar Arrangement.

Securing the Domains: Land, Maritime, Air, Space, and Cyber

- The leaders resolved that the United States and India should look to each other as priority partners in the Asia Pacific and the Indian Ocean region.
- They welcomed the inaugural meeting of the Maritime Security Dialogue, welcomed the conclusion of a technical arrangement for sharing of maritime "White Shipping" information, affirmed their support for U.S.-India cooperation in promoting maritime security and reiterated the importance they attach to ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight and exploitation of resources as per international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and settlement of territorial disputes by peaceful means.
- The leaders applauded the enhanced military to military cooperation between the two countries especially in joint exercises, training and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HA/DR). They expressed their desire to explore agreements which would facilitate further expansion of bilateral defense cooperation in practical ways. In this regard, they welcomed the finalization of the text of the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA).

- Noting that the U.S.-India defense relationship can be an anchor of stability, and given the increasingly strengthened cooperation in defense, the United States hereby recognizes India as a Major Defense Partner.
- The leaders committed to enhance cooperation in support of the Government of India's Make in India Initiative and expand the co-production and co-development of technologies under the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI). They welcomed the establishment of new DTTI working groups to include agreed items covering Naval Systems, Air Systems, and other Weapons Systems. The leaders announced the finalization of the text of an Information Exchange Annex under the Joint Working Group on Aircraft Carrier Technology Cooperation.
- They affirmed their commitment to the voluntary norms that no country should conduct or knowingly support online activity that intentionally damages critical infrastructure or otherwise impairs the use of it to provide services to the public; that no country should conduct or knowingly support activity intended to prevent national computer security incident response teams from responding to cyber incidents, or use its own teams to enable online activity that is intended to do harm; that every country should cooperate, consistent with its domestic law and international obligations, with requests for assistance from other states in mitigating malicious cyber activity emanating from its territory; and that no country should conduct or knowingly support ICT-enabled theft of intellectual property, including trade secrets or other confidential business information, with the intent of providing competitive advantages to its companies or commercial sectors.

Standing Together Against Terrorism and Violent Extremism

- The leaders acknowledged the continued threat posed to human civilization by terrorism and along with the multiple joint initiatives that have been adapted, affirmed their support for a UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism that advances and strengthens the framework for global cooperation and reinforces that no cause or grievance justifies terrorism.

Bolstering Economic and Trade Ties

- In order to substantially increase bilateral trade, they pledged to explore new opportunities to break down barriers to the movement of goods and services, and support deeper integration into global supply

chains, thereby creating jobs and generating prosperity in both economies. They look forward to the second annual Strategic and Commercial Dialogue in India later this year to identify concrete steps in this regard. They also commended the increased engagement on trade and investment issues under the Trade Policy Forum (TPF) and encouraged substantive results for the next TPF later this year. They welcomed the engagement of U.S. private sector companies in India's Smart City program.

- The leaders applauded the strong bonds of friendship between the 1.5 billion peoples of India and the United States that have provided a solid foundation for a flourishing bilateral partnership, noting that two-way travel for tourism, business, and education has seen unprecedented growth, including more than one million travelers from India to the United States in 2015, and similar number from the United States to India. The leaders resolved to facilitate greater movement of professionals, investors and business travelers, students, and exchange visitors between their countries to enhance people-to-people contact as well as their economic and technological partnership. To this end, they welcomed the signing of an MOU for Development of an International Expedited Traveler Initiative (also known as the Global Entry Program) and resolved to complete within the next three months the procedures for India's entry into the Global Entry Program.
- The leaders recognized the fruitful exchanges in August 2015 and June 2016 on the elements required in both countries to pursue a U.S.-India Totalization Agreement and resolved to continue discussions later this year.
- Recognizing the importance of fostering an enabling environment for innovation and empowering entrepreneurs, the United States welcomes India's hosting of the 2017 Global Entrepreneurship Summit.
- The leaders welcomed the enhanced engagement on intellectual property rights under the High Level Working Group on Intellectual Property and reaffirmed their commitment to use this dialogue to continue to make concrete progress on IPR issues by working to enhance bilateral cooperation among the drivers of innovation and creativity in both countries.
- The United States welcomes India's interest in joining the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, as India is a dynamic part of the Asian economy.

Expanding Cooperation: Science & Technology and Health

1. The leaders affirmed their nations' mutual support in exploring the most fundamental principles of science as embodied in the arrangement reached to cooperate on building a Laser Interferometer Gravitational Wave Observatory (LIGO) in India in the near future and welcomed the formation of the India-U.S. Joint Oversight Group to facilitate agency coordination of funding and oversight of the project.
2. The leaders look forward to India's participation at the September 2016 Our Ocean Conference in Washington, D.C. as well as holding of the first India-U.S. Oceans Dialogue later this year, to strengthen cooperation in marine science, ocean energy, managing and protecting ocean biodiversity, marine pollution, and sustainable use of ocean resources.
3. The leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the Global Health Security Agenda and the timely implementation of its objectives. The Prime Minister noted India's role on the Steering Group and its leadership in the areas of anti-microbial resistance and immunization. The President noted the United States' commitment to support, undergo, and share a Joint External Evaluation in collaboration with the World Health Organization.
4. The leaders recognized the global threat posed by multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) and committed to continue collaboration in the area of tuberculosis and to share respective best practices.
5. The leaders noted the growing threat of non-communicable diseases. The leaders also reiterated the importance of holistic approaches to health and wellness, and of promoting the potential benefits of holistic approaches by synergizing modern and traditional systems of medicine, including Yoga.
6. The leaders strongly endorsed expansion of the Indo-U.S. Vaccine Action Program, which is fostering public-private research partnerships focused on the development and evaluation of vaccines to prevent tuberculosis, dengue, chikungunya and other globally important infectious diseases.

Global Leadership

1. The leaders reaffirmed their resolve to continue working together as well as with the wider international community to augment the capacity of the United Nations to more effectively address the global development and security challenges. With the historic adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September 2015, and recognizing its universality, the leaders reaffirmed their commitment to implement this ambitious agenda domestically and internationally

and work in a collaborative partnership for the effective achievement of Sustainable Development Goals.

2. The leaders reaffirmed their support for a reformed UN Security Council with India as a permanent member.
3. The leaders welcomed the successful convening of the Leaders' Summit on UN Peacekeeping and committed to deepening engagement on UN peacekeeping capacity-building efforts in third countries, through co-organizing the first UN Peacekeeping Course for African Partners in New Delhi later this year for participants from ten countries in Africa. The leaders also reiterated their support for ongoing reform efforts to strengthen UN peacekeeping operations.
4. Building on their respective bilateral engagements with Africa, such as the U.S.-Africa Leaders Summit and India-Africa Forum Summit, the leaders reflected that the United States and India share a common interest in working with partners in Africa to promote prosperity and security across the continent. The leaders welcomed trilateral cooperation with African partners, including in areas such as agriculture, health, energy, women's empowerment and sanitation under the Statement of Guiding Principles on Triangular Cooperation for Global Development. They looked forward to opportunities to deepen the U.S. - India global development cooperation in Africa, as well as in Asia and beyond.

Building People-to-People Ties

1. Both sides committed to open additional consulates in each other's country. India will be opening a new consulate in Seattle and the United States will open a new consulate at a mutually agreed location in India.
2. The leaders announced that the United States and India will be Travel and Tourism Partner Countries for 2017, and committed to facilitate visas for each other's nationals.
3. Reflecting on the strong educational and cultural bonds between the two countries, the leaders welcomed the growing number of Indian students studying in the United States, which increased by 29 percent to nearly 133,000 students in 2014-2015, and looked forward to increased opportunities for American students to study in India. The leaders also appreciated their governments' joint efforts through the Fulbright-Kalam Climate Fellowship to develop a cohort of climate scientists to confront the shared challenge of global climate change.
4. Recognizing its mutual goal of strengthening greater people-to-people ties, the leaders intend to renew efforts to intensify dialogue to address issues affecting the citizens of both countries that arise due to

differences in the approaches of legal systems, including issues relating to cross-country marriage, divorce and child custody.

5. Prime Minister Modi welcomed the United States' repatriation of antiquities to India. The leaders also committed to redouble their efforts to combat the theft and trafficking of cultural objects.
6. Prime Minister Modi thanked President Obama for his gracious invitation and warmth of hospitality. He extended an invitation for President Obama to visit India at his convenience.

9.5.D Documents signed/finalized in the run upto the visit of Prime Minister of India to the US (June 07, 2016)¹⁴

Documents signed

1. Arrangement between the Multi-Agency Centre/Intelligence Bureau of the Government of India and the Terrorist Screening Center of the Government of the United States of America for the exchange of Terrorist Screening Information.
2. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Government of India and the Government of the United States of America to enhance cooperation on Energy Security, Clean Energy and Climate Change.
3. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Government of India and Government of the United States of America to enhance co-operation on Wildlife Conservation and Combating Wildlife Trafficking.
4. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Consular, Passport and Visa Division of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India and US Customs and Border Protection, Department of Homeland Security of the United States for the Development of an International Expedited Traveler Initiative (the Global Entry Programme).
5. Technical Arrangement between the Indian Navy and the United States Navy concerning Unclassified Maritime Information Sharing .
6. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, Government of India and the Department of Energy of the United States of America for Cooperation in Gas Hydrates

Documents finalized

1. Information Exchange Annex (IEA) between the Ministry of Defence, Government of India and the Department of Defense of the United

¹⁴<http://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visit-detail.htm?26878/Documents+signedfinalized+in+the+run+upto+the+visit+of+Prime+Minister+of+India+to+the+US>

States of America to the Master Information Exchange Agreement concerning Aircraft Carrier Technologies.

2. Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement between the Ministry of Defence, Government of India and the Department of Defense of the United States of America

9.5.E Prime Minister's remarks at the U.S. Congress (June 08, 2016)¹⁵

Our nations may have been shaped by differing histories, cultures, and faiths. Yet, our belief in democracy for our nations and liberty for our countrymen is common.

The idea that all citizens are created equal is a central pillar of the American constitution. Our founding fathers too shared the same belief and sought individual liberty for every citizen of India.

Engagement between our democracies has been visible in the manner in which our thinkers impacted one another, and shaped the course of our societies.

Today, our relationship has overcome the hesitations of history. Comfort, candour and convergence define our conversations.

Through the cycle of elections and transitions of Administrations the intensity of our engagements has only grown. And, in this exciting journey, the U.S. Congress has acted as its compass.

In the fall of 2008, when the Congress passed the India-U.S. Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, it changed the very colours of leaves of our relationship. We thank you for being there when the partnership needed you the most.

You have also stood by us in times of sorrow. India will never forget the solidarity shown by the U.S. Congress when terrorists from across our border attacked Mumbai in November of 2008.

The genius of Norman Borlaug brought the Green Revolution and food security to India. The excellence of the American Universities nurtured Institutes of Technology and Management in India.


The embrace of our partnership extends to the entirety of human endeavour—from the depths of the oceans to the vastness of the space.

Our S&T collaboration continues to help us in cracking the age-old problems in the fields of public health, education, food, and agriculture.

¹⁵<http://mea.gov.in/outgoing-visit-detail.htm?26886/Prime+Ministers+remarks+at+the+US+Congress>

Ties of commerce and investment are flourishing. We trade more with the U.S. than with any other nation. And, the flow of goods, services and capital between us generates jobs in both our societies.

As in trade, so in defence. India exercises with the United States more than we do with any other partner. Defence purchases have moved from almost zero to ten billion dollars in less than a decade.

Our cooperation also secures our cities and citizens from terrorists, and protects our critical infrastructure from cyber threats. Civil Nuclear Cooperation,  is a reality.

Our people to people links are strong; and there is close cultural connect between our societies. SURI tells us that India's ancient heritage of Yoga has over 30 million practitioners in the U.S..

Connecting our two nations is also a unique and dynamic bridge of three million Indian Americans. Today, they are among your best CEOs; academics; astronauts; scientists; economists; doctors; even spelling bee champions.

To do list is long and ambitious .It includes:· A vibrant rural economy with robust farm sector; · A roof over each head and electricity to all households; · To skill millions of our youth; · Build 100 smart cities; · Have a broad band for a billion, and connect our villages to the digital world; And create a twenty-first century rail, road and port infrastructure.

These are not just aspirations; they are goals to be reached in a finite time-frame. And, to be achieved with a light carbon foot print, with greater emphasis on renewables. In every sector of India's forward march, I see the U.S. as an indispensable partner.

There can be no doubt that in advancing this relationship, both nations stand to gain in great measure.As the U.S. businesses search for new areas of economic growth, markets for their goods, a pool of skilled resources, and global locations to produce and manufacture, India could be their ideal partner.

India's strong economy, and growth rate of 7.6% per annum, is creating new opportunities for our mutual prosperity.

Transformative American technologies in India and growing investment by Indian companies in the United States both have a positive impact on the lives of our citizens.

Today, for their global research and development centres, India is the destination of choice for the U.S. companies. Looking eastward from India, across the Pacific, the innovation strength of our two countries comes together in California.

Here, the innovative genius of America and India's intellectual creativity are working to shape new industries of the future. The 21st century has brought with it great opportunities. But, it also comes with its own set of challenges.

Inter-dependence is increasing. But, while some parts of the world are islands of growing economic prosperity; other are mired in conflicts.

In Asia, the absence of an agreed security architecture creates uncertainty. Threats of terror are expanding, and new challenges are emerging in cyber and outer-space.

In this world full of multiple transitions and economic opportunities; growing uncertainties and political complexities; existing threats and new challenges; our engagement can make a difference by promoting:

- Cooperation not dominance;
- Connectivity not isolation;
- Respect for Global Commons;
- Inclusive not exclusive mechanisms; and above all
- Adherence to international rules and norms.

India is already assuming her responsibilities in securing the Indian Ocean region.

A strong India-U.S. partnership can anchor peace, prosperity and stability from Asia to Africa and from Indian Ocean to the Pacific.

It can also help ensure security of the sea lanes of commerce and freedom of navigation on seas.

A commitment to rebuild a peaceful, and stable and prosperous Afghanistan our shared objective.

The fight against terrorism has to be fought at many levels. And, the traditional tools of military, intelligence or diplomacy alone would not be able to win this fight.

Terrorism must be delegitimized. The benefits of our partnership extend not just to the nations and regions that need it most.

On our own, and by combining our capacities, we are also responding to other global challenges including when disaster strikes and where humanitarian relief is needed.

Far from our shores, we evacuated thousands from Yemen, Indians, Americans and others. Nearer home, we were the first responders during Nepal's earthquake, in the Maldives water crisis and most recently during landslide in Sri Lanka.

We are also one of the largest contributors of troops to UN Peace Keeping Operations. Often, India and the U.S. have combined their strengths in science, technology and innovation to help fight hunger, poverty, diseases and illiteracy in different parts of the world.

The success of our partnership is also opening up new opportunities for learning, security and development from Asia to Africa.

And, the protection of environment and caring for the planet is central to our shared vision of a just world. For us in India, to live in harmony with mother earth is part of our ancient belief.

And, to take from nature only what is most essential is part of our civilizational ethos. Our partnership, therefore, aims to balance responsibilities with capabilities.

And, it also focuses on new ways to increase the availability and use of renewable energy. A strong U.S. support for our initiative to form an International Solar Alliance is one such effort.

We are working together not just for a better future for ourselves, but for the whole world. This has also been the goal of our efforts in G-20, East Asia Summit and Climate Change summits.

So, as we embark on a new journey, and seek new goals, let us focus not just on matters routine but transformational ideas.

- Not just on creating wealth but also creating value for our societies;
- Not just on immediate gains but also long term benefits;
- Not just on sharing best practices but also shaping partnerships; and
- Not just on building a bright future for our peoples, but in being a bridge to a more united, humane and prosperous world.

9.5.F Opening Plenary during the Second India-US Strategic and Commercial Dialogue (S&CD) in New Delhi (August 30, 2016)

- India and the US held the Second India-US Strategic and Commercial Dialogue in New Delhi. External Affairs Minister of India Sushma Swaraj and Minister of State for Commerce and Industry of India Nirmala Sitharaman co-chaired the dialogue with US Secretary of State John F. Kerry and US Secretary of Commerce Penny Pritzker.
- The Sides expressed deep satisfaction at the expanded and strengthened course of bilateral engagement in recent times and reiterated their shared commitment to advance mutual prosperity, global peace, and stability. The Sides reviewed the progress made in the implementation of decisions taken in the recent Summit meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Barack Obama in June 2016 in Washington, DC and looked forward to continued engagement for further strengthening of bilateral ties.
- Smt. Swaraj said that we want to take our expanding defence cooperation to the next stage of co-production and co-development. For this, we need to define the benefits associated with India's designation as a 'Major Defence Partner' of the US during Prime Minister's visit in June. This would spur defence industry collaboration between India and the US and help India play the desired role as a net provider of security in the region.
- Both sides were able to conclude a Framework for the India-US Cyber Relationship, the first of its kind both for India and the US, with any other country.
- She urged the United States to join the International Solar Alliance as an active member, which will be critical to its success.
- John Kerry said that the US looks forward to finalizing a cyber-framework that will help us all to be able to recognize and to protect against new and evolving threats to global security.
- He said that in security and economic sectors, we have room to be able to further grow and to expand our two-way trade, our investments, but also to solve security problems. He emphasised on energy sector where the two countries have enormous opportunities.
- Both sides agreed to scale up their collaboration in clean energy and to quickly operationalize the various initiatives that were announced during Prime Minister's visit to facilitate investments in this sector from US into India. We look forward to working with the US to ensure the success of the International Solar Alliance.
- Both agreed to work together on the implementation of Agenda 2030, through its 17 Sustainable Developmental Goals (SDGs).
- The two sides discussed the following common sectors of interest, Strategic, Defense & Security, Regional Consultations and Global Issues, Climate, Energy and Environment, Commerce, Economy, and

Growth, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Ease of Doing Business, Smart Cities Cooperation, Travel, Tourism, and People-to-People Ties, Standards Cooperation, Transportation Sector Cooperation, Trade Policy, Science and Technology, Health, Education and People-to-People Contacts.

9.5 United Kingdom

Prime Minister of the UK, Theresa May visited India in November 2016. India and the UK issued a joint statement and signed MoUs on ease of doing business and cooperation in the field of intellectual property. Both countries discussed to enhance cooperation in the areas of trade, urban development-smart cities, defence, energy, climate change, science and technology, etc. Prime Minister May expressed interest in widening bilateral economic relations between the two countries.

9.6.A India-UK Joint Statement during the visit of Prime Minister of the United Kingdom to India on November 07, 2016 (India-UK Strategic Partnership looking forward to a renewed engagement: Vision for the decade ahead)

- The visit was designed to further strengthen the India-UK Strategic Partnership, guided by a shared vision for the future and supported by a concrete and comprehensive roadmap of bilateral and global engagement.
- The two leaders recalled the strong bonds of friendship that exist between the two countries characterised by extensive political engagement, deep economic cooperation, and ever expanding scientific and technological collaboration. The two states enjoy vibrant people to people relations supported by the 1.5 million strong Indian diaspora in the UK and an increasing convergence on the way forward on key global challenges of the 21st century.
- During Prime Minister Modi's visit to the UK last year, the two countries set out a bold vision for the UK-India Strategic Partnership. Both countries today commit to turn this vision into reality through closer, practical cooperation that delivers real benefits to both the countries.
- The UK was the first P5 advocate of India's permanent membership of the UN Security Council, recognising the common values we hold and our shared vision of a stable, rules-based international system. We continue to build upon our 2015 Defence and International Security Partnership to deepen cooperation, including on countering terrorism, radicalisation, violent extremism and cyber security. We will jointly set out areas on defence and security which make clear our future ambitions to design, make, exercise, train and co-operate together. And we will continue to consult and co-ordinate across a range of global policy security challenges, in pursuit of our shared goal of a more secure world.

Stimulating growth, trade and business together

- The two Prime Ministers noted the importance of the UK-India trade relationship and welcomed that business to business ties between India and the UK are flourishing. They noted that India was the third largest investor in the UK and the second largest international job creator with Indian companies having created over 110,000 jobs in the UK. The UK is the largest G-20 investor in India. The two Prime Ministers expressed their pleasure at the level of bilateral financial cooperation and called for greater participation of the investment community from both sides in stimulating Indian and UK economic growth.
- The two Prime Ministers welcomed the large number of commercial deals finalised in connection with the visit across a range of sectors - ICT companies, critical engineering and healthcare products.
- The two Prime Ministers noted the importance of Government and business working together. They welcomed the suggestions made by the India-UK CEO Forum which met in the margins of the visit. They agreed that the two Governments, together with the CEO Forum, would review how the Forum can better support an enhanced economic and commercial relationship, alongside Government dialogues.
- They agreed they will make it a priority for both countries, when the UK leaves the European Union, to build the closest possible commercial and economic relationship. To this end, the newly established Joint Working Group, reporting to JETCO, will discuss the detail of our trading relationship, and help drive progress.
- The two Prime Ministers agreed to accelerate the deepening partnership between the UK and India in financing investment in Indian infrastructure.
- Over \$1.1 billion (INR 7,500 crore or £900 million) of rupee-denominated bonds have been issued in London since July 2016 establishing London as the leading global centre for offshore rupee finance. The two Prime Ministers commended the pioneering and highly successful bond issuances by HDFC (INR 3,000 crore or £366 million) and NTPC (INR 2,000 crore or £244 million), which will pave the way for Indian corporates to raise significant quantities of finance in London. They noted the recent issuance in London by the Canadian province of British Columbia, the first foreign sub-national entity to issue rupee-denominated bonds. They welcomed the intention of National Highways Authority of India [NHAI] and Indian Railway Finance Corporation [IRFC] to issue rupee-denominated bonds in the next few months. They also looked forward to other Indian entities, including Energy Efficiency Services Limited and the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency preparing to issue green bonds including rupee-denominated bonds in London in the coming weeks.

- The two Prime Ministers also welcomed the agreement to create the FTSE-SBI India Bonds Index Series, which will support the development of India's growing corporate bond market. This follows a successful collaboration between State Bank of India (SBI) and London Stock Exchange Group's index business FTSE Russell.
- The two Prime Ministers were pleased with the progress being made to establish an India-UK Sub-Fund under the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF). The fund will seek to leverage private sector investment from the City of London to finance Indian infrastructure projects under the umbrella of the NIIF. It is hoped that this will initially raise around £500 million and has the potential to unlock much greater investment flows in the future.

Both governments will be prepared to make an anchor investment of up to £120 million each in the India-UK Sub-Fund subject to agreeing a structure that maximises investor interest.

- The two Prime Ministers welcomed that the economic and financial agenda will be taken forward by Finance Ministers when they convene the Economic and Financial Dialogue in early 2017. They welcomed successful collaboration between the two financial services sectors through the industry-led India-UK Financial Partnership. The IUKFP will meet again alongside the Economic and Financial Dialogue. The two Prime Ministers commended CDC Group, the UK's Development Finance Institution, for its initiatives in India. They noted CDC's expanding investment portfolio in India. India will continue to be a key focus of CDC's investment strategy.

Smart Cities and Urban Development

- The two Prime Ministers recalled the three city partnerships agreed in London in November 2015 and noted progress. They agreed to build on these through a more strategic and ambitious urban partnership that brings together Governments, businesses, investors and urban experts to build smarter, more inclusive cities that drive shared prosperity, jobs and growth in India and the UK. Both sides would drive the partnership to raise investment, identify opportunities and accelerate progress. UK seed investment financing through mechanisms like CDC, NIIF, and UK Export Finance could leverage higher financing from financial markets - including through Rupee Bonds floated on the London Stock Exchange. As part of the partnership, the two Prime Ministers welcomed new technical assistance for the redevelopment of Varanasi City Railway Station under the Varanasi Smart City Development Plan.

Start-up India

- Prime Minister May announced that the UK is investing over £160m across 75 start-up enterprises which would create jobs and deliver critical services across several States in India. She announced an additional £20 million for a Start-Up India Venture Capital Fund. The Fund will support 30 enterprises and leverage additional £40m capital from other investors including UK venture capital funds.

Ease of Doing Business

- The two Prime Ministers welcomed the signing of an MoU between the UK and India on Ease of Doing Business, which will harness UK expertise to support India's efforts to climb the World Bank Ease of Doing Business ratings.

Intellectual Property

- The two Prime Ministers welcomed the signing of an MOU on Intellectual Property, which will promote innovation, creativity and economic growth in both countries.

Energy and Climate Change

- To drive forward the next phase of bilateral collaboration on the shared strategic priority of secure, affordable and sustainable energy, the two Prime Ministers noted an enhanced UK-India energy for growth partnership and welcomed the decision to hold the first India-UK Energy Summit in early 2017.
- They also welcomed a fourth phase of joint UK-India Civil Nuclear Research Programme which will look at new technologies that contribute to enhancing nuclear safety, advanced materials for nuclear systems, waste management, and future civil nuclear energy systems.
- Prime Minister May appreciated Indian leadership on the International Solar Alliance to harness solar energy for meeting energy demands globally and to address climate change concerns. She signalled the UK's intention to join the Alliance and the UK will continue to engage in discussions as the Framework Agreement is finalised. The two leaders called upon prospective member countries to signal their support for the International Solar Alliance on the sidelines of COP 22 in Marrakesh on 15 November 2016.

A Global Partnership

- The two Prime Ministers reiterated the need for the rules-based international system to adapt and renew itself in light of the transformational changes that have taken place over the last 70 years. Prime Minister May reaffirmed the UK's commitment to a reformed United Nations Security Council with India as a permanent member, as well as to an enhanced role for India within the United Nations system. The two Prime Ministers underlined the priority they attach to international peace keeping, where India is the second largest troop contributor and the UK is the 6th largest budget contributor in the world.
- They committed to co-ordinating ever more closely within the G20, and welcomed the positive role played by the Commonwealth in championing democracy and fundamental freedoms. India and the United Kingdom expressed their strong and shared interest in advancing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The UK welcomed India's joining of the Missile Technology Control Regime

(MTCR) which would strengthen global non-proliferation objectives and continues to be a strong advocate of early Indian membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) as well as membership of other key Export Control Regimes.

- Following the Statement of Intent on Partnership for Cooperation in Third Countries signed in November 2015, the two Prime Ministers agreed to continue to pursue this partnership with a specific focus on Africa. Both sides agreed to share their experiences and best practices in providing developmental cooperation.

Fighting terrorism and responding to global security challenges

- Prime Minister May strongly condemned the September terrorist attack on the Indian Army Brigade headquarters in Uri, and offered condolences to the victims and their families. The two leaders strongly affirmed that terrorism is a serious threat to humanity. They reiterated their strong commitment to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and stressed that there can be no justification for acts of terror on any grounds whatsoever – agreeing that there should be zero-tolerance on terrorism.
- The two Prime Ministers affirmed that the fight against terrorism should not only seek to disrupt and bring to justice terrorists, terror organisations and networks, but should also identify, hold accountable and take strong measures against all those who encourage, support and finance terrorism, provide sanctuary to terrorists and terror groups, and falsely extol their virtues. There should be no glorification of terrorists or efforts to make a distinction between good and bad terrorists. They agreed that South Asia should be stable, prosperous and free from terror and called on all countries to work towards that goal.
- The leaders welcomed the recent UK-initiated joint statement on Preventing Violent Extremism launched at the Global Countering Terrorism Forum in New York. . The two leaders also called for strengthening the existing international counter terrorism legal framework including through the adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. The two leaders reiterated their call for Pakistan to bring the perpetrators of the November 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai and 2016 Pathankot attack to justice.

Enhancing defence partnership

- Building on the Defence and International Security Partnership (DISP) agreed in November 2015, the UK and India are committed to further strengthening their strategic partnership in defence.
- The two Prime Ministers recognized the potential for cooperation in defence manufacturing between UK and Indian companies in the 'Make in India' framework and agreed to encourage and facilitate such cooperation. The UK will continue their engagement with the Indian MOD and Indian defence companies to simplify and expedite export controls and to support the transfer of technology to enable projects in areas of mutual interest.

- The two Prime Ministers tasked the Defence Consultative Group (DCG) on 15-16 November 2016 to advance the bilateral defence cooperation agenda, including the UK's proposals for capability partnerships, through a range of activities including military to military cooperation, training, exchange of subject matter experts, research and technology linkages as well as defence manufacturing.
- Noting that ongoing cooperation between HAL and BAE Systems in manufacturing Hawk Advanced Jet Trainers in India as an example of partnership in defence manufacturing, the Prime Ministers agreed to apply innovative approaches to jointly promote products and services into international markets.

Cyber cooperation

- The two Prime Ministers announced their desire to enter into a Framework for the UK-India Cyber Relationship. The Prime Ministers also noted with satisfaction progress made on cyber security, including regular cooperation to tackle the shared threat of cyber crime, and the signing of an MOU between respective Computer Security Incident Response Teams in March 2016.

Freedom of the Seas

- The two sides underlined the importance of maintaining the legal order for the seas and oceans based on the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). They urged States to respect UNCLOS and refrain from activities which prejudice the peace, good order and security of the oceans.

International Affairs

- The two Prime Ministers recognised the increasing role of India as a global player. In this context, they recognised the constructive contribution of India in building peace and stability in the South Asia region, including through its expansive development cooperation in Afghanistan. In this context, they expressed support for the efforts of Afghan security forces against the continuing threat of terrorism in Afghanistan and strongly endorsed their efforts to ensure Afghanistan's security. The UK side extended its support to India for the Sixth Ministerial Meeting of the Heart of Asia Istanbul Process on Afghanistan in Amritsar on 4 December 2016.
- Both nations agreed to continue their engagement with Maldives to strengthen its democratic institutions.
The Prime Ministers noted the progress made by Sri Lanka in line with UN Human Rights Council Resolution 30/1 and agreed that more needed to be done. They committed to continue working closely with the Sri Lankan Government to achieve this.
- The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed their support to the people and the Government of Iraq in their war against terrorism and welcomed the Iraqi-led operation to liberate Mosul and other cities from the control of terrorist organization ISIS.

Extradition, Returns and Mobility

- The two Prime Ministers affirmed their strong commitment to enhance cooperation under the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty. The two leaders agreed that fugitives and criminals should not be allowed to escape the law. They expressed their strong commitment to facilitate outstanding extradition requests from both sides. In this context, they directed that the officials dealing with extradition matters from both sides should meet at the earliest to develop better understanding of each countries' legal processes and requirements; share best practices, and identify the causes of delays and expedite pending requests. They also agreed that regular interactions between the relevant India-UK authorities would be useful to resolve all outstanding cases expeditiously.
- Prime Minister Modi welcomed Prime Minister May's announcement that the UK is to offer new services to improve business travel for Indian visitors to the UK. India will become the first visa country to be offered the Registered Traveller Scheme, offering business travellers expedited clearance at the UK border. The Indian Government will become the first government in the world to be invited to nominate business executives to the Great Club, a bespoke visa and immigration service.
- The two Prime Ministers acknowledged the valuable contributions of the 1.5 million strong Indian diaspora to British society and their role in furthering bilateral relations. They recognised that mobility can strengthen people-to-people relations between the two countries. To this end, both parties agreed that visa regimes need to be as simple and efficient as possible for students, businesses, professionals, diplomats and officials and other travellers, including facilitating short-term mobility of skilled personnel between the two countries. The two leaders noted that the UK remained a popular destination for Indian students and that these students add to deepening India-UK partnership across all sectors of bilateral engagement. Prime Minister May noted that there remained no cap on overall numbers of international students studying at recognised educational institutions in the UK, that Indian students would continue to be welcome and that the UK Home Secretary had recently announced her intention to consult on changes to the UK student visa regime.
- The two Prime Ministers agreed that ensuring simple and effective visa systems depended critically on cooperation to protect the integrity of border and immigration systems. This included ensuring the timely and efficient return of individuals to their country of origin, as required by their respective national laws. Both countries agreed to strengthen co-operation in this area by implementing an expedited process for verifying the nationality and issuing travel documents. The two Prime Ministers announced the launch of a senior UK-India dialogue on Home Affairs issues which will take place bi-annually and be chaired at Permanent Secretary/Secretary level. The Prime Ministers expect this dialogue to make progress on key issues of mutual concern, including opportunities to make the visa system

simpler and more efficient, and steps to improve the integrity of border and immigration systems.

Celebrating Culture and Education and promoting skills

- The two Prime Ministers noted that 2016 is the India-UK Year of Education, Research and Innovation and welcomed the further investment (£20m) in the UK-India Education Research Initiative (UKIERI) to 2021, creating 50 new partnerships in 2017. Both Prime Ministers welcomed first 35 UK faculties visiting India under the Ministry of Human Resource Development funded GIAN programme and 198 new GREAT scholarships for Indian students to study at 40 UK universities. Both leaders welcomed the first batch of TCS sponsored UK interns, under the Generation UK-India programme. Both Prime Ministers look forward to the celebration of 2017 as the India-UK Year of Culture and support the activities and programmes being planned, for example an exhibition of Indian Science in the Science Museum in London, and highlighting 400 years of Shakespeare. Both Prime Ministers welcomed new teaching materials to the Indian SWAYAM MOOC platform, developed in partnership by UK and Indian Universities.
- The UK is supporting the Skill India Mission through a Centre for Excellence for the automobile sector in Pune. Prime Minister May announced a new commitment of up to £12m to support India's Skill India mission. Technology transfer from the UK will facilitate international training standards in up to 5 sectors including apprenticeships and certification.

Harnessing Science and Technology for a better future

- The two Prime Ministers noted that the exponential growth in science and technology programmes in India provide immense possibilities for further expanding bilateral collaboration. India-UK joint funding now stands at over £200 million and its leveraged impact on the economies and societies is several times higher. They announced new research partnerships worth £80 million including a new Joint Strategic Group on Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) with a joint investment of up to £13 million. The Prime Ministers recognised that Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) is a global challenge, and further recognized the commitments made at the G20 and UNGA earlier this year. Building upon the Thames-Ganga Partnership, the two Prime Ministers welcomed new initiatives on joint hydrological research programme and re-using waste water as well as innovative biotechnologies for cleaning and processing industrial waste, adding value to the Swachh Bharat programme.
- Noting the growing partnership in the area of renewable energy and combating climate change, the two Prime Ministers welcomed the launch of India-UK Clean Energy R&D Centre with focus on solar energy storage and integration with joint investment of £10 million and a collaborative R&D programme on energy efficient building

materials. Both these green initiatives would help to reduce carbon footprint and contribute to the Smart Cities programme.

- Building on the recent successful collaborations in agriculture, the two sides announced projects to address post-harvest losses benefiting farmers. Building on the recent successful collaborations in healthcare, the two sides announced the launch of the second phase of joint research in women's and children's health in low-income settings.
- The two leaders commended ongoing collaboration in biotechnology. The two sides looked forward to engaging on India's efforts to develop a Bio-bank that will draw on UK Bio-Bank's scientific expertise..

9.6.B List of MOUs exchanged during the visit of Prime Minister of the United Kingdom to India (November 07, 2016)

1. MoU on Ease of Doing Business between the Government of India and the Government of UK. The MoU intends to make expertise from different departments of the UK Government which have led the ease of doing business drive in the UK available to the relevant departments and agencies of the Government of India.
2. MoU between the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, India and the Intellectual Property Office of the United Kingdom (UK IPO) for cooperation in the field of intellectual property.
3. The MoU envisages establishing a mechanism for furthering cooperation between the Intellectual Property Offices of India and the UK in the field of IP and related information technology services.

10 INDIA and MULTILATERAL INSTITUTIONS

10.1. India and BRICS Summit

The eighth BRICS summit was held in Goa from 15 to 16 October 2016. The summit concluded with adaptation of Goa Declaration. The two day summit was attended by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russian President Vladimir Putin, Brazilian President Michel Temer and South African President Jacob Zuma. The theme for the summit was "Building Responsive, Inclusive and Collective Solutions".

The BRICS countries adopted the Goa Declaration that lays down a comprehensive vision for our cooperation and coordination, within BRICS and on international issues. **The key highlights of the BRICS Summit Goa Declaration are:**

- BRICS nations noted with satisfaction the operationalisation of the New Development Bank (NDB) and of the Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA), the strengthening of the international financial architecture; and progress in operationalising the Africa Regional Centre (ARC) of the NDB
- Appreciated the approval of the first set of loans by the New Development Bank (NDB), particularly in the renewable energy projects in BRICS countries; and issuance of the first set of green bonds in RMB.
- Reaffirmed the need for a comprehensive reform of the UN, including its Security Council.
- Welcomed the African Union's (AU) vision, aspirations, goals and priorities for Africa's development enshrined in Agenda 2063, which is complementary with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Welcomed the adoption of landmark 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals during the UN Summit on Sustainable Development on 25 September 2015 and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.
- Called upon developed countries to honour their Official Development Assistance commitments to achieve 0.7% of Gross National Income commitment for Official Development Assistance to developing countries. Those commitments play a crucial role in the implementation of the SDGs.
- Reaffirmed commitment to a strong, quota based and adequately resourced IMF.
- Called for the advanced European economies to meet their commitment to cede two chairs on the Executive Board of the IMF.
- Stressed the need to advance negotiations on the remaining Doha Development Agenda (DDA) issues as a matter of priority.
- Welcomed India's initiative to host the first BRICS Trade Fair in New Delhi, an important step towards the implementation of Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership.
- Welcomed experts exploring the possibility of setting up an independent BRICS Rating Agency based on market-oriented principles, in order to further strengthen the global governance architecture.
- Welcomed the recent decision by the UNCOPUOS Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee Working Group on Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities to conclude negotiations and achieve consensus on the full set of guidelines for the long term sustainability of outer space activities by 2018.

- Welcomed India's offer to host a Conference in 2018 aimed at strengthening international resolve in facing the challenge of the WMD-Terrorism nexus.
- Called upon all nations to work together to expedite the adoption of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) in the UN General Assembly without any further delay.
- Agreed to organise a BRICS High Level Meeting on Traditional Medical Knowledge.
- Expressed satisfaction with the progress of the BRICS Network University (BRICSNU) as well as the BRICS University League (BRICSUL), which will commence their programmes in 2017.
- Welcomed the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between BRICS Diplomatic Academies to encourage exchange of knowledge and experiences.
- Welcomed the establishment of the BRICS Working Group on Research Infrastructure, and Mega-Science to reinforce the BRICS Global Research Advanced Infrastructure Network (BRICS-GRAIN).
- Welcomed the signing of the MoU for Establishment of the BRICS Agricultural Research Platform.
- India, South Africa, Brazil and Russia conveyed their appreciation to China for its offer to host the Ninth BRICS Summit in 2017 and extended full support to that end.

Some Key initiatives taken during India's BRICS chairmanship

- BRICS Agriculture Research Platform
- BRICS Railway Research Network
- BRICS Sports Council
- BRICS Rating Agency
- BRICS Institute for Economic Research and Analysis
- MoU on Environmental Cooperation
- Regulations on BRICS Customs Cooperation Committee
- MoU on Cooperation between Diplomatic Academies of BRICS Countries
- MoU on Cooperation among BRICS Development Banks and the NDB
- BRICS Women Parliamentarians' Forum
- BRICS Under-17 Football Tournament
- BRICS Trade Fair
- BRICS Film Festival
- BRICS Convention on Tourism

- BRICS Digital Conclave
- BRICS Wellness Forum
- BRICS Friendship Cities Conclave
- BRICS Smart Cities Workshop
- 3rd BRICS Urbanisation Forum
- BRICS Local Bodies Conference
- BRICS Handicraft Artisans' Exchange Programme
- BRICS Young Scientist Conclave
- BRICS Innovative Idea Prize for Young Scientists
- BRICS Economic Research Award

➤ **List of MoUs signed by BRICS Countries ,October 16, 2016**

1. MoU for Establishment of BRICS Agricultural Research Platform
2. MoU on Mutual Cooperation between Diplomatic Academies
3. Regulations on Customs Cooperation Committee of the BRICS

**At the BRICS Leaders' Plenary Session held on October 16, 2016
Prime Minister Modi articulated the following salient points:**

- The scope of their partnership stretches from agriculture to industry and innovation; trade to tourism; environment to energy; films to football; skill development to smart cities; and from fighting corruption and money laundering to securing our societies.
- This year, they have taken BRICS to Indian cities and provinces and linked it directly to their people from different walks of life.
- Their association with Agenda 2030, the Paris Climate Agreement, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development has been purposeful and productive. And, they remain at the forefront of pushing change in the global governance architectures.
- The process of institution building in BRICS must continue to remain a focus area. They look forward to translating into reality the idea of a BRICS Credit Rating Agency.
- They need to transform the quantum and quality of trade and investment linkages among BRICS. In 2015, intra-BRICS trade stood at about 250 billion US Dollars. They should set a target to double this number to US Dollars five hundred billion by 2020.
- The BRICS Trade Fair and Exhibition just concluded in New Delhi should become a regular platform for business exchanges.
- India has tabled a draft of the Trade Facilitation Agreement for Services at the WTO. A strong BRICS support to this proposal will be in their collective economic interest.
- Under India's Chairmanship, emphasis has been placed on digital-technology, smart-cities, urbanization, and cooperation between cities.

Terrorism casts a long shadow on our development and economic prosperity. Their response to terrorism must, therefore, be nothing less than comprehensive. Selective approaches to terrorist individuals and organizations will not only be futile but also counter-productive.

- They need to deepen the security cooperation between their National Security Advisors. Early adoption of the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism will be an expression of resolve to fight this menace.
- Thriving people-to-people exchanges is the lifeblood of BRICS. The BRICS Films Festival, Trade Fair, Tourism Convention, Sports Council, Football Tournament and other related activities will help in creating millions of young stakeholders that will ultimately carry our partnership forward.

10.2 BRICS -BIMSTEC Outreach

In order to reach out and enrich understanding and engagement with fellow developing and emerging economies, an Outreach Summit of BRICS Leaders with the Leaders of BIMSTEC member countries - Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation comprising of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand was held on 17 October 2016. The Heads of State, Heads of Government and Leaders from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, that together with India, were in Goa as the special guests. The meeting offered an opportunity to renew their friendship with BIMSTEC countries as well as to jointly explore possibilities of expanding trade and commercial ties, and investment cooperation between BRICS and BIMSTEC countries, while advancing their common goals of peace, development, democracy and prosperity.

Some Salient points of the Welcome Remarks by Prime Minister at Plenary Session of BRICS BIMSTEC Outreach Summit, on October 16, 2016

Welcoming all at the first ever BRICS-BIMSTEC Outreach Summit PM Modi said BRICS and BIMSTEC located in different geographies, together represent two thirds of humanity and are joined by a common vision and commitment to peace, stability and development.

There exists a large basket of economic opportunities. With 1.5 billion people and a combined GDP of 2.5 trillion US Dollars, the countries of BIMSTEC have shared aspirations for growth, development, commerce, and technology.

BRICS represents large emerging economies, G-20 member-states and 2 permanent members of the Security Council. Its linkages with BIMSTEC economies will enlarge the regional and global sphere of dynamic growth and prosperity.

The convergence of purpose and priorities between BRICS and BIMSTEC provides a perfect opportunity to: Frame economic and development partnership; Shape ties in the fields of energy, agriculture, technology, fisheries, and culture; Structure trade, investment and commercial partnerships; and Pool resources to fight terrorism and transnational crime.

The areas of Commerce, Connectivity, Culture, Security and Disaster Management appear promising in identifying collaborative possibilities.

The New Development Bank of BRICS can be a channel for BRICS-BIMSTEC collaboration. BIMSTEC has focused intensely on connectivity. More than a hundred connectivity projects have been mooted within the BIMSTEC. Such projects can benefit from the capacity developed in BRICS countries..

Digital connectivity is of particular relevance. Technology can bridge the gaps in physical connectivity and connect communities across our regions.

People-to-people exchanges - in tourism, education, media, scholarship – is of great long-term benefit.

Fourth, terrorism, radicalization, and transnational crimes pose grave threats to each of the members. In South Asia and BIMSTEC, all nation states, barring one, are motivated to pursue a path of peace, development and economic prosperity for its people. Unfortunately, this country in India's neighbourhood embraces and radiates the darkness of terrorism.

The time for condemning the state sponsored terrorism is long gone. It is imperative for BRICS and BIMSTEC to create a comprehensive response to secure societies against the perpetrators of terror.

BIMSTEC region is prone to natural disasters ranging from cyclones, floods, tsunamis, and earthquakes. Environment protection and disaster management are areas where BRICS countries can work together with BIMSTEC.

This calls for collective approach and action to address inter-linked issues. A spirit of cooperation and collaboration between BRICS and BIMSTEC can be a powerful agent of change.

Some of the salient points outlined in the Outcome Document of the BIMSTEC Leaders' Retreat 2016 that came out on October 17, 2016 are:

The leaders expressed their appreciation for the opportunity of a Summit between BRICS and BIMSTEC Leaders to discuss matters of mutual interest and exchange views on important global and regional issues including the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

BIMSTEC leaders agreed to intensify their efforts to realise the objectives and purposes of BIMSTEC as outlined in the 1997 Bangkok Declaration, and reaffirmed that BIMSTEC has considerable potential for economic and social development through mutually beneficial cooperation in the identified priority areas.

Recognizing that terrorism continues to remain the single most significant threat to peace and stability in the region, they strongly believe that their fight against terrorism should not only seek to disrupt and eliminate terrorists, terror organisations and networks, but should also identify, hold accountable and take strong measures against States who encourage, support and finance terrorism, provide sanctuary to terrorists and terror groups, and falsely extol their virtues.

They committed to expedite the signing of the BIMSTEC Convention on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters, and to early ratification of the BIMSTEC Convention on Cooperation in Combating International Terrorism, Transnational Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking.

They expressed satisfaction at the continuing efforts and initiatives to advance multi-modal physical connectivity (air, rail, roads and waterways) in the BIMSTEC region. They agreed to explore the possibility of having a BIMSTEC Motor Vehicle Agreement.

Being aware that the Bay of Bengal region is home to over thirty percent of the world's fishermen, they recognized that cooperation in sustainable development of fisheries in this region has the potential to make a significant contribution towards ensuring food security and improving livelihoods of people in our region and agree to deepen cooperation in this Sector.

They recognized the enormous potential that the development of the blue economy holds for the region, and agreed to explore ways to deepen the cooperation in areas such as aquaculture (both inland and coastal), hydrography, seabed mineral exploration, coastal shipping, eco-tourism and renewable ocean energy with the objective of promoting holistic and sustainable development of the region.

They decided to expedite the signing of the BIMSTEC Memorandum of Understanding on Grid Interconnection. They directed that steps be taken for early operationalization of the BIMSTEC Energy Centre.

They renewed their commitment to the early conclusion of BIMSTEC Free Trade Area negotiations, and direct the Trade Negotiating Committee (TNC) and Working Groups to expedite the finalization of its constituent Agreements.

They directed for early finalization of the Memorandum of Association on the Establishment of BIMSTEC Technology Transfer Facility in Sri Lanka.

They directed the BIMSTEC Network of National Centres of Coordination in Traditional Medicine and its Task Force to expand and deepen cooperation in this sector.

They encouraged the development of Buddhist Tourist Circuit and Temple Tourist Circuit within the region.

They decided to expedite the establishment of the BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Commission and BIMSTEC Cultural Industries Observatory in Bhutan, which will serve as a repository for information on cultural industries.

The leaders of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand expressed their profound appreciation of the initiative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to invite BIMSTEC Leaders' to the BRICS-BIMSTEC Outreach Summit, and for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements during the Summit.

10.3 Russia-India-China (RIC)

The 14th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Russian federation, the Republic of India and People's Republic of China was held in April 18, 2016. The meeting was held in Moscow, Russia and was attended Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Union Minister of Foreign Affairs Sushma Swaraj, and Minister of Foreign Affairs of China Wang Yi took.

Some of the key highlights of the meeting are :

- The Ministers discussed various aspects of trilateral cooperation on global and regional issues.

- They reaffirmed the need for a comprehensive reform of the United Nations, including its Security Council.
- They urged for strengthening cooperation in preventing and countering international terrorism, both bilaterally and tri-laterally.
- They expressed desire for launching negotiations to elaborate an international convention for the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism at the Conference on Disarmament.
- They called upon all states to fully implement the UN Security Council Resolution 2199 that prohibits trade in oil and other natural resources with the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).
- They expressed deep concern about the illicit production and trafficking of drugs, and emphasized the need for a broader international universal regulatory binding instrument under the UN auspices for combating the use of ICTs for criminal purposes.
- They stressed the importance of multilateral region-led interaction on Afghan issues. They called upon all parties in Syria and foreign stakeholders to implement relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions on Syria.
- They expressed their respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq. They welcomed the achieved ceasefire in the east of Ukraine .
- They should enhance their cooperation between think-tanks, promote parliamentary, media, cultural, film and television and youth exchanges, including visits of young diplomats.

External Affairs Minister Smt Sushma Swaraj gave the opening remarks at the conclusion of 14th RIC Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Some key points of her Opening Remarks are:

- International terrorism remains the foremost threat to international peace and security. The RIC countries must lead the way in getting the international community together to counter terrorism through joint action, including at the UN.
- There is need for greater urgency on the issue of reform of UN Security Council.
- The slowdown of the global economy has created its own set of issues for all economies and development agendas. As three large, emerging economies, India share similar approaches and could benefit from coordinating our position.

10.4 The United Nations

The Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, addressed, through a video message, the special event in New York City, to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the United Nations Economic and Social Council on 22 January 2016. Key highlights of his speech were:

- He said that the ECOSOC is a key pillar of the United Nations structure. India was a proud participant in the creation of this body. An eminent citizen of India, Arcot Ramaswamy Mudaliar, had the privilege of serving as the first President of ECOSOC at its inaugural session in 1946.
- The work of the ECOSOC therefore, particularly the manner in which it advances the improvement in the human condition and ensures a life of dignity for all, is central to the overall agenda of the United Nations.
- Eradication of poverty remains the greatest unfinished business of the 20th century.
- The international community has just given to itself a new comprehensive vision of development. The 70th anniversary of the ECOSOC could not have come at a more appropriate moment. The '2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development', presents a valuable opportunity for the UN system to rethink its role and purpose, and make itself more effective.

10.5 SAARC

10.5. A Summary of the Statement by External Affairs Minister during 37th SAARC Council of Ministers' Meeting in Pokhara (March 17, 2016)

- The External Affairs Minister Smt Sushma Swaraj mentioned about some important decisions taken to integrate economies through SAFTA and South Asian Trade in Services Agreement and stressed the need to be developed and consolidated further to achieve a South Asian Economic Union.
- Stating the manner in which intra-regional trade can grow, she stressed the nature to develop communities to bring people above the poverty line, strengthening food security, health, nutrition and education to the people living in the region. Harnessing economic She said that India is prepared to work within the SAARC community to realize joint developmental goals. Indian Universities remain open for SAARC citizens. She proposed a SAARC Environment and Disaster Management Centre in India, which can benefit from domain expertise

of a large network of specialized Indian institutions experienced in quick response to various natural disasters.

10.5 G20 and India

During G-20 Summit on September 04, 2016, Prime Minister Modi met President Xi Jinping of China, who is the host of the G20 Summit. After that the Prime Minister chaired a meeting of the BRICS leaders, being the chair of the BRICS, hosting the summit in Goa. The Prime Minister also met the Prime Minister of Australia, Malcolm Turnbull.

10.6 SCO and India

11.3.A At the SCO Summit held on June 24, 2016, The key points highlighted by PM Modi:

- PM Modi expressed gratefulness to the SCO Member States and its leaders for their overwhelming support for India's membership of the SCO. He also welcomed Pakistan as the new member of the SCO and Belarus as a first time Observer to this body.
- He said that India is not new to the region. The historic linkages are centuries old. Their societies have been enriched by links of culture, cuisine and commerce.
- India would no doubt benefit from SCO's strengths in energy, natural resources and industry.
- India's capacities in trade, investments, information and communication technology, Space, S&T, agriculture, health care, small and medium scale industry can bring wide spread economic benefit to the SCO countries.
- They need seamless flow of goods, services, capital and people among themselves and their region needs to nurture strong rail, road and air links with the rest of the world.
- Finally he said that within SCO, India will be a productive partner in building strong trade, transport, energy, digital and people to people links. Its decision to join the international North South Transport Corridor, the Chabahar Agreement, and Ashgabat Agreement reflects this desire and intent.

10.7 7th NAM Summit

The 17th NAM Summit was held in Margarita Island in Venezuela on 17-18 September 2016. Vice President of India Mohammad Hamid Ansari led the Indian delegation to the Summit including MoS for External Affairs M..J. Akbar.

In his address at the 17th NAM Plenary Meeting the Vice President made the following key points:

- Development Cooperation, is an essential means of promoting and developing international solidarity and it becomes important in the light of the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Agenda 2030
- Peace and Sovereignty – are a pre-requisite for development.
- Today, the biggest threat to international peace, and to the sovereignty of States, is the phenomenon of Terrorism. It has become a major impediment to development.
- It is imperative for the Non-Aligned Movement to galvanize the international community to strengthen the international legal framework to address this menace, including by adopting the draft Comprehensive UN Convention on Terrorism.

As the largest peace movement of the world, NAM must be in the vanguard of the principal international debates on political, strategic and even economic and social issues to achieve that ideal.

11. Miscellaneous (Summit, Conferences, Seminars & Dialogues)

- **Valedictory Address by External Affairs Minister at India-Africa Hydrocarbon Conference 2016 (22 January 2016)**

External Affairs Minister, Mrs. Sushma Swaraj delivered the valedictory address at the conclusion of the Fourth Edition of the India-Africa Hydrocarbon Conference. Some of the salient points of her address are:

The Conference having been organized not long after the successful Third India-Africa Forum Summit held in New Delhi in October last year shows India's continuous interest in strengthening partnership with Africa in a wide range of areas.

She said that the India-Africa Hydrocarbon Conferences began in 2007 and conference was taking place after a gap of five years. During these years, India's energy demand has risen rapidly and Africa has changed in terms of rising demand, new discoveries of oil and gas, and increasing global engagement in the oil and gas sector.

She said that energy is an essential requirement for India's development and as stated in a recent IEA report, India is set to move to the centre of global energy affairs, accounting for 25% of the rise in global energy use till 2040.

In recent years, India has emerged as a major refining hub in the Asia-Pacific region and is currently the fourth biggest refiner in the world. Last

year, India exported petroleum products worth 47 billion dollars, with Africa occupying the second place in its destinations for petroleum products.

She encouraged African oil producers to take advantage both its rising demand and strengths in refining to develop strong partnerships. New discoveries during the last two decades have blessed Africa with doubling of its oil reserves and increase in gas reserves by more than 50%. This puts the continent in the league of most endowed geographical regions. Another significant development is that Indian oil companies have expanded their footprint in Africa. Today, Indian companies have a presence in the exploration and production sector in Sudan, South Sudan, Nigeria, Gabon and Libya. They are also working on EPC projects in countries such as Algeria, Libya, Sudan and Ghana and have earned a great reputation as competent and reliable partners in the energy sector. Mozambique is a recent example, where investments in excess of 5 billion dollars have been made from 2014.

Mrs. Swaraj said that our future cooperation in energy should not be confined to hydrocarbons alone and should focus equally if not more on cooperation in renewable energy. India has gained tremendous expertise in developing its renewable energy programme, particularly in the solar and wind sector and would be happy to share experiences and technologies with Africa.

She concluded that it is an opportunity for both India and Africa to forge a commitment to energy security – both security of demand and security of supply.

- **Address by Foreign Secretary at the Counter terrorism Conference (February 03, 2016)**

In his address at the Counter terrorism Conference on February 3, 2016, Foreign Secretary, Dr. S. Jaishankar, said that terrorism is today widely seen as a truly global scourge and that countering terrorism is a priority imperative for Indian diplomacy. The first serious attempt to approach terrorism from a regime perspective is India's initiative of tabling a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism at the United Nations. Interestingly, the initiative has gathered greater traction as the specter of global terrorism appears more threatening. Encouraging a 'whole of the world' approach in countering terrorism, thus, is one of the major goals of Indian diplomacy.

- **Delhi Dialogue VIII (ASEAN-India Relations: A New Paradigm)**

The eighth edition of Delhi Dialogue was held from February 17-19, 2016. The Ministerial Session of the pre-eminent annual Track 1.5 dialogue process for brainstorming on all aspects of the ASEAN-India relationship took place on February 18, 2016 at New Delhi. The Ministerial Session was attended by over 200 delegates from ASEAN countries and India and was preceded by a Business Session on February 17, 2016. Smt. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs hosted the Session.

In her keynote address Smt. Swaraj observed that 2017 would be a special year for ASEAN and the ASEAN-India partnership as ASEAN would celebrate its golden jubilee and India and ASEAN would be commemorating the silver anniversary of their partnership. She remarked that since Prime Minister Modi's government came to power in May 2014, the President, Vice President and Prime Minister of India have visited 9 out of 10 ASEAN countries. She mooted the idea of an ASEAN-India economic community and expressed hope that a balanced and ambitious Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement would be concluded soon, giving a further boost to economic and commercial engagement with ASEAN and the wider Asia-Pacific. She also announced that an ASEAN Studies Centre would be inaugurated very soon at the North-Eastern Hill University in Shillong. Smt. Swaraj maintained that enhancing connectivity is a strategic priority for both India and ASEAN. In this regards she mentioned the progress of major connectivity projects - the Kaladan Multi Modal Transport project, India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway and RihTedim Project in Myanmar.

• **Speech by External Affairs Minister at the inauguration of Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi (March 01, 2016)**

Welcoming all at the inaugural session of the Raisina Dialogue External Affairs Minister, Ms Sushma Swaraj said it was a new initiative meant to create an international platform in India for policy makers and strategic thinkers to deliberate on the key issues of the day.

Highlighting the theme of the dialogue as 'Asian Connectivity', she said connectivity today is central to the globalisation process. It is, particularly important for Asia's growth and development.

In the contemporary world, connectivity has very diverse manifestations. Overcoming basic problems of physical connectivity, and strengthening the digital one is being simultaneously sought. Economic activities, while an outcome of connectivity, themselves form a bond between and within

nations. Migration for employment cannot be left out of any conversation on connectivity. The global commons, whether on the seas or in space, also offer their own specific challenges as they do their solutions.

Connectivity is as much a driver of relationships as its outcome. While resources and capabilities drive the pace of connectivity, policy choices can be a critical factor. In South Asia, it is seen that good neighbourly ties can have a strong beneficial effect on building road and rail connections, opening waterways or supplying energy. Sub-regional combinations like BBIN have been creatively worked so that the momentum of cooperation does not slow down.

Another aspect is the threat of disruption in connectivity. In its most radical form, this emanates from the spread of terrorism, which has mutated to keep pace with the march of technology. As a result, we confront the spectre of cyber attacks, threat of use of force by nations in territorial disputes. Dissuasion and diplomacy are part of the answers in such situations. The security of connectivity in its various forms thus emerges as central to the maintenance of global order. The role of net security providers in different regions is also a natural corollary.

In India, special emphasis is being given to connecting frontier regions. The development of ports is good not only for the Indian economy but to the larger region as well. Transit agreements that take advantage of neighbouring connectivity have become a regular outcome in its diplomacy. Our international outreach is aimed at attracting resources, technologies and best practices to make these initiatives succeed. In terms of the cultural connect, the further strengthening of links to the diaspora has been accompanied by a larger endeavour to project Indian heritage globally.

Beyond our borders, a 'Neighbourhood First' policy that began with the very inauguration of our Government underlines a strong commitment to connectivity, commerce and contacts with the larger region. India's connectivity horizons, earlier limited from Singapore to the Gulf, now expand well beyond as its economic capabilities and interests grow.

The vast sea space to our south means that connectivity is as much maritime as it is territorial. The oceans around India and the associated blue economy link security and prosperity as strongly in the maritime domain as they do in other spheres. India's vision was articulated by Prime Minister as SAGAR-Security and Growth for All in the Region. It is a commitment to safe, secure, stable and shared maritime space.

Cyber connectivity is of growing importance in an increasingly digital world. India has supported a multi-stakeholder approach aimed at preserving a free and integrated internet, but has also asked for a more democratic distribution of critical internet infrastructure and for closer international cooperation on cyber security and cyber crime to build trust and stability among the various stakeholders.

In essence, connectivity is not just key to India's development ambitions but an important and integral aspect of its vision for international cooperation. It will drive its interests and relationships in Asia and beyond.

• **Valedictory Address by Foreign Secretary Shri Jayshankar at the 4th Annual Growth Net Summit: Diplomacy for Higher Growth. (April 09, 2016)**

- India today is in the midst of major initiatives and campaigns that focus on aspects of development which countries of that geography have successfully pursued in the last few decades. Among them is the strengthening of manufacturing and improvement of skills, the combination so critical for generation of greater employment. It includes as well the modernization and expansion of the infrastructure, on which hinges India's competitiveness. Equally important are infusions of technology that could accelerate its passage to the digital era, as they also ensure that India's development path is greener and cleaner. Gravitation towards urban centres is as important to address in this context as the larger entry of women into the workforce – for which they must first be educated.
- India cannot grow in isolation, and indeed, will find it much harder to do so without the strong support of its region. For that reason, it is imperative that India's cooperation and connectivity with neighbours grow rapidly. This is the essence of its 'Neighbourhood First' policy that is predicated on a commitment to shared prosperity.
- Within India, there is greater awareness of the benefits of regional cooperation – e.g. energy, trade or transit. To its neighbours, the fruits of collaboration are also visible in major infrastructure projects, additional sources of income and employment, broad social development and access to a large and growing market.
- The Look East approach then extended beyond to North East Asia that made it even more transformational in terms of trade, tourism and flow of resources. The shift in India's centre of gravity

as a consequence is evident in the revival of India's eastern coastline.

- Attracting investments, technology and best practices from the east, including China, and fashioning an ODA-led investment strategy with Japan hold great potential for India's higher economic growth.
- While the 'Act East' policy is under consolidation, it is also perhaps time to 'Think West'. The prospects of fossil fuel, attractions of a more decisive and high growth India, and sharp intra-regional competition have all combined to open up new opportunities for India in the Gulf. This may be expected to be a major focus of Indian diplomacy in the coming days.
- The United States is a partner with whom India has increasingly broader and deeper collaboration across a very wide range of areas. Ties with the economies of Europe have been perhaps less volatile, but of no less significance. In the case of Russia politics led the way but strategic convergence and popular support provided ballast. Almost across the board, there are opportunities that await greater exploitation. This can be increasingly said of Africa and Latin America as well. India's foreign policy is very conscious that demands of it are growing at a rapid pace.
- Energy security deserves a special mention in the context of diplomacy and economic growth. India will continue to accord high priority to negotiations that can help expand India's civilian nuclear energy programme. Within the region, encouragement would be given to hydro-electric projects. India's ambitious commitments in renewables find expression, amongst others, in the establishment of the International Solar Alliance. Recognising the near-term relevance of fossil fuels, it will also be active in engaging traditional energy suppliers more aggressively, both in the upstream and downstream.
- Finding international partners for 'Smart Cities' has been a major exercise. Railways has been a particular focus with the Shinkansen project between Mumbai and Ahmedabad its highlight. In addition, understandings have been reached with different nations in speed raising, station development, rail safety, locomotive production and even financing. Programmes like 'Digital India' and 'NamameGange' are also finding foreign partners, Governments as also the private sector.

12. Major Economic Developments, 2016

12.1 Indian Economic Performance

- **Economic Growth**

India was among the fastest growing economy in the year 2016. In February 2016, India overtook China as the fastest growing major economy in the world amid a slow global economy. In May, India's GDP grew 7.5 per cent year-on-year between January and March, faster than the previous quarter's 7.3 per cent. In June, India's GDP grew further to 7.6 per cent, retaining the fastest growing economy title. In the following months even as India's GDP dipped to 7.1 per cent it still managed to stay ahead of China's 6.7 per cent growth.

- **Trade Balance**

Overall the trade balance showed an improvement in the year 2016. Taking merchandise and services together, overall trade deficit for April- December 2016-17 stood at US\$ 33742.17 million which is 36.78 percent lower in dollar terms than the level of US\$ 53371.23 million during April-December 2015-16.

- **FDI and Forex**

The cumulative Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) since 2000-01, in terms of equity flows, re-invested earnings and other capital stood at \$ 453,183 million. The total FDI for 2016-17 (Apr-Sept) was \$ 29,016 million. Total Foreign Exchange Reserves (Forex) stood at \$360,296.8 million as on December 30, 2016.

12.2 National- Major Policies/Measures

- **Demonetisation of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 notes**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on November 8, 2016 announced the decision to withdraw Rs 500 and Rs 1,000 bank notes in a bid to crack down on black money. The aim of the action was fourfold: to curb corruption; counterfeiting; the use of high denomination notes for terrorist activities; and especially the accumulation of “black money”, generated by income that has not been declared to the tax authorities. It followed a series of earlier efforts to curb such illicit activities, including the Benami Transactions Act 2016.

- **Passing of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) Bill**

In one of the biggest tax reform in Indian history since Independence, the Rajya Sabha, in a unanimous decision on August 4, 2016, approved the crucial 122nd Constitutional amendment to turn the Goods and Services Tax Bill into a law. The bill got 203 votes in favour and none against after years of debate and deliberation. The brought all indirect taxes under one uniform tax system. Following its passage, the Centre set up a GST Council, approved by the Union Cabinet in its meeting held on September 12, 2016, that focused on other aspects of

the tax such as exemptions, threshold, compounding and control. On November 4, the GST Council finally agreed on a multi-layered rate structure as 0 per cent, 5 per cent, 12 per cent, 18 per cent and 28 per cent, a departure from popular international practice of having one rate of tax for all goods and services.

- ***Constitution of the Monetary Policy Committee under the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934***

The Government amended the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 by the Finance Act, 2016 providing for inflation target to be set by the Government in consultation with the Reserve Bank, once in every five years. It further provided for a statutory basis for the constitution of an empowered six-member Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) by featuring 3 members from the RBI (including the Governor) and three members selected by the Government. The Government notified the constitution of the MPC on September 29, 2016. As per the revised monetary policy framework, the Government fixed the inflation target of 4 per cent with tolerance level of +/- 2 per cent for the period beginning from August 5, 2016 to March 31, 2021. The MPC held two meetings, latest meeting held on December 7, 2016. The policy rate was reduced by 25 basis points to 6.25 per cent in its first meeting held on October 4, 2016. In meeting held on December 7, 2016, MPC did not change the policy rate while maintaining accommodative policy stance.

- ***Taxation Laws (Second Amendment) Act, 2016***

The Taxation Laws (Second Amendment) Act, 2016 has come into force on 15th December, 2016. The salient features of the Scheme are as under:

- Declaration under the Scheme can be made by any person in respect of undisclosed income in the form of cash or deposits in an account with bank or post office or specified entity.
- Tax @30% of the undisclosed income, surcharge @33% of tax and penalty @10% of such income is payable besides mandatory deposit of 25% of the undisclosed income in Pradhan MantriGaribKalyan Deposit Scheme, 2016. The deposits are interest free and have a lock-in period of four years.
- The income declared under the Scheme shall not be included in the total income of the declarant under the Income-tax Act for any assessment year.
- The declarations made under the Scheme shall not be admissible as evidence under any Act (eg. Central Excise Act, Wealth-tax Act,

Companies Act etc.). However, no immunity will be available under Criminal Acts mentioned in section 199-O of the Scheme.

12.3 International Major Policies/Measures

- **India climbs steadily in the Global Competitiveness Index**

According to data released on September 26, 2016, by the World Economic Forum (WEF) India's ranking in the Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) has improved by 16 places for the second year in a row. According to the latest ranking, India is placed 39th among 138 countries, ahead of BRICS countries other than China which is ranked 28.

- **India jumps 19 places in World Bank's Logistics Performance Index**

According to the World Bank report on Logistics Performance Index (LPI) 2016 titled "Connecting to Complete 2016" on June 28, 2016, India ranked 35 amongst 160 countries compared to rank of 54 in LPI 2014. This is a jump of 19 places.

- **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) Ltd. and Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) for facilitating Investment from Qatar in the infrastructure sector in India**

With a view to attracting investments from Qatar under the umbrella of NIIF, the National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) Ltd. entered into an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) on 5th June, 2016 during the visit of the Prime Minister of India to Doha on June 4- 5, 2016. The MoU was signed by Mr. Abdullah Bin Mohamed Al Thani, CEO of Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) and Mr. Amar Sinha, Secretary (Economic Relations), Ministry of External Affairs on behalf of NIIF Ltd. The objective of the MoU is to facilitate QIA to study investment opportunities in the infrastructure sector in India and develop a framework for exchange of information with regard to such investments opportunities, in order to enable both sides to decide on joint investments. It will remain in effect for twelve (12) months during which period both parties will discuss and agree on the terms, principles, criteria for such investments.

- **Bilateral meeting between India's Finance Minister and United States Trade Representative Ambassador Mr Michael Froman**

On April 14, 2017, the Finance Minister Shri Jaitley held a bilateral meeting with United States Trade Representative Ambassador Mr Michael Froman. Affirming sustained engagement and rapidly increasing trade and investment partnership between India and the US, The Finance Minister emphasized on the following key points:

- India's keenness in early conclusion of a Totalization Agreement with the United States. (As per Industry estimates, Indian professionals have contributed more than US\$ 25 billion to the US Social Security during the last decade, without being able to retrieve their contributions)
- India's concern over the hike in the H-1B and L1 visa fee which is discriminatory and in effect, largely targeted at Indian IT companies.

- **Sixth Annual India-US Economic and Financial Partnership (EFP)**

The Union Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley and U.S Treasury Secretary Mr Jacob J. Lew met for the Sixth Annual U.S.-India Economic and Financial Partnership (EFP) in Washington D.C. on April 15, 2017. The following were the key points of the discussion:

- Both sides noted the progress in sharing of financial information between the two countries under the Inter-Governmental Agreement pursuant to Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA) and affirmed to continue to engage in discussions on full reciprocal arrangement on FATCA.
- Both sides also discussed increased cooperation in sharing of cross-border tax-information. Both sides committed to continued collaboration and sharing of experience in tackling offshore tax evasion and avoidance, including joint tax audits and tax examination abroad.
- Both sides reviewed the progress made under the U.S.-India Investment Initiative launched in January 2015, particularly collaboration with private sector to identify specific policies, regulatory reforms, and technical collaboration aimed at mobilizing capital from both domestic and foreign investors to build infrastructure and create jobs. They also affirmed that both countries are working together to support India's National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF) in order to increase financing options for India's infrastructure growth.
- The leaders also committed to working together to collaborate in multilateral fora, such as the G20, to steer our economies toward stronger, sustainable, and balanced growth.

- **Union Finance Minister's Visit to Melbourne, Australia**

Union Minister of Finance Shri ArunJaitley led a high powered finance and business delegation to Melbourne on April 1, 2016. In his keynote address Shri Jaitley covered the broad investments spectrum of India and also focused on how and why India is definitely an attractive destination to put in money. He gave specific sector-wise details of investment friendly reforms of the Government of India. During his visit a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed between FICCI and Australia-India Business Council.

- **The Union Finance Minister Shri ArunJaitley participation in the G-20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Meeting in Washington D.C**

On April 15, 2016, the Union Finance Minister Shri ArunJaitley participated in the G-20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Meeting in Washington D.C. The salient points were:

- The Finance Minister Shri Jaitley welcomed the agreed timeline of October 2017 for shareholding review in IMF and said that the new quota formula should enhance the voice, role and voting share of the developing countries and reflect their increased share in global GDP.
- The Finance Minister also emphasized the need for review of the World Bank's shareholding to reflect share of the developing countries in the global economy.
- Shri Jaitley reiterated the need to leverage the credit rating and balance sheets of Multilateral Development Banks to ensure increased infrastructure investment in poor countries.
- He also stressed upon the need to take strong measure against Tax Havens. G-20 Finance Ministers have committed to take stern measures to prevent corruption, tax evasion, terrorist financing and money laundering.
- Supported the World Bank Group assessment of its funding and capital requirement, he encouraged the President to raise annual financing volumes of the World Bank Group to \$100 billion a year. Referring to the excellent contribution made by Indians in the World Bank Group, the Finance Minister emphasized upon the need to increase the representation of Indians in the top Management of the World Bank.

- **IMF and India to Set-Up a South Asia Regional Training and Technical Assistance Center (SARTTAC) in Delhi**

The Union Finance Minister Shri ArunJaitley and Ms. Christine Lagarde, Managing Director, International Monetary Fund (IMF) signed a Memorandum of Understanding in New Delhi on March 12, 2016 to establish a capacity development center in the national

capital. The signing of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) represents a key step toward a fully integrated capacity development center in New Delhi, and demonstrates the shared commitment between the IMF and its membership in using technical assistance and training as vehicles for economic stability and inclusive growth. The key features of the center are:

- To become the focal point for planning, coordinating, and implementing the IMF's capacity development activities in the region on a wide range of areas, including macroeconomic and fiscal management, monetary operations, financial sector regulation and supervision, and macroeconomic statistics.
- The Center will help address existing training needs and respond to the demand for IMF training in India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, while bringing the region's training volume on par with those of other regions.
- SARTTAC will offer courses and seminars for policymakers and other government agencies from the six aforementioned countries. It will build upon the IMF's in-depth experience with capacity development by drawing on the experiences of the IMF's Regional Technical Assistance Centers and Regional Training Centers, which have a proven track record of delivering technical assistance on economic institution building.
- Funding will come from contributions by Regional Member countries and Development Partners. The Australian Agency for International Development, the Republic of Korea and India have pledged financial support for the said Center.
- **Finance Minister Inaugural Address at the BRICS India 2016 seminar on "Best Practices in Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) and Long-term Infrastructure Financing"**

In the inaugural address at the BRICS India 2016 seminar held on September 22, 2016, Finance Minister, Arun Jaitley, said that infrastructure is key to growth of economy. Shri Jaitley said that an institutionalized forum amongst BRICS countries could serve as a regional knowledge hub with exchange of information facilitated through cloud sharing, and other electronic method. Shri Jaitley said that projects in transportation sector like Highways, Ports and Railways will be area of mega economic activities as far as infrastructure sector in India is concerned. Shri Jaitley further said that investment, both from public and private sector, will be required for infrastructure financing, especially in areas of health, education, sanitation, renewable energy, highways, ports and railways among others. Outlining the strategy the Government has adopted to boost the Indian Economy like Make in India, 100 smart cities, and

liberalised FDI regime, he said that the Government gives high priority to Infrastructure and have taken a number of policy decisions like NIIF, Innovative new financial instruments such as REITS, INVITS, IDFs.

Research Fellows who contributed the content for Year End Review
2016

Month wise

No.	Month	Research Fellow
1	January	Dr. Indrani Talukdar & Dr. Smita Tiwary
2	February	Dr. Arundhati Sharma
3	March	Dr. Dinoj Upadhyay & Dr. F.R. Siddiqui
4	April	Dr. Stuti Banerjee and Dr. Sanghamitra Sarma
5	May	Dr. Athar Zafar & Dr. Sanjeev Kumar
6	June	Dr. Amit Kumar and Dr. Asif Shuja
7	July	Dr. Amit Ranjan
8	August	Dr. Ambreen Agha
9	September	Dr. Dhrubajyoti Bhattacharjee
10	October	Dr. M. Samatha & Dr. Nivedita Ray
11	November	Dr. Avinash Godbole
12	December	Dr. Nihar Ranjan Das

Region wise

No.	Region/Country	Research Fellow
1	Afghanistan	Dr. Smita Tiwary
2	Bangladesh	Dr. Dhrubajyoti Bhattacharjee

3	Nepal	Dr. Amit Kumar
4	Pakistan	Dr. Dhrubajyoti Bhattacharjee
5	Sri Lanka	Dr. SamathaMallemapati
6	East Asia/ASEAN	Dr. SanghamitraSarma
7	Central Asia	Dr. Athar Zafar
8	Saudi Arabia	Dr. Zakir Hussain
9	China	Dr. Sanjeev Kumar
10	Latin America	Dr. Md. Abdul Gaffar
11	US and Latin America	Dr. Stuti Banerjee
12	Russia	Dr. IndraniTalukdar
13	European Union	Dr. DinojUpadhyay
14	West Asia	Dr. F.R. Siddiqui
15	Iran	Dr. Asif Shuja
17	Africa & Multilateral Organisations	Dr. Nivedita Ray (Director Research)
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