

Year End Review

2015

Prepared by ICWA Research Faculty

Indian Council of World Affairs
Sapru House, New Delhi -110001

Year End Review 2015

*Annual Report on the Developments in the Field of Foreign
Affairs, Internal Security, Economic Policy, Defence, Commerce
and Finance*

Contents

Chapter	Page No.
1. South Asia	04
I. Afghanistan	
II. Bangladesh	
III. Bhutan	
IV. Nepal	
V. Pakistan	
VI. Sri Lanka	
2. East Asia/ASEAN	19
I. Cambodia	
II. Indonesia	
III. Lao PDR	
IV. Malaysia	
V. Mongolia	
VI. Myanmar	
VII. Philippines	
VIII. Republic of Korea	
IX. Singapore	
X. Thailand	
3. Central Asia	30
I. Kazakhstan	
II. Kyrgyzstan	
III. Tajikistan	
IV. Turkmenistan	
V. Uzbekistan	

4. West Asia and North Africa

35

I. Bahrain

II. Egypt

III. Iran

IV. Iraq

V. Israel

VI. Jordan

VII. Palestine

VIII. Qatar

IX. Saudi Arabia

X. Sultanate of Oman

XI. Turkey

XII. United Arab Emirates

5. Africa

43

I. Mozambique

II. South Africa

III. Tanzania

6. Indian Ocean Island States

45

I. Maldives

II. Mauritius

III. Seychelles

7. Latin America and the Caribbean

50

I. Argentina

II. Antigua and Barbuda

III. Brazil

IV. Cooperative Republic of Guyana

V. Costa Rica

VI. Jamaica

VII. Republic of Suriname

VIII. Salvador	
IX. Miscellaneous	
8. North America	55
I. Canada	
9. Major Powers	57
I. China	
II. European Union	
III. Japan	
IV. Russia	
V. The United States of America	
10. Multilateral Institutions	95
I. ASEAN-India Summit	
II. BASIC 20 th Ministerial Meeting	
III. Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN)	
IV. Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS)	
V. Community of Democracies 8 th Ministerial Conference	
VI. COP 21	
VII. East Asia Summit	
VIII. G-20	
IX. India-Africa Forum Summit	
X. Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)	
XI. Russia, India and China (RIC)	
XII. United Nations	
11. Non-Traditional Security Issues	111
I. Cyber Security	
12. Miscellaneous	113
13. India and Multilateral Institutions	121
I. BRICS and India	
II. G-20 and India	

III. SCO and India

14. Major Events, Ministry of Finance **128**

15. Developments in Defence Field **140**

Sources

The information provided in the Year End Review 2015 has been sourced from the following websites:

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

1. South Asia

I. Afghanistan

1. Visit of President of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to India (April 27-29, 2015)

The President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, His Excellency Mr. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, paid a state visit to India from 27-29 April 2015, on the invitation of Shri Pranab Mukherjee, President of the Republic of India. This was the first visit of H.E. Mr. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani to India after assuming the Presidency in September 2014, which continues the tradition of regular high-level exchanges between the two countries that has been established since 2002. During the visit, the two leaders issued a joint statement including the following major points:

- Prime Minister and President Ghani discussed the efforts undertaken by President Ghani to launch an Afghan-led and Afghan owned reconciliation process within the framework of the Afghan constitution and the internationally accepted red lines. President Ghani strongly affirmed that the hard won political, social and economic gains over the last 14 years, protection of basic human rights of Afghan citizens, especially women and children, Afghanistan's unity, plurality and sovereignty, can never be diluted in any effort to promote the reconciliation process.
- President Ghani welcomed the steps taken by India to promote business links and trade between the two countries and India's decision as a fourth party to join the recent PATTTA (Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan Trade and Transit Agreement) negotiations that would allow the arrangement to contribute in a meaningful manner to the vision of wider regional economic integration. Afghanistan also welcomed the Indian stewardship of the Trade, Commerce and Investment Confidence Building Measures (TCI-CBM) under the Afghan-led Heart of Asia process whose activities remain focused on showcasing Afghanistan's potential and its unique location at the 'Heart of Asia'.
- The two leaders also pledged to work closely with the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to make Chabahar port a reality, and a viable gateway to Afghanistan and Central Asia. They agreed that routes additional to existing ones will provide a major impetus to Afghanistan's economic reconstruction efforts.
- The two leaders agreed to work together for their shared goal of bringing reforms to the UN system and PM Modi thanked President Ghani for Afghanistan supporting and co-sponsoring the G-4 resolution on UN reforms, including the expansion of the UN Security Council in the 70th year of the UN.
- President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani expressed gratitude for the gifting of three multi-role Cheetal helicopters from India in April 2015.

2. The National Security Advisor of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Mr. Hanif Atmar's visit to India (November 8-9, 2015)

- During the visit, the two sides discussed various aspects of regional security, particularly terrorism which threatens peace and stability of the region. They also discussed ways

and means to enhance cooperation between India and Afghanistan to strengthen the latter's defence capabilities for safeguarding its security and combating all forms of terrorism.

3. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Visit to Afghanistan (December 25, 2015)

The Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi visited Afghanistan on December 25, 2015. He had detailed discussions with the President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan H.E. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive H.E. Dr. Abdullah Abdullah. The outcomes of the visit were:

- President Ghani and Prime Minister Modi jointly dedicated the National Assembly Building (Parliament) constructed under India-Afghanistan development cooperation. A block of National Assembly Building was named after the former Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Government of Afghanistan was assured of Indian assistance for a new Administrative Block of the National Assembly. PM Modi said that it will stand as an enduring symbol of the ties of emotions and values, of affection and aspirations that binds India and Afghanistan in a special relationship.
- Discussions were held on the key aspects of utilisation of India's pledged assistance of over USD 2 billion for development in Afghanistan between the Indian Prime Minister and the Afghanistan President.
- India would continue to be guided by the priorities and requirements of the Government of Afghanistan, including priorities for reconstruction in Kunduz in the aftermath of the recent terrorist rampage.
- Successful completion of the India-assisted projects including Doshi and Charikar sub-stations and India-Afghanistan Friendship Dam in Chishti Sharif, were noted. These dams are to be fully functional shortly.
- The total Small Development Projects (SDP) outlay for community infrastructure was envisaged to grow to USD 200M by 2020.
- India would expeditiously supply 170,000 tonnes of wheat to meet Afghanistan's urgent needs.
- Decisions were taken to develop the modalities for supply of 1000 new buses from India to Afghanistan.
- Prime Minister Modi affirmed India's continued support in building Afghan capacity for governance, security and development. As India's commitment to developing capacity in the areas of education and governance, the existing scheme of 1,000 scholarships every year for Afghan students to study in India was announced to be extended by another five years beyond 2017 with the possibility of one year vocational and skill training. In addition 500 scholarships will be provided by the Government of India for study of children of martyrs of Afghanistan National Defence and Security Forces in reputed schools and colleges in India and Afghanistan.
- Afghanistan welcomed India's decision to start the setting up of Afghanistan National Institute of Mining and regulate exchange programs for training of mining sector experts based on the assessment of requirements

- The setting up of the Kandahar Agriculture University has been welcomed as India's commitment in continuing its support for the capacity development of this important institution.
- Afghanistan reiterated that inclusion of India in the Afghanistan Pakistan Trade and Transit Agreement would be advantageous for the whole region.
- Both leaders welcomed the ground breaking for the TAPI project.
- Prospects of trilateral cooperation in view of India's participation in development of Phase-I of Chabahar Port in Iran were discussed. Both the leaders directed their concerned officials to conclude discussions on trilateral agreement among Afghanistan, India and Iran in this regard.
- People-to-people interactions lay at the heart of the relationship between the two countries.
- With the Afghan Cricket Team being assigned a new 'Home Ground' at Greater NOIDA near Delhi, the growing India-Afghanistan cooperation for necessary facilities and training to develop cricket in Afghanistan was welcomed and further encouragement to such efforts was assured.
- It was decided that the bilateral Strategic Partnership Council, co-chaired by Foreign Ministers, shall meet in the first quarter of 2016 to review implementation of the decisions of the two leaders, following meetings of four Joint Working Groups of the Council.
- The two leaders highlighted the significance of the 6 agreements that will be signed between the two countries shortly.
- Both leaders exchanged views on the security situation in Afghanistan, which faces serious challenges of terrorism, extremism and narcotics.
- In the context of strengthening capabilities for security, the two leaders pointed out that the Mi-25 helicopters provided by the Indian Government to Afghanistan and their maintenance facility would address an important requirement.
- The two leaders agreed to increase and expand training opportunities for Afghan National Security and Defence Forces in relevant Indian institutions, based on the requirements of Afghanistan.
- Prime Minister Modi strongly supported Afghan government-led reconciliation process which respects the redlines drawn by the people of Afghanistan and the international community, i.e., the groups and individuals to be reconciled must give up violence and abide by the Constitution of Afghanistan.

India welcomed the decision of the Government of Afghanistan to open a new Consulate General in the city of Hyderabad to further strengthen their historical ties.

II. Bangladesh

1. During the visit of the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Bangladesh on 6-7 June 2015, the two countries resolved their decades old border disputes. Following treaties, agreements and MoUs were signed:

- The Agreement concerning the Demarcation of the Land Boundary between India and Bangladesh and Related Matters of 1974 and the 2011 Protocol to the 1974 Agreement come into effect with the exchange of Instrument of Ratification; the letter specifies the

modalities for the implementation of Agreement concerning the Demarcation of the Land Boundary between India and Bangladesh and related issues.

- The agreement seeks to promote two-way trade between India and Bangladesh through ports. Presently, shipping cargo plies between the countries through Colombo/Singapore/Klang ports. Coastal shipping will reduce shipping time and help in reducing congestion at the land ports.
- Renewal of Agreement envisages promotion of trade through land, waterways, and railways between the two countries and provides for transit to the North-East India. It also facilitates access to Bangladesh cargo through India into Nepal and Bhutan. The Agreement has a validity of five years with provisions for auto renewal;
- Envisages cooperation for the establishment of an Indian Economic Zone with the participation of business entities from both countries.
- Both the countries will work out preferential policies and encourage investors/companies/business communities of the two countries to set up units in Indian Economic Zone in Bangladesh.
- Consequent to the settling of Maritime boundary between India and Bangladesh, the MOU seeks cooperation between both the Coast guards to ensure jointly marine security and prevent crimes at sea.

2. Exchange of Enclave agreement between India and Bangladesh (31 July 2015)

July 31, 2015 became a historic day in Indo-Bangladesh relations as it marked the ratification and implementation of the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement and 2011 Protocol instruments of ratification. This had been in accordance with steps agreed between India and Bangladesh during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bangladesh on June 6-7, 2015. The Bangladeshi enclaves in India and Indian enclaves in Bangladesh were physically transferred to the other country with effect from the midnight of 31 July 2015. The people from the enclaves were given the option to choose their 'new' nationality and country. The entire process of border demarcation is expected to be over by 30 June 2016.

III. Bhutan

1. His Excellency Lyonchhen Tshering Tobgay, the Prime Minister of Bhutan's visit to India from 10-18 January 2015.

At the invitation of the Prime Minister of India, His Excellency Lyonchhen Tshering Tobgay, the Prime Minister of Bhutan made an official visit to India from 10-18 January 2015. The two Prime Ministers agreed that cooperation in the field of hydropower was mutually beneficial and a win-win situation for both countries. Other outcomes from the visit were:

- They expressed satisfaction over the progress of the three ongoing HEPs totalling 2940 MW under the inter-governmental model. They reiterated their commitment to the 10,000 MW initiatives and in this context to the early implementation of the four JV-model projects, totalling 2120 MW.
- The visiting Prime Minister of Bhutan also had a meeting with the Chief Minister of Gujarat Smt. Anandiben Patel. They discussed areas of cooperation between Bhutan and

Gujarat including promotion of investments from Gujarat in Bhutan and other business links.

- Besides Gujarat, the Prime Minister of Bhutan also visited the holy sites in Varanasi and Bodhgaya. In Bodhgaya, he was presented a sapling of the Bodhi tree as a gift by the people of India to the people of Bhutan during a very special year when the Bhutanese people are celebrating the 60th Birth Anniversary of His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the Fourth King of Bhutan.

2. 4th India-Bhutan Development Cooperation Talks for the 11th Five Year Plan – 2 September 2015

- India-Bhutan discussed the bilateral developmental assistance. The Indian delegation was led by Ms. Sujata Mehta, Secretary (M&ER) and the Bhutanese delegation was led by Dasho Tshering Dorji, Foreign Secretary of Bhutan.
- India committed Rs. 2800 crore as Project Tied Assistance (PTA), Rs. 850 crore for Programme Grant and Rs. 850 crore for Small Development Projects (SDPs) for Bhutan's 11th Five Year Plan (July 2013 - June 2018).
- A total of 85 PTA projects and 485 SDPs have been broadly agreed for implementation during the current Plan period.
- The two sides reviewed the overall progress of PTA projects and agreed to a reprioritized list of projects. The two sides also noted with satisfaction the overall progress of the SDPs.

IV. Nepal

1. Nepal witnessed a destructive earthquake on 25 April 2015.

- As part of the Nation's overall relief effort for Nepal, the Indian Army launched operation 'Maitri' from 25 April 2015. The Engineer Task forces launched the rescue and rehabilitation operations from Barpak, Basantpur/Bhaktapur and Jorbati. The Army also established hospitals and treated the injured people in the earthquake.

2. External Affairs Minister's Speech at International Conference on Nepal's Reconstruction in Kathmandu (June 25, 2015) – Key points from the speech

- In India, there has been an overwhelming outpouring of sympathy, support and solidarity with Nepal in its moment of tragedy. Response from India was swift, spontaneous and substantive.
- The Government of India, the State Governments, NGOs and Corporates, and above all the people of India, opened their hearts to come to Nepal's assistance.
- Announcement of Government of India's pledge for Nepal's post-earthquake reconstruction of Nepali Rupees 10,000 crores, equivalent to one billion US dollars, one fourth of it as Grant.
- The two visits of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Nepal last year gave a significant impetus to bilateral cooperation in different fields. Hydropower projects now need to be speedily implemented and work on construction of the Kathmandu-Nijgadh fast track road and the Nijgadh airport with India's participation should be expedited.
- These projects will create new job opportunities, contribute to revenue, and facilitate long-term recovery.

- Government of India will work closely with Government of Nepal in identifying specific reconstruction projects.
- 3. Visit of Former Prime Minister of Nepal, Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba to India (29 July- 03 August, 2015)**
- Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba met Prime Minister Narendra Modi and thanked him on India's assistance to Nepal for rehabilitation post 2015 earthquake as well as informed him about the constitutional developments in Nepal.
 - He also met President Mukherjee as well as External Affairs Minister and the Foreign Secretary.
 - Mr. Deuba presented a paper titled "Political Development in Nepal" in Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA).
- 4. Key points from the Press Statement by the Foreign Secretary after visiting Nepal (September 19, 2015)**
- India has been strongly supportive of constitution making in Nepal. We would like its completion to be an occasion for joy and satisfaction, not agitation and violence.
 - Government of India hopes that Nepal's political leaders will display the necessary flexibility and maturity at this crucial time to ensure a durable and resilient Constitution that has broad-based acceptance.
- 5. Statement on the situation in Nepal (September 21, 2015)**
- Statement reflects Government of India deep concern over the incidents of violence resulting in death and injury in regions of Nepal bordering India following the promulgation of Constitution on 20 September, 2015.
 - India has repeatedly cautioned the political leadership of Nepal to take urgent steps to defuse the tension in these regions. This, if done in a timely manner, could have avoided these serious developments.
 - India consistently argued that all sections of Nepal must reach a consensus on the political challenges confronting them. The issues facing Nepal are political in nature and cannot be resolved through force.
 - India still hopes that initiatives will be taken by Nepal's leadership to effectively and credibly address the causes underlying the present state of confrontation.
- 6. 2nd UPR of Nepal – Interactive Dialogue at 23rd Session of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Working Group (November 04, 2015)**
- India welcomed the delegation of Nepal led by H.E. Mr. Kamal Thapa, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. India put forth the following recommendations before the Government of Nepal:
 - Consolidate the constitution building and democratization process by accommodating all sections of Nepal to enable broad-based ownership and participation
 - Ensure effective functioning of Truth and Reconciliation Commission and full implementation of its recommendations, including prosecution of those responsible for violent insurgency,

- Ensure the independence and financial autonomy of the National Human Rights Commission, and
- Set up an independent Commission for children and women.

7. Statement by the External Affairs Minister on Calling Attention Motion on "Situation in Nepal and State of Indo-Nepal Relation" in Rajya Sabha (December 03, 2015) – excerpts

- India has always stood for a peaceful conclusion to Nepal's on-going political transition after decades of instability and violence. At times, at the request of Nepali political parties, India has actively facilitated that process.
- Throughout the process of Constitution making in Nepal, there has been a political consensus in India on providing unstinting moral and material support to Nepal in its efforts to establish a peaceful, stable and Constitutional democracy. India has remained closely engaged with Nepal during its ongoing political transition and has consistently supported early promulgation of a broad-based, inclusive and durable Constitution. The Indian Prime Minister emphasized this during his two visits to Nepal in 2014, when he advised Nepal's leadership to work with a 'rishi-man' to frame a Constitution based on 'sahmat' rather than 'bahumat'.
- Soon after assuming office in May 2014, the NDA Government has embarked on a rejuvenated partnership with Nepal, injecting a new sense of optimism in this vital relationship. There was significant progress in the area of hydropower cooperation and connectivity.
- When a devastating earthquake struck Nepal in April 2015, India was the first responder with its largest ever disaster relief operation appropriately called 'Operation Maitri'. For the long-term rehabilitation phase, India's commitment of US\$ 1 billion (1/4th of which would be as grant), was announced on 25 June 2015 in Kathmandu, which was the largest pledge among all international donors. It is over and above India's existing commitment of another US\$ 1 billion, 40% of which would be grant, over the next five years.
- Prime Minister's call for consensus and broad-based ownership, conveyed during his two visits to Nepal, in August and November 2014, was strongly and consistently conveyed by Government both before, and after the draft Constitution was put out for public consultations from June-August 2015.
- India's advice was reiterated on several occasions including the visits by CPN-UML Vice-Chairperson Smt. Bidya Bhandari in January 2015, UCPN (M) senior leader Shri Baburam Bhattarai in March 2015, UCPN (M) Chairman Shri Prachanda in July 2015, senior leader of Nepali Congress Shri Sher Bahadur Deuba in August 2015, as well as other visitors from Nepal.
- The draft Constitution that finally emerged was perceived as non-inclusive by several sections of the Nepalese society, particularly in the Terai, who became restive and came out in protest from mid-August 2015 onwards. Several contentious provisions in key areas - such as constituency delimitation, inclusion for needy sections of the society and provincial boundaries - were apparently incorporated in the draft, either at a late stage without due debate and discussion, or by diluting important provisions of the 2007

Interim Constitution under which two successful elections had already been held in 2008 and 2013.

- In an effort to head off what clearly was a looming crisis, Foreign Secretary travelled to Nepal on 18-19 September as Prime Minister's Special Envoy. He advised the Nepalese political leadership to (a) give more time for dialogue to bring about broad-based acceptance; (b) send a positive signal to the disaffected sections of the Nepalese population that their grievances will be addressed; (c) reflect on India's assessment that if the protests were not addressed politically, the agitation in the Terai areas could intensify; and (d) prevent a further deterioration of the situation in the Terai and on the India-Nepal border. Regrettably, these cautions passed unheeded.
- As a result, the Constitution adopted on 20 September 2015 was perceived by large sections of Nepal's population as non-inclusive and diluting the representation already available to Nepal's ethnic and social groups since 2007. Unrest in the Terai escalated sharply, causing over 55 deaths and injuries to hundreds since August. The agitation, which completed 100 days on 23 November 2015, has seen protestors obstructing movements of cargo trucks across India-Nepal border crossings, thereby affecting supplies of fuel and other essential commodities from India to Nepal.
- That the new Constitution established Nepal as a federal democratic republic was duly noted and recognized by us. But we could not ignore the fact that several sections of the Nepalese society felt that their interests had not been taken care of.
- India's position, without being prescriptive, is that remaining issues about perceived under-representation, should be resolved through dialogue in an atmosphere free from violence and intimidation, and institutionalized in a manner that would enable broad-based ownership of the Constitution.
- This has caused continues resentment among the disaffected sections of the Nepalese population, and the situation in many parts of the country bordering India remains violent. With a 1751-km long open border with the five Indian States of Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Sikkim, India is directly affected by developments in the Terai.
- Contrary to some canards on this issue, there is no blockade by India, which we have repeatedly clarified, of supplies going to Nepal. Obstructions are by the Nepalese population on the Nepalese side, in which GoI cannot interfere. In fact, Government of India has facilitated supplies wherever possible. Several thousand trucks have remained stranded for weeks, waiting on the Indian side of the border crossings. We have kept them there to respond quickly if the blockages on the Nepal side are peacefully lifted. The primary crossing of Raxaul-Birgunj, which accounts for two-thirds of India-Nepal trade, remains closed from the Nepali side for more than two months. However, every day, several hundred cargo trucks have still been passing through those crossing points that are open and available.
- Despite constraints, Indian Oil Corporation has delivered POL supplies to the extent possible. More than 400 medical consignments were cleared through the India-Nepal border in November 2015.

V. Pakistan

After remaining in a state of flux, relations between India and Pakistan witnessed positive development in December 2015. Although formal talks between them derailed, the two countries remained connected through several meetings both at the bilateral and multilateral level.

1. India and Pakistan exchanged, through diplomatic channels simultaneously at New Delhi and Islamabad on January 1, 2015, the list of nuclear installations and facilities covered under the Agreement on the Prohibition of Attack against Nuclear installations between India and Pakistan, signed on 31 December 1988 and entered into force on 27 January 1991.
2. In response to a media question related to the elections scheduled on June 8, 2015 in Gilgit-Baltistan in PoK, the Official Spokesperson, MEA, on June 2, 2015, stated: "India's position is well known. The entire State of Jammu and Kashmir which includes the regions of Gilgit and Baltistan is an integral part of India. The election in Gilgit and Baltistan on June 8 under the so called "Gilgit Baltistan Empowerment and Self Government Order" was an attempt by Pakistan to camouflage its forcible and illegal occupation of the region. India is concerned at the continued efforts by Pakistan to deny the people of the region their political rights, and the efforts being made to absorb these territories. The fact that a Federal Minister of Pakistan is also the "Governor of Gilgit Baltistan" speaks for itself. Unfortunately in recent times the people of the region have also become victims of sectarian conflict, terrorism and extreme economic hardship due to Pakistan's occupationary policies."

3. Meeting with Prime Minister of Pakistan Nawaz Sharif (9 July 2015)

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi met with his Pakistani counterpart Nawaz Sharif on the sideline of BRICS Summit at Ufa, Russia on 9 July 2015. Both leaders agreed to cooperate to eliminate the menace of terrorism from South Asia. It was also agreed in the meeting to take the following steps to improve bilateral relations:

- A meeting in New Delhi between the two National Security Advisors (NSAs) to discuss all issues connected to terrorism.
- Early meetings of DG BSF and DG Pakistan Rangers followed by that of DGMOS.
- Decision for release of fishermen in each other's custody, along with their boats, within a period of 15 days.
- Mechanism for facilitating religious tourism.
- Both sides agreed to discuss ways and means to expedite the 26/11 Mumbai trial, including additional information like providing voice samples.

4. NSA Level Dialogue Between Ajit Doval and Sartaj Aziz in Delhi cancelled on August 23rd 2015

The trust deficit between India and Pakistan had cast its shadow on the NSA Level Dialogue that was agreed by the two Prime Ministers at Ufa, Russia, in July 2015. Pakistan took 22 days to respond to the Indian proposal of meeting between the two NSAs in New Delhi and proposed an agenda that was at complete variance with what the Prime Ministers had agreed upon in Ufa. Even more significantly, without confirming either the programme or the agenda, the Pakistani High

Commissioner invited Hurriyat representatives to consult with the visiting NSA. The Ufa understanding on the talks - read out jointly by the two Foreign Secretaries - was very clear: the NSAs were to meet to discuss all issues connected to terrorism. This was the only agenda set for them by the two Prime Ministers.

Pakistan's insistence on meeting the Hurriyat representatives as well as resetting the Ufa agreement was responsible for the cancellation of the NSA Level Dialogue in August 2015. Pakistani NSA Sartaj Aziz cancelled his visit to New Delhi at the last minute saying that the dialogue cannot happen with so many preconditions being set. He came to New Delhi for the talks, but it did not happen because of India's precondition, which Pakistan was not ready to follow.

5. National Security Advisers of India and Pakistan Meet in Bangkok, December 06, 2015

Initiated during Indian and Pakistani Prime Ministers' meeting in Paris, the NSAs of India and Pakistan, Ajit Doval and Lt Gen Nasser Khan Janjua, accompanied by their respective Foreign Secretaries, met at Bangkok on December 6, 2015. Discussions covered peace and security, terrorism, Jammu and Kashmir, and other issues, including tranquillity along the LoC.

6. External Affairs Minister's participation in the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the Heart of Asia Istanbul Process, Islamabad (December 09, 2015)

The External Affairs Minister of India, Smt. Sushma Swaraj led the Indian delegation to the Fifth Ministerial Conference of the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process in Islamabad on December 8-9, 2015. She called on the Pakistan Prime Minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif and held discussions with Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sartaj Aziz. Key points that emerged from the discussion are:

- The EAM and the Adviser condemned terrorism and resolved to cooperate to eliminate it.
- Both the leaders noted the successful talks on terrorism and security related issues in Bangkok by the two NSAs and decided that the NSAs will continue to address all issues connected to terrorism.
- Pakistan assured India of the steps being taken to expedite the early conclusion of the Mumbai trial.
- Both countries agreed to a Comprehensive Bilateral Dialogue and directed the Foreign Secretaries to work out the modalities and schedule of the meetings under the Dialogue including Peace and Security, CBMs, Jammu & Kashmir, Siachen, Sir Creek, Wullar Barrage/Tulbul Navigation Project, Economic and Commercial Cooperation, Counter-Terrorism, Narcotics Control, Humanitarian Issues, People to People exchanges and religious tourism.

Some of the highlights of her statement in the conference were:

- India's participation in the Conference was the reaffirmation of the country's strong commitment towards the promotion of political consultations and regional cooperation for a united, democratic, independent, strong and prosperous Afghanistan.
- India's vision of the process, Heart of Asia, is one of interlinked trade, transit, energy and communication routes, with Afghanistan as an important hub.

- India's efforts to develop regional economic cooperation are through connectivity. Afghanistan can benefit immensely if it can directly and fully access India's markets to take advantage of the zero duty regime available to its exports to India.
- India is willing to join the Afghanistan-Pakistan Trade and Transit Agreement, which was formally indicated.
- India's engagement in the Trade, Commerce and Investment (TCI) CBM within the Heart of Asia process as the lead country complements India-Afghanistan bilateral development cooperation with Afghanistan, including in the spheres of infrastructure, connectivity and capacity building.
- She stated that it was the collective duty of all of countries to ensure that the forces of terrorism and extremism do not find sanctuaries and safe havens in any name, form or manifestation in Afghanistan.
- An end to terrorism and extremism, and adherence to internationally accepted redlines were essential for reconciliation and lasting peace in Afghanistan.

7. The Indian Prime Minister's stopover in Lahore, Pakistan, on 25 December 2015 on his way back home from Afghanistan (outgoing Visit).

It was the first visit of an Indian Prime Minister to Pakistan after a gap of 11 years. It had significant impact in the region and beyond and was welcomed by world leaders. Prime Minister Sharif and PM Modi agreed that the two foreign secretaries of the countries would meet in mid January in Islamabad. (This has been postponed due to terror attack at IAF airbase in Pathankot, India.)

VI. Sri Lanka

1. Prime Minister's Media Statement during the State Visit of President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to India, February 16, 2015

- The speech started with a congratulatory note to Sri Lanka on the completion of a successful election and highlighted the strong historical and contemporary bonds between Indian and Sri Lanka of friendship, economic, political and cultural cooperation.
- It talked about plans to enhance cooperation in the energy sector, improve sea and air connectivity, bilateral agreement on civil nuclear cooperation, and expand defence and security cooperation.
- It mentioned the progress made by the housing programme (for Internally Displaced Persons) in Sri Lanka being assisted by India.
- An MoU was signed on cooperation in agriculture, and the importance of solving the Fisherman's issue.

List of Agreements/MoUs signed during the State Visit of the President of Sri Lanka to India

- ***Agreement between Sri Lanka and India on Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy***
 - Facilitating cooperation in the transfer and exchange of knowledge and expertise, sharing of resources, capacity building and training of personnel in peaceful uses of nuclear energy including use of radioisotopes, nuclear safety,

radiation safety, nuclear security, radioactive waste management and nuclear and radiological disaster mitigation and environmental protection.

- ***Programme of Cultural Cooperation between Sri Lanka and India for the years 2015-18***
 - It seeks to enhance the level of cooperation in a wide variety of fields such as performing arts, visual arts, libraries, museums, archives & cultural documentation, archaeology, handicrafts, publications and professional exchanges.
- ***MoU on the Establishment of Nalanda University***
 - The MoU would enable Sri Lanka to participate in the Nalanda University Project.
- ***Work-Plan 2014-2015 under the MoU on cooperation in the field of Agriculture between India and Sri Lanka***
 - It facilitates bilateral cooperation in agro processing, agricultural extension, horticulture, agricultural machinery, training in farm mechanization, livestock diseases, etc. between relevant institutes and organizations from both countries.

2. Prime Minister Modi's Visit to Sri Lanka, 13-14 March 2015

During the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the two sides signed four bilateral agreements on visa, customs, youth development and building the Rabindranath Tagore memorial in Sri Lanka.

Prime Minister's Media Statement during visit to Sri Lanka (13 March) – Key Points

- Lanka IOC and Ceylon Petroleum Corporation have agreed to jointly develop the Upper Tank Farm of the China Bay Installation in Trincomalee on mutually agreed terms and a Joint Task Force will be constituted soon to work out the modalities.
- India is keen to help Trincomalee become a regional petroleum hub.
- India has been looking forward to early commencement of work on the ground in the Sampur Coal Power Project – a landmark project that would meet Sri Lanka's energy needs.
- Underlining the importance of Ocean economy, PM stated that the ocean economy is a new frontier that holds enormous promise for both Sri Lanka and India. It is a priority for the two countries. Their decision to set up a Joint Task Force on Ocean Economy is a significant step, especially because of their proximity.
- PM promised to extend the facility of "Tourist Visa on Arrival - Electronic Travel Authorization" Scheme to Sri Lankan citizens from 14 April 2015.
- India would cooperate in developing Ramayana Trail in Sri Lanka and a Buddhist Circuit in India.
- India would provide a fresh Line of Credit of up to US\$ 318 million for the railways sector. This will be used to procure rolling stock and to restore and upgrade existing railway track.

- The Reserve Bank of India and the Central Bank of Sri Lanka have agreed to enter into a Currency Swap Agreement of US\$ 1.5 billion.

Prime Minister's address to Parliament of Sri Lanka (March 13, 2015) – Key points

- Sri Lanka is a leader in advancing cooperation in South Asia. It is important for the future of the Indian Ocean Region.
- Sri Lanka's progress and prosperity is also a source of strength for India. So, Sri Lanka's success is of great significance to India.
- India deeply values its security cooperation with Sri Lanka.
- Underling the importance of security cooperation in Indian Ocean, PM said that the maritime security cooperation between India, Sri Lanka and Maldives should expand to include others in the Indian Ocean area. He further stated that the two countries are at the crossroads of the Indian Ocean. Sri Lanka's leadership and their partnership will be vital for building a peaceful, secure, stable and prosperous maritime neighbourhood.

3. Suo Motu Statement by External Affairs Minister in Rajya Sabha on Prime Minister's Visit to Sri Lanka (March 18, 2015) – Key Points:

- The visit expressed India's strong support for democracy and reform in Sri Lanka. Prime Minister noted in his address to the Parliament that recent elections reflected the collective voice of the nation – the hope for change, reconciliation and unity.
- Prime Minister also declared that we believe that the early and full implementation of the 13th Amendment and going beyond it would contribute to this process.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the first Indian Prime Minister to visit Jaffna. Prime Minister unveiled the foundation stone of the Jaffna Cultural Centre to be built under a grant offered by India.
- Prime Minister handed over certificates to the beneficiaries of the Indian Housing Project for internally displaced persons. At Talaimannar, he flagged off the inaugural train on the track to Madhu Road. Prime Minister also visited the ancient temple of Naguleswaram at Jaffna.
- The problem of fishermen was also discussed during the talks. Prime Minister pointed out that this was a complex issue involving livelihood and humanitarian concerns on both sides, India and Sri Lanka need to find a long term solution. Fishermen's associations of both countries must meet at the earliest to work out a mutually acceptable arrangement.
- Among the main outcomes of the Prime Minister's talks in Sri Lanka were: a) inclusion of Sri Lanka in the Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) Scheme from 14th April, coinciding with the occasion of the Sinhala and Tamil New Year; b) setting up of a Joint Task Force to develop the Trincomalee Upper Oil Tank Farm; c) announcement of a fresh line of credit for US\$318 million for Sri Lanka's railway sector; d) extension of currency swap facility of US\$1.5 billion by Reserve Bank of India to Sri Lanka's Central Bank; e) creating a Joint Task Force for cooperation in the Ocean Economy; f) direct flights between Delhi and Colombo by Air India to begin this summer; g) holding of a Festival of India in Sri Lanka; and h) cooperation in development of a Ramayana Trail in Sri Lanka and the Buddhist circuit in India.

- Four agreements/MOUs were signed during the visit: on customs cooperation; visa exemption for diplomatic and official passport holders; youth development; and construction of an auditorium in Ruhuna University in Matara, Sri Lanka.

4. Visit of Prime Minister of Sri Lanka to India during September 14-16, 2015

Ranil Wickremesinghe, Prime Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, visited India from September 14-16, 2015. During the visit, India and Sri Lanka signed four agreements/MoUs. Bilateral agreement on Orbit Frequency Coordination of Satellite for SAARC Region, renewal of MoU regarding Indian grant assistance for the implementation of Small Developmental Projects (SDP) through local bodies, non-governmental organizations, charitable trusts and education and vocational institutions, and MoU regarding supply of Medical Equipment to 200 bed ward complex at District General Hospital, Vavuniya, were signed. An exchange of letters on the establishment of emergency ambulance services in Sri Lanka was also made. India and Sri Lanka recognise closely aligned security interests and the need to remain sensitive to each other's concerns. They agreed to enhance their security cooperation. Sri Lankan Prime Minister thanked India for helping in resettling and reconstruction in the Northern and the Eastern Provinces of his country.

2. East Asia/ASEAN

I. Cambodia

1. Visit of Vice President to Cambodia, September 15-17, 2015

Vice-President Hamid Ansari visited Cambodia from 15-17 September, 2015. For India, the relationship with Cambodia is a key element of engagement with ASEAN. In 2002, it hosted the first India-ASEAN Summit. MoUs on tourism and an umbrella agreement for Quick Impact Projects were signed during the visit. Harnessing water resources was a mutually identified area of cooperation. The Government of India has extended support to several projects under the Mekong Ganga Cooperation programme targeting the health sector, agriculture and women's empowerment. Agriculture and agro processing sector, mining, oil and gas and small and medium enterprises offer opportunities for trade and investment by Indian business houses.

II. Indonesia

1. Vice President Mr Hamid Ansari's visit to Indonesia (02 November 2015)

- Both the leadership discussed ways to diversify and increase bilateral trade as well to encourage investments in each other's country through each other's private sectors. The two sides also discussed possibilities of expanding cooperation in defence and counter-terrorism through intensification of existing mechanisms.
- Two MoUs were also signed. India and Indonesia signed a MoU on cooperation in New and Renewable Energy Sector. This cooperation is important as both India and Indonesia have committed themselves to reduce carbon emissions by 35% and 29% respectively by 2030 and the second MoU was on cooperation in cultural field.

III. Lao PDR

1. Visit of Vice President to Lao PDR, September 14, 2015

Vice-President Hamid Ansari visited Lao PDR from 17-18 September, 2015 at the invitation of Mr. Bounnhang Vorachith, Vice President of Lao PDR. This was the first ever visit at the level of Vice President to Laos. He was accompanied by the Minister of State for Water Resources, Shri Sanwar Lal Jat, four MPs, senior officials and media. India offered its capacities in economy, investment and technology to Lao. Agreements regarding air services and agricultural cooperation were also signed. Laos once again conveyed its support for India's permanent membership of the UNSC. Laos is an ASEAN member and set to take over ASEAN presidency in 2016. India and Laos discussed working together in the ASEAN and in Mekong-Ganga Cooperation Framework.

IV. Malaysia

1. Minister of State for External Affairs attended the 13th ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers Meeting in Kuala Lumpur (5 August 2015)

- In his speech General V.K. Singh stated the importance of the endorsed Plan of Action (POA) for the period 2016-2020, which will give shape to the ASEAN-India Partnership for Peace, Progress and shared Prosperity and would be ratified in November 2015.

- Conducted a comprehensive review of the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership.
2. **Minister of State for External Affairs at the 5th East Asia Summit (EAS) Foreign Ministers' Meeting, Kuala Lumpur (August 06, 2015)**
 - General VK Singh reiterated India's support to ASEAN centrality and leadership role within the EAS and supported the setting up of a dedicated EAS Unit within ASEAN Secretariat and utilizing the services of the EAS Ambassadors in Jakarta optimally to ensure effective and timely follow-up of the Leaders' decisions.
 - He also stated that India supports freedom of navigation in international waters, including the South China Sea and hoped that all parties to the disputes in the South China Sea will abide by the guidelines on the implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea.
 3. **Joint Statement on enhanced Malaysia-India Strategic Partnership (November 23, 2015) issued by the Prime Minister of the Republic of India Shri Narendra Modi and Dato Mohd. Najib Tun Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia.**

Both countries agreed to proceed with efforts to develop the Strategic Partnership between the two countries as follows: Political Consultation, Economic, Trade and Financial Areas, Defence and Security, Tourism and Education, Human Resources, Health, Science and Technology, Public Administration and Regional and International Cooperation.

Three MoUs signed

- MoU on Cyber Security (Between the Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-IN), India and Cyber Security, Malaysia, to promote closer cooperation and the exchange of information pertaining to cyber security incident management, technology cooperation, cyber attacks, prevalent policies and best practices and mutual response to cyber security incidents.
- MoU on CEP (Between the Ministry of Culture, India and Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Malaysia), to strengthen friendship existing between the two countries and further develop their cultural exchanges and cooperation by way of visits of delegation at various levels and troupes, organising Art Exhibitions, participation of scholars and experts in conferences etc.
- MoU between National Institution for Transforming India (NITI AAYOG), Government of India and PEMANDU, Government of Malaysia, to strengthen, promote and develop cooperation in the areas of performance management, project delivery and monitoring related to government programmes to enhance public service delivery, improve efficiency of implementation methods and procedure and develop templates and tools to monitor performance of government programmes.

V. Mongolia

1. Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi visits Mongolia

Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi paid a visit to Mongolia on 17-18 May 2015. The visit underscored the significance of the bilateral relations in the backdrop of 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between India and Mongolia. It was the first ever visit by an Indian Prime

Minister marking the dawn of a new era in Mongolia-India relations. Although India's economic engagement with Mongolia is minimal but there is a potential for cooperation in the minerals sector. Mongolia is a mineral rich country in coking coal, copper, rare earths and uranium. India already has a civil nuclear agreement which provides for uranium exports to India once the domestic laws in Mongolia permit prospecting and mining.

India provides technical training to Mongolian students. There are 150 slots for students' admission every year which are earmarked to Mongolia under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation programme. Besides, India provides 40 scholarships per year to Mongolian nationals for higher studies in India. Two to four students also come to study Hindi at Kendriya Hindi Sansthan in Agra every year.

Several agreements/MoUs were signed between the two countries during Prime Minister's visit to Mongolia. These include on air service, animal health and dairy, traditional systems of medicine and homoeopathy, establishment of cyber security training centre in the Ministry of Defence, Mongolia, between National Security Council of both the countries, and on renewable energy.

The Joint Statement outlined the prioritised area of cooperation in the field of political and security partnership and other aspects such as defence, economic, health, scientific and cultural exchanges.

VI. Myanmar

1. First India-Myanmar Joint Consultative Commission (JCC) Meeting (15 July 2015)

The First India-Myanmar Joint Consultative Commission (JCC) Meeting co-chaired by the External Affairs Minister of India and the Foreign Minister of Myanmar was held on July 16, 2015. This was the first JCC meeting reviewed the progress on bilateral initiatives in various sectors, identify thrust areas and give directions for further growth of the bilateral partnership.

VII. Philippines

1. Third India-Philippines Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation took place on October 14, 2015

The 3rd Meeting of the India-Philippines Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation was held on 14 October 2015 in New Delhi. The meeting was co-chaired by Her Excellency Sushma Swaraj, External Affairs Minister of the Republic of India and Honourable Albert F. Del Rosario, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines.

Minister Swaraj and Secretary Del Rosario expressed satisfaction at the progress made in the implementation of the decisions made at the 2nd Joint Commission on Bilateral Cooperation. They held comprehensive discussions on a wide range of matters of mutual importance including political-security; economic; and socio-cultural cooperation, and reviewed the progress of the Joint Working Groups on Trade and Investment; Tourism; Agriculture; Health and Medicine; as well as the Joint Committee on Renewable Energy; and the Joint Defence Cooperation Committee.

The Ministers emphasized the importance of regular high level meetings, to reflect the growing and dynamic bilateral partnership between the Philippines and India. The Ministers welcomed the proposed visit of the President of India to the Philippines and endeavoured to work towards its success.

Joint Statement – Key Points:

- The Meeting noted the convening of institutionalized mechanisms such as the Foreign Policy Consultations; Strategic Dialogue; and Joint Consular Consultation Meetings. The Ministers agreed that the Joint Working Groups/ Joint Committees that support these mechanisms be held regularly to discuss and agree on concrete and time bound targets in the various identified areas of cooperation. In this regard, both Ministers agreed that the next meetings of the Policy Consultations and Strategic Dialogue will be held in New Delhi in 2016.
- The Ministers expressed satisfaction at the deepening defence cooperation especially in exchanges in military training and education, capacity building, and regular goodwill visits by Indian Naval Ships to the Philippines. Both sides agreed to further strengthen defence and security cooperation in the areas of maritime domain awareness, intelligence sharing, capability building, White Shipping and defence production. The Ministers expressed satisfaction at the regular INTELLEX meeting and looked forward to the convening of the 2nd meeting of the India-Philippines Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) in India.
- Secretary Del Rosario briefed Minister Swaraj on the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro and the draft Bangsamoro Basic Law. Minister Swaraj expressed India's support for the Philippine government's pursuit of a just and lasting peace in Mindanao.
- The Ministers affirmed their shared commitment to fight the scourge of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reiterated their resolve to expand and deepen cooperation to counter terrorism. They agreed to the early convening of the Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism, in New Delhi to discuss all issues related to terrorism and other transnational crimes.
- Recognizing the common threats to national security from transnational crimes, the Ministers hoped for an early conclusion of negotiations on the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters (MLAT) and the commencement of negotiations on a Transfer of Sentenced Persons Agreement (TSPA).
- Secretary Del Rosario discussed the developments in the West Philippine Sea, and the status of the Philippine arbitration case at the Permanent Court of Arbitration, in The Hague, the Netherlands. Minister Swaraj expressed support for the peaceful resolution of the West Philippine Sea/South China Sea dispute. Both sides reiterated the importance of the settlement of all disputes by peaceful means and of refraining from the threat or use of force, in accordance with universally recognised principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS. Both the Ministers asserted the importance of safeguarding the freedom of navigation and over flight in the South China Sea. In this regard, they reiterated the importance of an expeditious conclusion on a Code of Conduct and full and effective implementation of the 2002 Declaration of the Code of Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea.
- The Philippines recognized the steps taken by India to solve its maritime boundary with Bangladesh, through arbitration at the Permanent Court of Arbitration, and its acceptance of the ruling as an example of peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance

with universally recognized principles of international law, including the 1982 UNCLOS by the International Court.

- The Ministers' expressed satisfaction at the growing economic ties between India and the Philippines and committed to further enhance bilateral trade and investment. They expressed hope that the next Joint Working Group (JWG) on Trade and Investment be held early next year, along with the Joint Business Council meeting which further boost bilateral trade. The Ministers noted the impressive economic growth by both countries and the ASEAN Economic Community impact an increased economic cooperation. Minister Swaraj called for the ratification of the ASEAN-India Trade in Services and Investment Agreements and the review of Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA).
- In light of vibrant economic prospects for both countries, Secretary Del Rosario encouraged investments from India in the areas of Public Private Partnership, infrastructure development and information and communications technology, among others. He expressed hope that two-way trade will continue to increase and that a healthier balance can be achieved.
- Minister Swaraj showed gratitude for the active encouragement and facilitation of Indian investments into the Philippines and hoped that investors from the Philippines will also make use of the enhanced investment opportunities in India provided by the implementation of the Smart City and Make in India programmes. She also hoped that Philippines will facilitate greater access to Indian companies, particularly in the field of infrastructure.
- The Ministers highlighted the potential in health and pharmaceuticals. To maximise this potential, the Ministers called to initiate the first meeting of TWG on Pharmazone and Pharmaceuticals and the second meeting of the JWG on Health and Medicine to discuss relevant issues. Minister Swaraj expressed hope that the Philippines will facilitate entry of more Indian pharmaceutical companies in the Philippines.
- Both Ministers expressed satisfaction at the growth of tourism with around 43,000 tourists from the Philippines visiting India in 2014 and around 61,000 Indian tourists to the Philippines in the same year. The Ministers looked forward to the next meeting of the JWG on Tourism Cooperation proposed to be held in the Philippines in 2016.
- Both Ministers stressed the importance of enhancing cooperation in sectors such as Agriculture; New and Renewable Energy; Science & Technology; Information Technology; and Education sectors and encouraged the convening of relevant JWGs to further strengthen cooperation in these fields.
- Both Ministers underlined the existing cultural and civilizational linkages between the two countries and welcomed ongoing efforts to encourage further people-to-people exchanges. They expressed conviction that the Executive Programme of Cultural Exchanges for the year 2016-2018, between the two countries will further expand bilateral cultural cooperation and contribute to further strengthening of the partnership.
- Both sides agreed to address consular issues through bilateral consular consultations and regular meetings.

- The Ministers exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual interest including ASEAN-India cooperation; EAS; APEC; UNSC reforms, climate change and candidatures at various international bodies.
- Minister Swaraj wished the Philippines a successful Chairmanship of the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Manila on 18–19 November 2015.
- The two Ministers signed the bilateral Executive Programme of Cultural Exchanges for the year 2016–2018 and exchanged Instruments of Ratification of the India-Philippines Extradition Treaty during the meeting.
- The Ministers agreed that the 4th Meeting of the Joint Commission will be held in the Philippines in 2017.

VIII. Republic of Korea

1. Visit of Foreign Minister of Democratic People's Republic of Korea to India (April 12-14, 2015):

At the invitation of Minister of External Affairs Mrs Sushma Swaraj, Foreign Minister of Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ri Su Yong visited India (12-14 April, 2015). This was the first ever visit at the Foreign Minister level from DPRK to India. The Foreign Minister level talks were held in a frank and friendly atmosphere where issues of mutual interest including India's security concerns came up for discussion. EAM conveyed to her Korean counterpart the significance of peace and stability in the Korean peninsula for India's Act East policy. Foreign Minister Ri Su Yong expressed his country's appreciation for the humanitarian assistance provided by India to DPRK and in this regard sought additional assistance. EAM agreed to positively consider DPRK's request. The DPRK Foreign Minister invited EAM to visit DPRK.

2. Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid a State Visit to the Republic of Korea (ROK) at the invitation of H.E. Mme. Park Geun-hye, President of the Republic of Korea (ROK) on May 18-19, 2015.

During the visit, Prime Minister Modi held a summit meeting with President Park.

India sees the ROK as an indispensable partner in its "Act East" strategy, and the two countries recognized the value of the bilateral partnership and its contribution to bringing peace, stability and security in the Asia Pacific Region. President Park informed Prime Minister Modi about ROK's Northeast Asia Peace and Cooperation Initiative (NAPCI). The two leaders agreed that the two sides should work together to find complementarities between NAPCI and Act East Policy to achieve shared goals. To substantiate the Special Strategic Partnership the two sides agreed to the following:

- Establish annual Summit meetings, in either country, or on the margins of plurilateral events;
- Hold Joint Commissions led by the two Foreign Ministers annually;
- Facilitate greater parliamentary exchanges to strengthen democratic institutions in their respective regions;
- Strengthen the partnerships between Indian and Korean institutions of defence education, including the National Defence College of India and the National Defence University of Korea, by activating the dispatch of military officers for education;

- Further strengthen regular consultations between the National Security Council structures of the two countries on security, defence and cyber related issues;
- Establish a joint Vice Ministerial level defence and foreign affairs dialogue in the "2+2" Format;
- Encourage greater cooperation between their shipyards for defence needs;
- Pursue further deepening of defence cooperation through commencement of staff level talks between the two navies and regular exchanges of visits between the two armed forces;
- Seek the means of the cyber security cooperation to prepare against transnational cyber threats;
- Cooperate appropriately in the area of UN Peacekeeping; and
- Hold a track 1.5 dialogue annually between Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security of ROK (IFANS) - Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA).

3. In the Field of Trade and Investment, the two countries agreed on:

- President Park welcomed India's 'Make in India' initiative as it provides new avenues to enrich and add substance to the bilateral relations. Prime Minister Modi invited the ROK to become a privileged partner in 'Make in India' to which President Park conveyed her appreciation. Both leaders acknowledged that trade and investment between both countries have enormous potential for further development. Both the leaders took steps to leverage fully the potential of the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between the Republic of Korea and the Republic of India and to make full use of the current discussion mechanisms under the CEPA, such as the Joint Committee, for that purpose.
- The Ministry of Strategy and Finance and Export-Import Bank of Korea has expressed their intentions to provide \$10 billion for mutual cooperation in infrastructure, comprising Economic Development Cooperation Fund (US \$ 1 billion) and export credits (US \$ 9 billion) for priority sectors, including smart cities, railways, power generation and transmission, and other sectors to be agreed.
- Both the countries agreed to cooperate in several other fields which include in Steel, Ship Building and Maritime Transport sector.

IX. Singapore

1. State Visit of the President of the Republic of Singapore to India (09 February 2015)

The President of Republic of Singapore H.E. Dr. Tony Tan Keng Yam, accompanied by Mrs. Mary Tan, was on a State Visit to India from 8-11 February, 2015, at the invitation of the President, Shri Pranab Mukherjee. The visit highlighted the celebrations on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Singapore. H.E. President Tan met Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj, had wide-ranging discussions on enhancement of bilateral relations and strengthening of cooperation on regional and international issues.

The discussions covered new focus areas:

- Specific initiatives to develop Smart cities and urban rejuvenation, promote Skill development, measures to Speed up connectivity, coastal and port development, strengthening linkages with the North East India, sharing of experiences in science & technology, space and other areas to enhance productivity and efficiency as well as broadening cooperation in fighting terrorism.
 - H. E. President Tan inaugurated the Singapore Festival in India and launched the commemorative book titled "Singapore and India: Towards a Shared Future". He also inaugurated the Peranakan Exhibition at National Museum and hosted a Food Festival themed "Flavours of Singapore". The year-long Festival of India in Singapore was launched in August 2014, to showcase their culture, innovation, youth and States.
- 2. Prime Minister's Remarks to the Media on the occasion of his visit to Singapore to attend the State Funeral Services of Singapore's founder and first Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, March 29, 2015**
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised Singapore's founder and first premier Lee Kuan Yew as an inspirational leader and global thinker.
 - The PM stated that he was a global thinker, who saw things ahead of others. He was an advocate of economic progress, but also made tireless efforts to advance peace and stability in the region.
 - Prime Minister Modi highlighted that India's relations with Singapore are one of the strongest relationships in the world. Singapore is a key pillar of India's Act East Policy.
- 3. The Joint Statement on Strategic Partnership between India and Singapore-was titled "Renewed Spirit, New Energy – नया उत्साह, नया जोश" (November 24, 2015), signed between Prime Minister of the Republic of India, Mr Narendra Modi and Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore, Mr Lee Hsien Loong.**
- The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed the importance of defence relations between India and Singapore in their Strategic Partnership with emphasis on maritime security.
 - The relationship focused on 15 areas including: Political exchanges, defence and security cooperation, scaling up of trade and investment, strengthening air transport and maritime cooperation, smart city development and urban rejuvenation, skills development and capacity building, state focus to strengthen business and cultural links, culture and people-to-people exchanges, higher education institutions cooperation, cooperation in public administration, cooperation in science and technology, and research and innovation, legal and judicial cooperation, financial cooperation, parliamentary cooperation and cooperation in multilateral and regional fora.

Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership: Key Points

- India and Singapore elevate their bilateral relations to a Strategic Partnership to deepen and broaden engagement in existing areas of cooperation and catalyse new ones ranging from political, defence and security cooperation to economic, cultural and people to people contact. The Strategic Partnership is also a framework to contribute to greater regional stability and growth.

- The two sides also recognised the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA), signed in 2005, as the bedrock of their economic partnership. Emphasised the value of the Agreement on the Establishment of the Joint Ministerial Committee (JMC) for Bilateral Cooperation, signed in 2007, which has enhanced their political relationship.

Agreements signed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit

- The two nations signed an agreement concerning Defence Cooperation. The Agreement provides for Defence Ministers' Dialogue, joint exercises between the armed forces, cooperation between defence industries to identify areas of co-production and joint development.
- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Singapore on the Extension of Loan of Artifacts to the Asian Civilisations Museum of Singapore was also signed during the visit.

Executive programmes operationalised

- Executive Programme on Cooperation in the Fields of the Arts, Heritage, Archives and Library between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Republic of Singapore for the Years 2015-2018. Programme envisages detailed plan of action and cooperation in the field of Arts, Museums, Archives, Monuments, Library and Exchange of Technical Experts & Students for the period 2015-2018.
- Operationalisation of the Technical Agreement on Sharing White Shipping Information between the Indian Navy and the Republic of Singapore Navy signed on 21 July 2015. Following the signing of the Technical Agreement, both Navies have established a two-way linkage. This has enhanced bilateral cooperation in the area of maritime security.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed

- MoU between Indian Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In), Department of Information Technology of the Republic of India and Singapore Computer Emergency Response Team (SingCERT), Cyber Security Agency of the Republic of Singapore on Cooperation in the area of Cyber Security. The MoU promotes closer cooperation and exchange of information pertaining to cyber security between the Computer Emergency Response Teams of the two countries by establishment of a broader framework for future dialogue; exchange of information on cyber-attacks; research collaboration in smart technologies; exchange of information on prevalent cyber security policies and best practices as well as professional exchanges.
- MoU between Airports Authority of India (AAI) and Singapore Cooperation Enterprise (SCE) in Civil Aviation. The MoU facilitates mutual cooperation in a number of mutually agreed areas of civil aviation services and airport management beginning with Jaipur and Ahmedabad airports.
- MoU between National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog) and Singapore Cooperation Enterprise (SCE) on Cooperation in the Field of Planning. The MoU promotes knowledge and information exchange in areas such as urban planning; waste water management; solid waste management and public-private partnerships between the two organisations.

- MoU on cooperation to combat Illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their precursors. The MoU facilitates and enhances cooperation by exchange of Information on trends in the illicit manufacture and those arrested on drug trafficking charges, and establish direct contact points between the two Narcotics Control Bureaus. Capacity building, skill upgrading and knowledge development are also identified as areas of cooperation.
- MoU between the Town and Country Planning Organisation of the Government of India and the Singapore Cooperation Enterprise in Capacity Building in the Field of Urban Planning and Governance. The MoU provides for participation of government officials from India in capacity-building programmes in areas such as urban planning and management.

X. Thailand

1. List of Agreements/MOUs signed during the Visit of Minister of External Affairs to Thailand (27-29 June 2015)

- i. The two countries agreed on minutes of the Seventh Meeting of the Thailand-India Joint Commission for Bilateral Cooperation. It was a review of bilateral relationship at the Ministerial level.
- ii. The two countries exchanged instruments of ratification of the Treaty on Extradition. The Treaty provides the legal framework for seeking extradition of fugitive offenders, including those involved in terrorism, transnational crimes, economic offences etc. It provides for the extradition of any person who is wanted for trial or for the imposition or enforcement of a sentence by one Contracting State and is found in the territory of the other Contracting State. This will help both the countries in expedited extradition of fugitives. This Treaty would further strengthen the relationship between two law enforcement agencies by providing a firm legal basis for their bilateral cooperation
- iii. Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of Nalanda University was signed. By signing this Agreement, Thailand joins other East Asian Summit (EAS) countries in the establishment of Nalanda University
- iv. They also agreed on the avoidance of double taxation and the prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on Income. It provides the framework to avoid double taxation and prevention of fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on income so as to promote economic cooperation between two countries.
- v. Memorandum of Understanding between Ministry of AYUSH, India and Rangsit University, Thailand on the Establishment of the "Academic Chair" in Ayurveda Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences. The Chair will be based at Rangsit University, Thailand to undertake academic and research activities.

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 since the establishment of diplomatic relations with the republics 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.

The year 2015 can be termed as a significant year for India-Central Asia relations. Many high-profile visits were undertaken, important agreements were signed and grounds for deeper interactions were prepared. In the month of July 2015, Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi paid an important visit to the region. It was for the first time since the independence of the republics that any Indian Prime Minister visited all the five countries during a single visit to the region.

I. Kazakhstan

India-Kazakhstan relations got a boost with the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the country on 7-8 July, 2015. India signed a much larger second contract on civil nuclear cooperation through a uranium purchase contract. The Prime Minister also inaugurated the Indian-Kazakh Centre for Excellence in Information and Communication Technology, which houses a PARAM supercomputer which has been given by India. He also formally launched the drilling in the Satpayev Block in the Caspian Sea which is being undertaken by ONGC Videsh Limited. The Prime Minister informed that India has launched the drilling operations for exploration in the first oil field with Indian investments in Kazakhstan. India also expressed its interest to expand cooperation in other minerals. President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev responded positively to request to consider additional mature blocks for Indian investments.

The two sides considered to have a new roadmap for cooperation from the joint business council of chambers of commerce and industry. Increased cooperation in Space and Information Technology, including their application for governance and development was also agreed. Announcement of establishment of a joint study group to study India's proposal for Free Trade Agreement with Eurasian Economic Union was also made. India also reiterated its support for Kazakhstan's candidature for a non-permanent seat in the UNSC for 2017-18.

The agreements that were signed include an agreement for the purchase of 5,000 tonnes of uranium for India in the next five years. An agreement on defence cooperation between the two sides was also signed, which is to engage in peace training, exercises and exploration of possible engagement in production and co-production in the defence sector.

II. Kyrgyzstan

In Kyrgyzstan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi held discussions with President of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambaev during his visit to the country on 11-12 July 2015. Terrorism and climate change

appeared as the most important issues during the bilateral discussion. Prime Minister Modi inaugurated a statue of Mahatma Gandhi which has been placed at a very prominent location in the capital. Possibilities of co-production and joint ventures were also explored.

Health care appeared an important point of bilateral cooperation and Prime Minister inaugurated the first India-Central Asia E-Link on Health, which linked first real-time consultation between Kyrgyz and Indian hospitals.

The two sides also talked about having joint military exercises on an annual basis. Including Kyrgyz cadets to train at Indian Military Academies was also discussed. The Prime Minister inaugurated the second phase of the Mountain Bio Research project that India's DRDO and Kyrgyzstan have been carrying on to study the effects of high altitude on sleep patterns and other bio factors of soldiers.

Agreements signed include cooperation between the Election Commission of India and the Kyrgyz election authority.

III. Tajikistan

1. Sirodjidin Aslov Muhridinovich, Foreign Minister of Tajikistan (11-15, May 2015)

Relations between India and Tajikistan have traditionally been close and cordial. Exchange of high level visits between the two countries has served to cement bilateral ties.

During his visit to India in May 2015, Tajikistan Foreign Minister Sirodjidin had delegation level talks on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest with External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj. The Ministers undertook a comprehensive review of bilateral cooperation in political, defence, economic and cultural issues. With a view to facilitate greater trade and investment between India and Tajikistan, the two Ministers agreed to work towards enhanced connectivity between the two countries including through the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and other regional transit arrangements.

The Ministers signed a new Programme of Cooperation between the Foreign Ministries of the two countries for the years 2015-2017, which envisages regular and structured consultations on a range of bilateral issues, including consular matters, training of Tajik diplomatic personnel in India and enhanced information and media exchanges, as well as regional and multilateral issues.

2. Prime Minister Modi's visit to Tajikistan

Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid a State visit to Tajikistan from 12 to 13 July 2015 and held wide-ranging talks on bilateral, regional and international issues with President Emomali Rahmon. The two leaders noted the rising trend of extremism and terrorism in many parts of the world and in their immediate neighbourhood, posing a threat to India and Tajikistan as well as the region. Both sides further emphasized the need for adoption of the "Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism" by the UN General Assembly. Prime Minister Modi expressed appreciation at Tajikistan's efforts at curbing extremism and radicalism and to ensure secular governance, which is a common ideal of both the countries.

India and Tajikistan decided to reinvigorate official-level interactions in the framework of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter Terrorism for strengthening cooperation in the fight against terrorism. The Leaders expressed satisfaction at ongoing defence cooperation, which remains one of the main pillars of partnership between the two countries.

Tajikistan reiterated its support to the International North South Transport Corridor (INSTC). India and Tajikistan held consultations to include India into the proposed Pakistan, Afghanistan and Tajikistan Trilateral Transit Trade Agreement (PATTTTA).

Tajikistan expressed its intention to facilitate agricultural cooperation with India and welcomed greater involvement of Indian companies in the agricultural sector. Tajikistan thanked India for successful up gradation and modernisation of the Varzob-1 Hydro Power Station by the Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) and National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC).

Tajikistan welcomed India's proposal to implement a tele-medicine project in Tajikistan by connecting reputed multi-speciality hospitals in India with hospitals in Dushanbe and other regions of Tajikistan for offering medical consultation and education.

India and Tajikistan called for active implementation of the Programme of Cooperation on Art and Culture for the period 2016-18 and agreed to hold "Days of Culture" in each other's country.

Prime Minister Modi and President Rahmon noted that Afghanistan occupies a central position in Asia and reaffirmed their support for peace and security in Afghanistan through an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned process.

Tajikistan reiterated its support for India's candidature for permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council. Prime Minister Modi thanked Tajikistan for support to India's membership to the SCO.

IV. Turkmenistan

1. Visit of External Affairs Minister to Turkmenistan (April 7-9, 2015)

Sushma Swaraj, External Affairs Minister, led an inter-ministerial delegation to the 5th Meeting of the India-Turkmenistan Inter-Governmental Commission (IGC) for Trade, Economic, Scientific and Technological Cooperation, held in Ashgabat on 8 April, 2015.

- During the visit, EAM called on President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and discussions on initiatives and measures to further develop bilateral relations in energy, science and technology, defence, culture, and connectivity.
- The EAM also held consultations with Mr. Rashid Meredov Deputy Chairman to the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan on bilateral, regional and international issues, including developments in Afghanistan. The two ministers co-chaired the IGC, which focused on measures to enhance trade, scientific and cultural cooperation. They also agreed on joint efforts to expedite implementation of the TAPI pipeline project. The Turkmen side welcomed India's proposal to set up a urea manufacturing facility in Turkmenistan and opening a representative office by ONGC Videsh Ltd in Ashgabat.
- The EAM also discussed bilateral cooperation in culture, including celebration of International Day of Yoga in Turkmenistan, with Maysa Yazmammedova, Deputy Prime Minister for Culture and Media of Turkmenistan, during the visit. She also interacted with Turkmen students studying Hindi at the Azadi Institute of World Languages in Ashgabat.

2. Visit of Prime Minister Modi to Turkmenistan (10-11 July 2015)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Turkmenistan, which has the fourth largest natural gas reserves in the world. In his visit to Ashgabat on 10-11 July 2015, Turkmenistan, the Prime Minister held discussions with President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov concentrating on different areas of bilateral relationship as well as regional and international issues of mutual interest. The two countries signed a defence cooperation agreement, a framework MoU on fertilizers.

- Prime Minister Modi and President Berdimuhamedov resolved to deepen ongoing cooperation in countering various security threats. They also agreed to step up efforts against cross-border threats such as terrorism, organized crime and illegal drug-trafficking.
- Turkmenistan welcomed India's interest in joining the Ashgabat Transit Corridor, which connects Central Asian countries with West Asian nations and the Indian Ocean. Turkmenistan also showed very positive reaction to the Prime Minister's suggestion that Turkmenistan should also explore to join the International North-South Transport Corridor, connecting South Asia to Central Asia and Russia.
- India and Turkmenistan resolved to increase cooperation in various sectors and identified energy, petrochemicals, transport, communications, information and technology, textile industry, chemical and pharmaceutical industry, construction and agro-processing as potential areas for cooperation between the two countries. The two countries agreed to create favourable conditions and promote participation of private companies of both countries.
- Prime Minister Modi and President Berdimuhamedov noted that cooperation in energy sector, especially the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) pipeline project, forms a key pillar of economic engagement between the two countries. They recognised that TAPI would have a transformational impact on trade between the two countries.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and the Government of Turkmenistan on the 20th anniversary of adoption of Permanent Neutrality at the United Nations and noted that this policy had contributed to peace, development and stability in Turkmenistan and the region at large.
- A Centre of Yoga and Traditional Medicine in Ashgabat was inaugurated.

3. Vice President Hamid Ansari's visit to Turkmenistan

Vice President of India Hamid Ansari visited Turkmenistan on 12 December 2015. He called on President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov and attended two events, the International Conference on Neutrality well as the ground-breaking ceremony of TAPI.

President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov thanked India for supporting not only the neutrality initiative of Turkmenistan but also other international initiatives that Turkmenistan is taking particularly on transit energy corridors and stable energy supplies.

The Vice President said that neutrality followed by Turkmenistan was a very significant factor for regional peace and security, for which India was a supporter of this concept. He identified closeness between non-alignment and the neutrality posture that has been adopted by Turkmenistan. On

TAPI, the Vice President mentioned that this had the potential of not being just a pipeline but a regional connectivity initiative particularly in a sector in which regional initiatives are not easy to come.

The meeting also provided opportunity, to get an overview of the other aspects of the relationship, particularly the possibilities of cooperation in fertilizers, in the production and the long-term uptake of urea, the cooperation in counterterrorism and cooperation in the IT project. The Vice President also offered again to the President, India's facilities for capacity building and training of Turkmen youth in different areas.

V. Uzbekistan

1. Prime Minister Modi's Visit to Uzbekistan

Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid a visit to Uzbekistan on 6-7 July 2015. Apart from discussion on regional and international issues, including the situation in Afghanistan, the two sides also shared concerns on the rising threat of extremism and terrorism in extended neighbourhood. They agreed to intensify security cooperation and exchanges. Prime Minister Modi emphasized that a strong strategic partnership between India and Uzbekistan is a key pillar of India's engagement with Central Asia.

The two countries expressed their intention to strengthen coordination between the law enforcement agencies and special services, including under the framework of the Uzbekistan-India Joint Working Group on Counter-Terrorism. They also agreed to expand cooperation in the fields of defence and cyber-security.

India and Uzbekistan called for further promotion of investment cooperation between the two countries, and partnership in creating favourable conditions for investment by Indian companies in Uzbekistan, including in the framework of the SEZs Navoi, Angren and Jizzakh. They noted prospects for joint investment projects in sectors such as pharmaceuticals, light industry, IT and communications.

The two countries emphasized the importance of cooperation in the sphere of health, medical education and pharmaceuticals, and explored the possibility of setting up telemedicine links connecting medical institutions in Uzbekistan and India for medical consultations.

India and Uzbekistan signed a new Programme of Cultural Cooperation for the period 2015-2017, and called for its full and timely implementation to expand cultural exchanges. Agreement on cooperation in tourism was also signed during the visit.

The situation in Afghanistan was discussed and it was noted that bringing peace in that country is of great significance to the security and stability of the entire region. Both India and Uzbekistan expressed support for a genuine Afghan-owned and Afghan-led process for peaceful reconstruction and revival of the country.

Uzbekistan reaffirmed its support to India's candidature for permanent membership of the UN Security Council. India and Uzbekistan also agreed to further strengthen mutual cooperation under the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

4. West Asia and North Africa

I. Bahrain

1. **Joint Statement during the First India-Bahrain Joint Commission Meeting** (co-chaired by Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs and Overseas Indian Affairs, Government of India and H.E. Shaikh Khalid Bin Ahmed Bin Mohamed Al Khalifa, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Bahrain), 23 February 2015).

Key Points:

- The Joint Commission was established through a MoU signed between India and Bahrain during the State visit of King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain to India from 18-20 February 2014.
- Both sides celebrated the warm relations shared between them. It was decided that the Commission should meet at regular intervals alternatively in India and Bahrain.
- The two sides expressed satisfaction at the regular follow up and implementation of the Joint Statement of 20 February 2014.
- The two sides underlined the close bilateral ties, deep-rooted in shared history and cultural affinities, sustained and nourished through growing economic linkages, multi-faceted cooperation and close people-to-people contacts and there was useful exchange of views on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues of mutual interest.
- India expressed its gratitude for the ensured well being of the Indian Diaspora in Bahrain and Bahrain expressed their appreciation for the contribution and industriousness of the Indian community in Bahrain.
- Both sides agreed to start negotiations on an MoU on defence cooperation. They also agreed on early signature of the negotiated MOU on Internal Security cooperation. The Bahraini side requested to resume negotiations on the agreement on avoidance of double taxation, as it was initialled between the two Governments in 1998.
- Both sides noted the existing potential for two-way investments and agreed to provide favourable environment for investors, both from public and private sectors, from the two countries, Bahraini side also expressed its willingness to consider making investments in India citing the Make in India campaign and also welcomed the decision to open a regional office of the Confederation of Indian Industry in Manama to promote bilateral trade and investment.
- MOU on Water Resources Development and Management was signed.

II. Egypt

1. **Visit of External Affairs Minister to Egypt (Aug 23-25, 2015)**

- During the visit, the EAM met Egyptian President Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, Sameh Shoukry, Foreign Minister of Egypt and Nabil El-Araby, Foreign Secretary General of League of Arab States. She visited Egypt on the invitation of Minister Shoukry;
- She gave a speech at the Egyptian Council for Foreign Affairs and at the Indian Community Reception in Cairo

2. List of Agreements/MoUs signed during the visit of External Affairs Minister to the Arab Republic of Egypt –

- MoU between Government of Republic of India and Government for the Arab Republic of Egypt on Cooperation in the field of Tourism – To enhance the bilateral cooperation in Tourism, Hospitality and Human Resource Development; Draw up a road map for enhancing cooperation; Establish a Joint Working Group (JWG).
- MoU between the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Republic of India and the National Research Centre (NRC), Egypt for Scientific and Technical Cooperation - Support promotion and extension of cooperation in Scientific Research and Technology Development in fields of mutual interest; Cooperate on common intellectual property rights; Develop Working Program to review the implementation of MoU; Establish Joint Committee; Exchange of scientists, scholars, information; Joint Research Programmes in water desalination, solar energy, medicine and affordable health care, setting up joint laboratories, etc.

III. Iran

1. Visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic Iran to India (August 13-14, 2015)

Met VP Hamid Ansari, PM Modi, Minister of Shipping and Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari and Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj.

IV. Iraq

1. External Affairs Minister's Statement after meeting with families of Indians in captivity in Iraq (22 February 2015)

It was the sixth meeting with the families of those in captivity; it mentioned the continuous efforts by India to bring back those in captivity.

V. Israel

1. Visit of President of India to Israel, October 16, 2015

The President of India, Pranab Mukherjee paid first State visit to Israel from October 13-15, 2015 at the invitation of Reuven Rivlin, President of State of Israel. The President was accompanied by a high level delegation including Thaawar Chand Gehlot, Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment, Members of parliament, senior officials, senior representatives of Indian educational and academic institution and media representatives. During the visit, the President met and had interactions with President Rivlin and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu as well as the Speaker of the Israeli Parliament, Knesset, Yuli-Yoel Edelstein. The President also addressed the Knesset during the visit. The two sides signed a number of MoUs in the fields of culture, education, science and technology.

List of Agreements/MoUs signed during the visit of President to Israel

- Protocol amending the Convention and the Protocol between the Republic of India and the State of Israel for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and for the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to taxes on income and on capital

- Cultural Exchange Programme between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the State of Israel for the years 2015-2018
- MOU between Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
- Agreement of Cooperation between the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur.
- MOU for Institutional Collaboration between Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur (IITKGP) and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, (BGU)
- MOU between Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India and Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
- Framework for Academic Collaboration between the Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur, Kharagpur, India and the University of Haifa, Israel
- MOU between the University of Delhi, Delhi, India and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, (BGU), Beer Sheva, Israel
- Agreement of Cooperation between the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel and the University of Delhi, India
- MOU between the University of Delhi, India and IDC, Herzilya, Israel

2. Indian President's opening Remarks to the Media and the Delegation immediately after the Ceremonial Reception in Jerusalem, Israel, October 14, 2015 – Key Points:

- India attaches high importance to its relationship with Israel. Relations between India and Israel have taken great strides in the last few years. Both are cooperating and collaborating in a range of areas from defence and agriculture to science, research and cyber security.
- President Rivlin, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Mukherjee discussed the many global challenges that the two countries faced today - including the growing menace of terrorism and extremism, the common concerns about climate change and the urgent need for reform of global governance institutions.
- The Presidential visit was intended to further strengthen the excellent relations between the two countries and increase friendship, mutual trust and understanding. India looks forward to enhancing close co-operation with Israel for the progress of their respective societies and peace in this part of the world.

VI. Jordan

1. Visit of President of India to Jordan, October 11, 2015

At the invitation of King Abdullah-II Ibn Al Hussein of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, paid a State visit to Jordan from 10-12 October 2015. The visit of President was the first by the President of India to Jordan in the last 65 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi visited Jordan in 1988.

Details of MOUs signed between the Republic of India and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on 11 October 2015

- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on Maritime Transport
- MOU between the Foreign Service Institute [FSI], Ministry of External Affairs, Republic of India and & the Jordan Institute of Diplomacy[JID], Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Expatriates of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
- MOU between the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of the Republic of India and the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on Cooperation in the field of IT & Electronics
- Cultural Exchange Programme for 2015-17
- MOU between the Bureau of Indian Standards [BIS] and the Jordan Standards and Metrology Organization [JSMO] for Cooperation in the fields of Standardization and Conformity Assessment.
- Cooperation Agreement between Jordan News Agency [Petra] and Press Trust of India [PTI]

VII. Palestine

1. Visit of Secretary (East) to Palestine (8 July 2015)

Anil Wadhwa, Secretary, (East) called on President of State of Palestine Mahmud Abbas in Palestine from July 8-9, 2015. He also inaugurated Jawaharlal Nehru Secondary School for Girls in Asera Al-Shamalyeh. He also looked into the progress of other ongoing projects Jawaharlal Nehru Secondary Boys School in Abu Dees, setting up of India-Palestine Centre for Excellence in ICT and Digital Learning & Innovation Centre in Al Quds University (with a satellite centre in Ramallah) and Supply of Technical & Vocational Education Training (TVET) Equipment and Training Services to Seven Vocational Training Centres in Palestine.

2. Visit of President of India to Palestine, October 13, 2015

The President of India, Pranab Mukherjee paid the first ever State visit to Palestine from October 12-13, 2015 at the invitation of Mahmoud Abbas, President of State of Palestine. During the visit, the President met and had interactions with Palestinian President Abbas, Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah and the leaders of major political parties in Palestine.

Details of MOUs signed during the visit

- MOU between Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and Ministry of Culture, State of Palestine.
- MOU between Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) and Birziet University
- MOU between JNU and Al Najah National University
- MOU between Jamia Milia Islamia and Al Quds University
- MOU between Jamia Milia Islamia and Al Istiklal University
- MOU between Jamia Milia Islamia and Hebron University

VIII. Qatar

1. State Visit of Emir of the State of Qatar to India (24-25 March 2015)

- HH Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar paid a state visit to India from 24-25 March 2015. He was accompanied by a high-level delegation, including ministers, senior officials and captains of industry.
- During the visit, HH the Emir held bilateral talks with Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi.

IX. Saudi Arabia

1. Annual Haj Agreement (04 February 2015)

Delegation led by Gen V.K. Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Saudi Arabia on 03/02/2015 for signing of Annual Haj Agreement for Haj 2015. The Minister met H.E Bandar Ibn Muhammad Hajjar, Saudi Minister of Haj in Jeddah and discussed issues pertaining to arrangements for Haj 2015.

- Haj agreement between India and Saudi Arabia was signed.
- During the interaction with the Haj Minister, General V.K. Singh expressed deep condolences on sad demise of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Abdullah and expressed best wishes for King Salman bin Abdul Aziz and fondly recalled the meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and King Salman bin Abdul Aziz (then Crown Prince) in Brisbane (Australia) on 16 November 2014.
- The Haj quota for India for the year 2015 would be 1,36,020 and 100,020 pilgrims would come through Haj Committee of India and the remaining 36,000 would come through Private Tour Operators.

X. Sultanate of Oman

1. Official visit of Minister of External Affairs and Overseas Indian Affairs to the Sultanate of Oman, 16 February 2015

Minister of External Affairs and Overseas Indian Affairs, Sushma Swaraj had her first official bilateral visit to the Sultanate of Oman from 17-18 February 2015 at the invitation of her Omani counterpart, Yousuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah. The two sides discussed bilateral, regional and other issues of mutual interest.

India has vital stakes in the security and stability of the Gulf region, which hosts around 7 million Indians and are its chief Crude oil suppliers and form the largest trading regional block for India accounting for about a quarter of its global trade.

2. External Affairs Minister's Remarks at the Interaction with the Indian Community in Muscat (17 February 2015)

- Minister Swaraj congratulated the Indian Diaspora on building a reputation of hard-working, law-abiding and disciplined individual and mentioned a transformation in the profile of the Diaspora from skilled labour in the beginning to professionals in the fields of Banking, IT and Insurance etc.; also thanked them for their continued remittances sent back to India.
- She mentioned the government's resolve for better and transparent governance and invited all NRI entrepreneurs to be a part of the initiatives by the government like 'Make

in India' and 'Digital India Programme'; also congratulated the Diaspora on their participation in the 'Pravasi Bharatiya Divas'.

- She also mentioned the government's efforts towards improving the Indian infrastructure.
- She highlighted the Indian efforts to take care of the Indian Diaspora especially in the Gulf, it mentioned the constant dialogue with the Omani government, the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF), the monthly open houses and a daily open house in the Indian embassy as well as a 24x7 helpline including a toll-free service for Indians in distress, and the starting of a web-based service for Indians called MEA in Aid of Diaspora in Distress or 'MADAD'.

XI. Turkey

1. Meeting of External Affairs Minister with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkey (January 16, 2015)

External Affairs Minister of India Smt. Sushma Swaraj met Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu on 16th January, 2015. In addition to bilateral issues, the two Ministers also discussed regional and international subjects.

2. India condemns terror attack in Turkey (23 July 2015)

The Government of India strongly condemned the terrorist attack on innocent civilians in the Turkish town of Suruc. The statement said that the attack in Suruc is yet another reminder of the necessity of concerted action on the part of the international community to fight the scourge of terrorism.

XII. United Arab Emirates (UAE)

1. Official Visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi Visiting United Arab Emirates (Abu Dhabi and Dubai) – August 16-17, 2015

Joint Statement between the United Arab Emirates and the Republic of India – Key Points:

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the United Arab Emirates from August 16-17, 2015 at the invitation of Crown Prince Mohamed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan;
- It was the first visit of an Indian Prime Minister to UAE after 34 years;
- The two nations reject extremism and any link between religion and terrorism. They condemn efforts, including by states, to use religion to justify, support and sponsor terrorism against other countries. They also deplore efforts by countries to give religious and sectarian colour to political issues and disputes, including in West and South Asia, and use terrorism to pursue their aims;
- Both the leaders agreed to elevate the relation of India and UAE:
 - To a comprehensive strategic partnership;
 - Coordinate efforts to counter radicalization and misuse of religion by groups and countries for inciting hatred, perpetrating and justifying terrorism or pursuing political aims;
 - Denounce and oppose terrorism in all forms and manifestations, wherever committed and by whomever, calling on all states to reject and abandon the use

of terrorism against other countries, dismantle terrorism infrastructures where they exist, and bring perpetrators of terrorism to justice;

- Enhance cooperation in counter-terrorism operations, intelligence sharing and capacity building while working together for the adoption of India's proposed Comprehensive convention on International Terrorism in the United Nations;
- Work together to control, regulate and share information on flow of funds that could have a bearing on radicalization activities and cooperate in interdicting illegal flows and take action against concerned individuals and organizations. Strengthen cooperation in law enforcement, anti-money laundering, drug trafficking, other trans-national crimes, extradition arrangements, as well as police training;
- Promote cooperation in cyber security, including prevention on use of cyber for terrorism, radicalization and disturbing social harmony;
- Establish a dialogue between their National Security Advisors and National Security Councils. The National Security Advisors, together with other high level representatives for security from both nations, will meet every six months. The two sides will also establish points of contact between their security agencies to further improve operational cooperation;
- Cooperate to strengthen maritime security in the Gulf and the Indian Ocean region, which is vital for the security and prosperity of both countries;
- Promote collaboration and inter-operability for humanitarian assistance and evacuation in natural disasters and conflict situations;
- Strengthen defence relations, including through regular exercises and training of naval, air, land and Special Forces, and in coastal defence. India warmly welcomed UAE's decision to participate in International Fleet Review in India in February 2016;
- Cooperate in manufacture of defence equipment in India;
- Work together to promote peace, reconciliation, stability, inclusiveness and cooperation in the wider South Asia, Gulf and West Asia region;
- Support efforts for peaceful resolution of conflicts and promote adherence to the principles of sovereignty and non-interference in the conduct of relations between nations and settlement of disputes;
- Call on all nations to fully respect and sincerely implement their commitments to resolve disputes bilaterally and peacefully, without resorting to violence and terrorism;
- Establish a Strategic Security Dialogue between the two governments;
- Recognising that India is emerging as the new frontier of investment opportunities, especially with the new initiatives by the Government to facilitate trade and investment, encourage the investment institutions of UAE to raise their investments in India, including through the establishment of UAE-India Infrastructure Investment Fund, with the aim of reaching a target of USD 75 billion to support investment in India's plans for rapid expansion of next generation infrastructure, especially in railways, ports, roads, airports and industrial corridors and parks;

- Facilitate participation of Indian companies in infrastructure development in UAE;
- Promote strategic partnership in the energy sector, including through UAE's participation in India in the development of strategic petroleum reserves, upstream and downstream petroleum sectors, and collaboration in third countries;
- Further promote trade between the two countries, and use their respective locations and infrastructure for expanding trade in the region and beyond; and, with the target of increasing trade by 60% in the next five years;
- Tap India's expertise in Small and Medium Enterprises to create a vibrant industrial base in UAE, which could also be of benefit to Indian enterprises;
- Strengthen cooperation between UAE's increasingly sophisticated educational institutions and India's universities and higher research institutions. Promote scientific collaboration, including in the areas of renewable energy, sustainable development, arid agriculture, desert ecology, urban development and advanced healthcare;
- Promote cooperation in Space, including in joint development and launch of satellites, ground-based infrastructure and space application. Prime Minister Modi welcomed UAE's plan to set up the West Asia's first Space Research Centre at Al Ain and plans to launch a Mars Mission in 2021;
- Cooperate in peaceful uses of nuclear energy including in areas like safety, health, agriculture and science and technology;
- The 70th anniversary of the United Nations is an occasion to press for early reforms of the United Nations, and that the Inter-Governmental Negotiations on the reforms of the UN Security Council should be concluded expeditiously. Prime Minister thanked UAE for its support for India's candidature for permanent membership of a reformed United Nations Security Council;
- The finalization of the post-2015 Development Agenda with elimination of poverty by 2030 as its core objective was a welcome development;
- The International Conference on Climate Change in Paris in December 2015 should produce an effective agreement, which includes provision of means and technologies to developing countries to transition to clean energy;
- The overwhelming global response to the International Day of Yoga was a reflection of global community's ability to come together to seek a peaceful, more balanced, healthier and sustainable future for the world. Prime Minister Modi thanked UAE for its strong support to the International Day of Yoga on June 21 this year;
- India and UAE will also enhance cultural and sports exchanges in each other's countries;
- People-to-people were at the core of India-UAE relations and both governments will continue to nurture these relations and ensure the welfare of their citizens, especially the workers, in each other's country, as also work together to prevent human trafficking.

Prime Minister thanked Crown Prince for his decision to allot land for construction of a temple in Abu Dhabi.

2. Visit of UAE Foreign Minister to India September 3-4, 2015

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the UAE, Sheikh Abdullah Bin Zayed Al Nahyan visited India to participate in the 11th India-UAE Joint Commission Meeting on 3 September 2015. The meeting was held after three years. India and UAE have agreed to strengthen relations in the IT and IT businesses, and develop manufacturing of electronics and IT hardware in the area of information technology. UAE has expressed an interest in participating in India's strategic petroleum reserve. India and UAE have also agreed on the establishment of dialogue between National Security Advisors and the National Security Councils in order to strengthen their security cooperation.

5. Africa

I. Mozambique

1. State Visit of President of Mozambique His Excellency Mr. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi to India (August 4-8, 2015)

H.E. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique, accompanied by his wife, Mrs Isaura Nyusi, paid a State Visit to India from 4-8 August 2015. The President was also be accompanied by a high-level delegation, including the Mozambican Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Minerals & Energy, Agriculture, Transportation & Communications and Interior, senior officials as well as a senior business delegation. During the visit, President Nyusi called on Hon'ble President of India and met Hon'ble Vice-President of India. He held bilateral talks with Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. Hon'ble President hosted a banquet in honour of the visiting guests. President Nyusi and Mrs Nyusi also visited Ahmedabad for a day during their visit. President Nyusi is an alumnus of Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad, where he completed a short duration course in 2003. The President of Mozambique had earlier visited India in 2011 in his capacity as the Defence Minister of Mozambique.

2. The key highlights of the Media Statement by Prime Minister during the visit of President of Mozambique to India are:

- Prime Minister Modi welcomed President Nyusi who assumed office earlier in 2015. He expressed his happiness that India was his first destination in Asia after assuming office.
- The visit was special because it was the 40th anniversary year of independence of Mozambique and the 40th anniversary year of the establishment of diplomatic relations.
- Africa and the Indian Ocean are among the highest priorities for India's foreign policy. Mozambique is crucial for both.
- Mozambique and India have centuries-old trade ties. 20,000 people of Indian origin in Mozambique are an important link between us. Colonial experiences and development aspirations have shaped a shared vision and a strong partnership.
- Mozambique can be a large and a proximate source of natural gas, coal and other minerals that are so important to drive our growth. It also offers huge opportunities in agriculture sector.
- Indian investments in these sectors have grown significantly in recent years. Mozambique hosts nearly 25% of Indian investments in Africa. Trade has multiplied five times in the last five years
- India is delighted to be a development partner for Mozambique in several areas, including agriculture, healthcare, energy, infrastructure and human resource development.
- India conveyed the importance it attaches to Mozambique as its regional partner. It is committed to the development partnership, in accordance with Mozambique's priorities.

- Expressed hope that Mozambique would continue to provide an encouraging environment for investments from India, including in the areas of hydrocarbons, minerals and infrastructure.
- Agreed to explore ways to speed up the implementation of power supply project in Maputo, being funded by Indian line of credit.
- India assured its full assistance and collaboration in agriculture and food security. In turn, India could also benefit from the development of Mozambique's agriculture sector.
- Finalised a MoU on Cooperation in the field of Renewable Energy. This is an important area in their respective efforts towards sustainable development. It assumes special importance in the year 2015, as the international community moves to finalise a Climate Change agreement in Paris later in the year. India has already partnered Mozambique in setting up a solar panel assembly plant.
- India and Mozambique have large coastlines and are linked by Indian Ocean. Cooperation need to intensify in maritime security and ocean economy.
- In recent years, cooperation between both sides has included ship visits and hydrography surveys for Mozambique.
- Discussed other areas of cooperation in defence, building on his last visit to India as Defence Minister in 2011. It was agreed that the next meeting of Joint Working Group on Defence Cooperation will be scheduled soon.
- Discussed a range of regional and global issues of mutual interest. India greatly appreciates Mozambique's support for India's candidature for Permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council
- In this 70th year of the United Nations, India sought Mozambique's support to press for urgently needed reforms of the United Nations, especially the Security Council.
- India welcomed the finalisation of the Sustainable Development Goals with focus on elimination of poverty by 2030, and looked forward to the adoption of the post-2015 Development Agenda in September.
- India underlined the need for an effective climate change accord in Paris later this year, which also provides the means and technology to developing countries to transition to clean energy sources.

3. List of Agreements/MoUs signed during the visit of President of Mozambique to India:

- Memorandum of Understanding between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Republic of Mozambique on Cooperation in the field of New and Renewable Energy.

South Africa

1. Minister for External Affairs made an official visit to South Africa on 18-21 May, 2015 to take part in 9th Session of the India-South Africa Joint Ministerial Commission.

Minister Sushma Swaraj had called on President Jacob Zuma and extended the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to President Jacob Zuma to attend the third India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-III) in October 2015 in New Delhi. South Africa supported India's membership of Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).

2. Co-Chaired by Minister for External Affairs and Overseas Indian Affairs, Sushma Swaraj and South African Foreign Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, the 9th Session of the India-South Africa Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) was held in Durban on 19th May 2015.

- It was agreed to work under the framework of a five year strategic programme of cooperation. They identified the following priority areas of cooperation: defence, deep-mining, science and technology, agriculture and food processing and insurance. To facilitate this, a new Joint Working Group on Trade & Economic matters would be established. Furthermore, the South African side suggested that negotiations be launched to arrive at an India-South Africa Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA). The Indian side welcomed this.
- It was also decided to set up a new Sub-Committee on Science and Technology, and promote cooperation in Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).
- The two Ministers also discussed regional and multilateral issues including BRICS, IBSA, IORA, counter-terrorism, cyber security, reforms of multilateral institutions, especially the United Nations Security Council. They recognized the need for urgent reform of the UN Security Council and agreed that 2015.
- Minister Swaraj and Minister Mashabane decided to hold the next Session of the Joint Ministerial Commission in India at mutually convenient dates in 2017.

3. Meeting with President Zuma of South Africa (9 July 2015)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a bilateral dialogue with South African delegation led by President Zuma. The two leaders discussed that the India Africa Summit would be held in India in 2016. President Zuma called the upcoming summit very useful opportunity to discuss Africa's problems with India and also provide, besides the multilateral meeting, an opportunity to have another bilateral meeting with the Indian Prime Minister.

- On UN Security Council reforms, President Zuma pointed out that Africa was not represented on the UN Security Council and said that reforms were essential. Prime Minister also responded by saying that it was not in order that a continent like Africa was not represented on the UN Security Council.
- Prime Minister mentioned the importance of having a strategy for COP21 amongst the BASIC countries. South Africa, again like Brazil, is a part of BASIC.
- He also looked forward to further articulation of the South African position in support of India's membership for the Nuclear Suppliers Group. India appreciated South African position on the issue and requested for further articulation of this support.
- The two leaders also discussed important aspects of bilateral relation, particularly cooperation in defence, naval joint exercises. The International Fleet Review coming up in 2016 was mentioned where South Africa would be present. And Prime Minister hoped that perhaps after that there could be joint exercises.
- The two leaders also discussed interest from companies on both sides on defence production and joint production as well as the possibilities of further cooperation in the mining area.

II. Tanzania

1. State visit of His Excellency Mr. Jakaya Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania and Mrs. Salma Kikwete to India from June 17 – 21, 2015.

H.E. Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, President of the United Republic of Tanzania will paid a State Visit to India from 17-21 June 2015. He was accompanied by a high-level delegation, including ministers and senior officials. A senior business delegation also accompanied the President. President of Tanzania had earlier visited India in 2008 in his capacity as the Chairperson of the African Union on the occasion of the first India-Africa Forum Summit. During the visit, President Kikwete called on Hon'ble President and met Hon'ble Vice-President of India. He had bilateral talks with Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi. The President hosted a banquet in honour of the visiting guest.

2. Prime Minister Modi addressed the media during the State visit of the President of the United Republic of Tanzania. Key highlights of his statement are:

- PM Modi expressed his Government's pleasure of hosting President Kikwete as the first Head of State from Africa on a State Visit to India.
- India values President Kikwete's strong commitment to relations with India.
- India and Tanzania are connected through Indian Ocean, and its currents have carried out the centuries-old human links. The relationship prospers through nearly 50,000 people of Indian origin in Tanzania. Both have an emotional bond of a shared history of struggle against colonialism.
- India is Tanzania's largest trading partner and is a longstanding development partner. Trade is of over 4 billion U.S. dollars and is heavily in India's favour. Indian investments in Tanzania exceed 3 billion U.S. dollars and cover many areas.
- There are 2000 Tanzanian students in India. India is about to extend e-tourist visa scheme to Tanzania.
- Both have a common interest in maritime security in the Indian Ocean and a peaceful and prosperous Africa. Terrorism in their respective regions is a concern for both countries. Both have agreed to establish a Joint Working Group to strengthen cooperation in counter terrorism.
- Discussed cooperation in the area of natural gas sector in Tanzania, ocean economy, development of human resources, healthcare, agriculture, institutions and infrastructure in Tanzania, regional and global issues of mutual interest and also expand cooperation in counter-terrorism and maritime security.
- The agreement on hydrography is an important step forward in their cooperation in the ocean economy sector.
- Discussed regional and global issues of mutual interest and are ready to expand cooperation in counter-terrorism and maritime security.
- India greatly appreciates Tanzania's support for India's candidature for a permanent seat in an expanded UN Security Council.

3. MOU/Project signed/Exchanged with Tanzania

During the visit the two sides signed five agreements. The list of the agreements signed and description of the projects are as follows:

- MOU between the East Africa Statistical Training Centre (EASTC) in Tanzania and the National Statistical System Training Academy (NSSTA) in India on establishing a collaborative program in official statistics was signed for capacity building of staff of EASTC and other African Countries in Official Statistics.
- MOU between EASTC and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) - Indian Agricultural Statistics Research Institute (IASRI) was signed for capacity building of staff

of EASTC and other African Countries in Agricultural Statistics, Computer Applications and Bio-informatics

- MOU on Cooperation in the field of Tourism to enhance bilateral cooperation in Tourism and hospitality sectors
- Loan agreement between Exim Bank and Government of Tanzania on LOC for US\$ 268.35 million for extension of Lake Victoria pipeline project was signed to operationalise the LoC.
- Agreement between WAPCOS (PSU under M/o Water) and Government of Tanzania for preparation of DPR for Lake Victoria pipeline project was signed appointing the former as PMC
- MOU for Cooperation in the field of Hydrography between Tanzania and India
- & Protocol on exchange of Hydrographic Data was signed to promote development and cooperation in the field of Hydrography through conducting surveys, exchange of data, capacity building and infrastructure strengthening.

6. Indian Ocean Island States

I. Maldives

1. Visit of External Affairs Minister to Maldives, October 11, 2015

External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj visited Maldives on October 10-11, 2015. She co-chaired the 5th Meeting of the India-Maldives Joint Commission. The Joint Commission was set up under the 1986 Agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation and first met in Male in 1990. The Framework Agreement for Cooperation, signed in November 2011, mandated the Joint Commission to broaden its cross sectoral emphasise to include defence and security related issues.

During her visit to Maldives, EAM called on the President of the Republic of Maldives, Abdulla Yameen Abdul Gayoom. Discussions with the President of Maldives were reflective of the privileged relationship between India and Maldives. EAM emphasised the Government of India policy of 'Neighbours First'. President Yameen conveyed that Maldives would hold an Investment Forum in India in 2016, which is also the 'Visit Maldives' year. He reiterated Maldives' policy of 'India First'.

Subsequent to the Joint Commission, Minister Swaraj had meetings with Minister of Economic Development Mr. Mohamed Saeed and Minister of Health Irthisham Adam. She also had an interaction with the Indian community in Maldives at the India-Maldives Friendship Faculty for Hospitality and Tourism Studies.

In their discussions during the Joint Commission meeting, EAM and Maldivian Foreign Minister Dunya Maumoon reviewed the entire gamut of the relationship. These discussions held special significance not only because the Joint Commission was meeting after a gap of 15 years but also because the meeting took place in the year of the 50th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between India and Maldives.

Discussions took place in an atmosphere of traditional warmth and friendship, mutual respect and sensitivity to each others' interests, which have characterised the vibrant and robust relations between Maldives and India.

- The defence and security relationship was part of the forward looking discussions in the Joint Commission for the first time. Ongoing cooperation was reviewed and future requirements were discussed. India-Maldives defence cooperation includes, inter-alia, the construction of a Composite Training Centre for the Maldivian National Defence Forces, joint patrolling, training programmes for MNDF officers in India, medical camps, joint exercises, etc. The Maldivian side acknowledged the usefulness of the Advanced Light Helicopter given by India in the development of aviation capacities in the Maldives. India welcomed the participation of Maldives in the next Dosti Exercise in Goa, which took place at the end of October. The Ministers were of the view that the bilateral partnership was important also for maintaining security in the Indian Ocean Region. It was felt that increased cooperation would help in meeting the common threat from

radicalism and terrorism and combat the growing menace of drug trafficking and financing of terrorism in the region.

- The Joint Commission discussions endorsed enhancement of the trade and investment ties and the development partnership between the countries. The Ministers discussed various measures which could be recommended towards this objective. The experience of Indian companies in Maldives was reviewed. The Joint Commission proposed establishment of a Joint Business Forum and suggested that an investment oriented forum be part of the calendar for 2016. Both sides acknowledged the positive impact of increasing the B-to-B interface and facilitating a more participant role for the private sectors. The Joint Commission agreed to explore further measures to increase trade in goods and services and to strengthen links in the banking and financial sectors of both countries. The Maldivian side reiterated their interest in engaging with private investors in India for iHavan and Hulhulmale Youth City projects. Sectors such as tourism, fisheries, education, IT, infrastructure development, energy cooperation including renewable energy, and traditional medicine were identified for future cooperation. Both countries agreed to sign agreements at the earliest on Avoidance of Double Taxation and Tax Information Exchange. They agreed to also consider the Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement for early finalisation.
- Health sector has been an important area of bilateral cooperation. Both countries had signed an MoU in 2014 on short, medium and long term collaboration. The Joint Commission agreed that a Working Group should be set up at the earliest to monitor implementation of the MoU. Bilateral collaboration in the Indira Gandhi Memorial Hospital (IGMH) was reviewed. It was agreed to strengthen tele-medicine linkages between IGMH and PGI, Chandigarh and to expand the number of speciality hospitals in India available to Maldivian nationals under the AASANDHA scheme. The Maldivian side requested Indian assistance to set up a state-of the-art National Diagnostic Centre in Maldives. There was agreement on continuing the training of health professionals of Maldives and to agree on the deputation of Indian specialist doctors to IGMH. Both sides agreed to create a framework for cooperation in the area of traditional medicine.
- With a common demographic youth dividend, both Ministers laid special emphasis on human resource development and further cooperation in education, skill development and vocational training. It was agreed to take further the cooperation in the Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Studies. The Maldivian side welcomed the joint initiative to establish an e-Library for Maldivian schools and the Indian initiative to establish a Hindi language Chair at the Maldives National University.
- Consular matters and community issues were also reviewed. The Indian side welcomed the ratification by Maldives of the Agreement on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons. Both sides agreed on an early finalisation to the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in criminal matters. The Joint Commission acknowledged the need for early finalisation of the MoU on the employment of workers between the countries.
- Maldives and India have a cultural cooperation agreement since 1983. The Joint Commission suggested revision of the agreement. Both sides agreed to finalise the MoU on cooperation in the area of archaeological conservation and restoration. The Joint Commission suggested expediting an MoU for cooperation in the field of tourism in view of the need to further increase tourist traffic between the two countries.

- The Joint Commission welcomed the signing of the MoU between the Foreign Service Institutes of India and Maldives and the MoU on Youth Affairs and Sports on the sidelines of the Joint Commission.
- Maldives also apprised India of progress in its internal processes for joining the Agreement on Orbit Frequency Coordination for the Satellite for the SAARC region.
- Maldives reiterated its strong support to India's candidature as a permanent member of the UN Security Council
- The next meeting of the India-Maldives Joint Commission would be in 2017 in India. Both EAM and the Maldivian Foreign Minister have tasked their senior officials to hold a review meeting in 2016, preparatory to the next Joint Commission.

II. Mauritius

1. PM Narendra Modi's Visit to Mauritius, 10-11 March 2015

During the PM visit to Mauritius, India offered \$500 million concessional line of credit to Mauritius for key infrastructure projects. The two countries signed five agreements including on Ocean economy.

- ***The five agreements/MoUs signed between India and Mauritius during the visit of the Prime Minister to Mauritius are following:***
 - Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the field of Ocean Economy- This MoU is aimed to provide an extensive framework for cooperation in the field of Ocean Economy. This is an attempt to build up mutually beneficial cooperation for exploration and capacity development in the field of marine resources, fisheries, green tourism, research and development of ocean technology, exchange of experts and other related activities.
 - Programme for Cultural Cooperation between the Republic of India and the Republic of Mauritius for the year 2015-18.
 - Protocol between the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture of Republic of India and the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security of Republic of Mauritius for the importation of fresh mango from India.
 - Memorandum of Understanding for the Improvement in Sea and Air Transportation Facilities at Agalega Island of Mauritius
 - MoU on Cooperation in the field of Traditional System of Medicine and Homeopathy.
- India offered support for construction of the second cyber city. A decade ago, India helped build the first cyber city in Mauritius.
- India and Mauritius discussed revision of their Double Taxation Avoidance Convention.
- PM Modi conveyed deep appreciation for the support and cooperation offered by Mauritius on information exchange on taxation.
- Mauritius has shown great vision in the development of its ocean economy – from fishing to tourism and India showed its willingness to do the same.
- On the occasion of Commissioning of Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) Barracuda in Mauritius (March 12, 2015), PM explained his intent to participate and be involved in developing the ocean economy.

2. Suo Motu Statement by External Affairs Minister in Rajya Sabha on Prime Minister's Visit to Mauritius (March 18, 2015) – Key Points:

During the visit, Prime Minister Modi announced a concessional line of credit of US\$500 million for project to be identified by the Government of Mauritius. India and Mauritius signed five bilateral documents: for development of sea and air transportation facilities at Agalega Island, cooperation in ocean economy, cooperation in traditional systems of medicine and homeopathy, cultural exchange programme for 2015-18, and importation of mangoes from India.

III. Seychelles

1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid a visit to Seychelles from March 10 to March 11, 2015.

During the visit, the two sides signed the four key agreements:

- Cooperation in hydrographic survey, renewable energy, infrastructure development and jointly develop navigation charts and electronic navigational charts for sale to other countries.
- Seychelles and India agreed to establish a Joint Working Group to expand cooperation on the blue economy. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that this cooperation will increase India's understanding of marine ecology and resources, as well, will improve its ability to harness new possibilities of the ocean in a sustainable and balanced manner.
- Prime Minister hopes that Seychelles will soon be a full partner in the maritime security cooperation between India, Maldives and Sri Lanka. India agreed to grant free visas for three months to the citizens of Seychelles.

2. Suo Motu Statement by External Affairs Minister in Rajya Sabha on Prime Minister's Visit to Seychelles (March 18, 2015) – Key Points:

- The Prime Minister Narendra Modi had a bilateral meeting with President James Michel. Issues of economic, infrastructure and maritime cooperation were discussed during the meeting.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Coastal Surveillance Radar System set up with India's collaboration. PM met with the senior leaders of the Government and addressed the Indian community.
- Gift of a second Dornier aircraft, to provide gratis visa for a period of three months and to include Seychelles in the Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) Scheme were some key outcomes of the visit.
- The two sides signed four agreements. The signed agreements/MoU include on development of infrastructure facilities at Assumption Island, renewal energy cooperation, cooperation in hydrography and sale of navigational charts. India and Seychelles decided to set up a Joint Working Group on Cooperation in Blue Economy.

3. President of Seychelles' Visit to India (August 25-27, 2015)

List of Agreements/MOUs signed during the visit of President of Republic of Seychelles to India

- Air Services Agreement between India and Seychelles;

- MoU between India and Seychelles for providing one Dornier Maritime Aircraft;
- Agreement between India and Seychelles for exchange of information with respect to Taxes;
- MoU between ICAR and Seychelles Agricultural Agency for Cooperation in agricultural research and education;
- Protocol on framework of cooperation in the field of Blue Economy between India and Seychelles;
- Presentation of Navigational chart (related to Aldabra Island).

7. Latin America and the Caribbean

I. Argentina

The Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Argentina, Amb. Eduardo Antonio Zuain met with Indian officials to explore an expansion of Indo-Argentina cooperation in all fields (02 July 2015).

II. Antigua and Barbuda

R. Swaminathan, Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, visited Antigua and Barbuda on July 24-25, 2015 where he discussed bilateral, regional and multilateral issues including investment, traditional medicine, exchange of technical cooperation, CARRICOM, CELAC and UNSC Reforms.

III. Brazil

1. Bilateral Meeting, 09 July 2015

Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a bilateral meeting with President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil on the sidelines of the Ufa BRICS summit. This was his third meeting after the BRICS meeting in Fortaleza, Brazil, and then at the G20 summit in Brisbane in November.

- The two leaders agreed that they must intensify the strategic relationship that the two countries have. The two leaders discussed various issues which included cooperation in agriculture, possibilities of cooperation in the defence industry.
- Prime Minister requested the Brazilian President for assistance in expanding the list which is covered by the India-Mercosur Preferential Trade Agreement. That list is presently at 450 items, and India would like to increase it to about 2,000 items. This will also significantly impact India-Brazil bilateral trade. The Brazilian President responded positively.
- The Brazilian President requested for prominent Indian participation in the next conference on internet governance to be held in Brazil in 2016.
- The Prime Minister Modi made a point of telling the Brazilian President that they needed closer cooperation on Climate Change and BASIC countries should work together and have a clear strategy as they go towards COP21, which would be taking care of the interests of the developing countries.

2. Bilateral Talks and First Consular Dialogue, 23 July 2015

Bilateral talks between India and Brazil were held in Brasilia on July 20, 2015, to discuss implementation of directions given by President Dilma Rousseff and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on bilateral and multilateral cooperation at the BRICS Summit at Ufa. Both sides agreed to coordinate their efforts within G-4 for UN Security Council reform; work closely together in BASIC for Climate Change, and to re-vitalize IBSA.

3. Joint Statement on the 7th India-Brazil Joint Commission Meeting and Agreed Minutes (November 18-19, 2015)

The 7th India-Brazil Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) Co-Chaired by the External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and her Brazilian counterpart Mauro Vieira, was held in New Delhi on 19 November 2015.

The joint statement stated that the strategic partnership established in 2006 between India and Brazil has deepened with both countries cooperating closely in BRICS, IBSA, G4, G20, BASIC and the wider multilateral context of the United Nations. In the Agreed Minutes the various aspects of the relationship were discussed:

- **Strategic Partnership:** The Ministers agreed that there should be a mechanism at senior officer level to hold "Foreign Office Consultations" to take stock of the bilateral cooperation, regional & multilateral issues. The two sides underscored the priority of streamlining intra-IBSA cooperation, deepening the most promising streams of cooperation, while enhancing their effectiveness. They also stressed the need to further consolidate mutually beneficial cooperation on a range of issues in the G2G, B2B and P2P domains.
- **Other areas of cooperation included:** Trade and Investment, Mining and Energy, Agriculture And Food Processing, Science And Technology, Space, Nuclear Energy, Defence, Environmental and Sustainable development, technical Cooperation, Health and Medicine, Education, Culture, Tourism, Sports, Consular Cooperation, parliamentary Exchanges, Sectoral Working Group Meeting, Cyber Security, Terrorism and Regional and Multilateral Issues.

4. Meeting with President of Brazil Dilma Rousseff (9 July 2015)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi held bilateral meeting with President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil on the sideline of Ufa BRICS summit. This was his third meeting after the BRICS meeting in Fortaleza, Brazil, and then at the G20 summit in Brisbane in November.

- The two leaders agreed that they must intensify the strategic relationship that the two countries have. The two leaders discussed various issues which included cooperation in agriculture, possibilities of cooperation in the defence industry.
- Prime Minister requested the Brazilian President for assistance in expanding the list which is covered by the India-Mercosur Preferential Trade Agreement. That list is presently at 450 items, and India would like to increase it to about 2,000 items. This will also significantly impact India-Brazil bilateral trade. The Brazilian President responded positively to that.
- The Brazilian President requested for prominent Indian participation in the next conference on internet governance would be held in Brazil next year.
- The Prime Minister made a point of telling the Brazilian President that they needed closer cooperation as we go towards COP21 in climate change. And the BASIC countries should together and have a clear strategy as they go into COP21 which would be taking care of the interests of the developing countries so that we simply do not have another expensive meeting which does not lead to any financial assistance or any technological

assistance or transfer of technology for the purposes of promoting green energy. On the climate change issue the Brazilian President responded by saying that it would be a good idea if a side meeting was held during the UNGA of the BASIC countries and the strategy should be decided for the COP21.

5. Bilateral talks between India and Brazil, Brasilia, 20th July 2015

Bilateral talks between India and Brazil were held in Brasilia on 20th July 2015 to discuss implementation of directions given by President Dilma Rousseff and Prime Minister Narendra Modi on bilateral and multilateral cooperation at the BRICS Summit at Ufa. Both sides agreed to coordinate their efforts within G-4 for UN Security Council reform; work closely together in BASIC for Climate Change, and to re-vitalize IBSA.

6. Joint Statement on the 7th India-Brazil Joint Commission Meeting (November 18-19, 2015).

The 7th India-Brazil Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) Co-Chaired by the External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and her Brazilian counterpart Mauro Vieira, was held in New Delhi on 19 November 2015.

The joint statement stated that the strategic partnership established in 2006 between India and Brazil has deepened with both countries cooperating closely in BRICS, IBSA, G4, G20, BASIC and the wider multilateral context of the United Nations. In the Agreed Minutes the various aspects of the relationship were discussed.

- Strategic Partnership: The Ministers agreed that there should be a mechanism at senior officer level to hold "Foreign Office Consultations" to take stock of the bilateral cooperation, regional & multilateral issues. The two sides underscored the priority of streamlining intra-IBSA cooperation, deepening the most promising streams of cooperation, while enhancing their effectiveness. They also stressed the need to further consolidate mutually beneficial cooperation on a range of issues in the G2G, B2B and P2P domains.
- Other areas of cooperation included: Trade and Investment, Mining and Energy, Agriculture And Food Processing, Science And Technology, Space, Nuclear Energy, Defence, Environmental and Sustainable development, technical Cooperation, Health and Medicine, Education, Culture, Tourism, Sports, Consular Cooperation, parliamentary Exchanges, Sectoral Working Group Meeting, Cyber Security, Terrorism and Regional and Multilateral Issues.

IV. Cooperative Republic of Guyana

1. The President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, Donald Rabindranauth Ramotar paid an official visit to India from January 7-12, 2015.

He was the Chief Guest at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas being held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, on January 8-9, 2015. He was conferred the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award during the event. Indian Lines of Credit (LoC) for infrastructure projects to the tune of US\$59 million was announced during the visit. The LoC is expected to finance the new East Bank Demerara-East Coast Demerara bypass road at

US\$50 million and a passenger ferry for Guyana at US\$ 9 million. Announcements were also made during the visit for the setting up of an IT Centre of Excellence in Guyana by Government of India and 'visa on arrival' in India for the Guyanese nationals visiting India.

V. Costa Rica

1. Minister of State for External Affairs' official visit to San Jose, Costa Rica (23 July 2015)

Gen. V.K. Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs paid an official visit to San Jose, Costa Rica from July 21-22, 2015 where he discussed the entire range of India-Costa Rica bilateral relations and specifically issues pertaining to India-SICA (Central American Integration System) dialogue and the follow up of the last ministerial meeting held in May 2015 were also discussed.

VI. Jamaica

1. Visit of Minister of State for External Affairs to Jamaica (19 February 2015)

- Minister of State for External Affairs General V. K. Singh, accompanied by Riva Ganguly Das, Joint Secretary, Latin America and Caribbean Division and Anjani Kumar, Deputy Secretary in the Minister's Office visited Jamaica from February 17-19, 2015.
- Minister Singh met the Prime Minister of Jamaica, Portia Simpson Miller and the Foreign Minister of Jamaica, Arnold J. Nicholson and discussed bilateral relations including political, economic and commercial relations and development partnership.
- India offered a Line of Credit of US\$ 15 million to Jamaica.
- The Jamaican side was deeply appreciative of the assistance provided by India during natural disasters as well as for projects such as installation of flood lights at Sabina Park Cricket Stadium and ITEC scholarships for Jamaican nationals.
- Minister Singh also interacted with the members of the Indian community including several Ministers.

VII. Republic of Suriname

The Fifth Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) between the Republic of Suriname and the Republic of India was held on January 13, 2015 in New Delhi. The meeting was co-chaired by General V.K. Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs and Winston G. Lackin, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Suriname.

The entire range of issues of bilateral relations including political, economic and trade, traditional medicines, technical cooperation, education, consular and cultural issues were discussed by the two Ministers. They also discussed important regional and multilateral issues.

VIII. Salvador

1. 8th Ministerial Conference of the Community of Democracies, 25 July 2015

India as the member of the Governing Council of the Community of Democracies participated in its 8th Ministerial Conference which was hosted by El Salvador as the current President of the Group. Gen. V.K. Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs, led the Indian delegation and spoke at the plenary session along with Foreign Ministers of Guatemala, Mongolia, Mali, and El Salvador

IX. Miscellaneous

1. Remarks by External Affairs Minister at Dinner for Latin American Dignitaries, 08 October 2015 – Excerpts:

- Minister mentioned that India's relations with LAC region have traditionally been warm and friendly. Over the last few years, these have intensified in terms of political engagements as well as trade and commercial interactions.
- It was mentioned that Indian trade with the Latin American and Caribbean region has shown impressive growth in the recent past and now stands at about 46 billion dollars. Considering the fact that India's trade was only 2 billion dollars in 2000, this marks a phenomenal growth in its bilateral trade with the region.
- India has a Preferential Trade Agreement with MERCOSUR and with Chile and India's investment is estimated to be around 20 billion dollars, principally in IT sector, automobile parts, mining and hydrocarbons.
- The Minister pointed that Latin American region offers a market for Indian products such as pharmaceuticals, leather, automobile parts, engineering goods, textile, Information Technology among others. On the other hand, the LAC region offers oil and gas, minerals and metals, cereals, pulses, oil seeds, soya, fresh fruits and many other products.
- It was stated that the year 2015 had been significant in view of the fact that India had interaction at Ministerial level with the three major regional groupings, namely, CELAC, SICA and CARICOM.
- The address mentioned that the focus of such visits is economics and commerce. But attention was also drawn towards three other issues. First, terrorism and that it continues to pose the gravest threats to international peace and security. It was mentioned that there was a need to take resolute steps to counter terrorism. In this regard it was stated that India seeks support for the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism at the UN. Second, climate change is a major global issue confronting all the countries. It was mentioned that India has recently announced INDCs and hoped that a comprehensive, balanced and equitable agreement will be reached at COP-21 in Paris. Thirdly, it was stated that the reform of the Security Council and its expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories is an imperative today. It was also mentioned that UNGA had adopted a decision to carry forward to the 70th session the text presented by its President.

8. North America

I Canada

1. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Visit to Canada (April 14-17, 2015)

Prime Minister of Canada, Stephen Harper hosted Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi during his bilateral visit to Canada, in April 2015. The visit was important as it was the first by an Indian Prime Minister in 42 years. The visit also included stopovers in Ottawa, Toronto and Vancouver. Prime Minister Modi also called on the Governor General of Canada, Mr. David Johnston.

The visit comprised of engagements with Canada's political, business and academic leadership and interactions with the Indian Diaspora.

The visit culminated in the two heads of government issuing the "India-Canada Joint Statement: नया उत्साह, नए कदम: New Vigour, New Steps". The joint statement made the following major:

- The leaders agreed to take concrete measures to expand bilateral cooperation in key areas including the economy, trade and investment, civil nuclear cooperation, energy, education and skills development, agriculture, defence and security, science, technology, innovation and space, culture, people-to-people ties, and regional and global issues.
- The Prime Ministers recognised that bilateral business and commercial linkages constitute key drivers of the wide ranging India-Canada partnership. In this regard, Prime Minister Harper commended Prime Minister Modi for his forward-looking vision of energising the Indian economy and welcomed the policy measures and specific initiatives taken to improve the ease of doing business in India.
- Prime Ministers Harper noted that specific initiatives launched by Prime Minister Modi such as 'Make in India', 'Affordable Housing for all by 2022' and 'Smart Cities' offered significant collaborative commercial opportunities for Indian and Canadian businesses and industry. They also noted that Canada's prioritisation of India in its Global Markets Action Plan aligned well with bilateral objectives. They agreed to pursue specific measures to diversify and deepen bilateral trade and investment cooperation to increase the two way flow of goods and services.
- The Prime Ministers underscored the considerable potential for mutually-beneficial civil nuclear cooperation. They welcomed the signing of an Agreement between the Department of Atomic Energy of the Government of India and Cameco of Canada for long-term supply of uranium to India to meet its energy needs. They recognised that the agreement would impart a new significance to India-Canada Civil Nuclear Cooperation.
- The Prime Ministers noted the strong complementarities between Canada, a responsible resource producer with the potential to become an energy exporter to new markets such as India, and India, which is looking to Canada to enhance its energy security by diversifying its sources of supply. The Prime Ministers welcomed the decision by Indian

Oil Corporation to invest in a proposed new liquefied natural gas project in British Columbia.

- The Prime Ministers agreed that terrorism, extremism and radicalisation present security challenges to the peace, stability and prosperity of the two countries and humanity as a whole. The Prime Ministers assessed the emerging regional and global strategic landscape, including in particular, the evolution of terrorist threats globally, the conflicts in Syria and Iraq and the implications for regional stability, and supporting reconciliation and economic recovery in Afghanistan.
- Recalling their initial meeting at the G20 Summit in Brisbane in 2014, the Prime Ministers affirmed the ongoing importance of cooperative efforts through the G20 to promote global growth and prosperity.

9. Major Powers

I. China

1. External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj's Visit to the People's Republic of China, February 1-3, 2015

External Affairs Minister, Sushma Swaraj paid an official visit to the People's Republic of China from 1-3 February 2015. She met with Chinese President Xi Jinping, had formal talks with Foreign Minister Wang Yi and also had a meeting with Wang Jiarui, Minister of the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China.

External Affairs Minister also inaugurated the 2nd India-China High-Level Media Forum and attended the launch of Visit India Year during her stay in Beijing. On 2 February, EAM also participated in the 13th Foreign Ministers' Meeting of Russia-India-China Trilateral besides meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov on the sidelines of the Meeting.

➤ External Affairs Minister's remarks at the launch of the 2nd India-China Media Forum, Beijing, February 01, 2015 – Key Points:

- The Media Forum was envisaged as a platform to encourage appreciation and build understanding of each other's societies in respective media of both countries.
- The need to have a good understanding of each other's interests and viewpoints was emphasized.
- The speech focused on unfolding of a number of key initiatives addressing a wide range of ambitious goals which was being made evident by the frequency of Sino-India's high-level exchanges and the widening of the already substantive bilateral agenda.
- It highlighted a change in the nature of bi-lateral relations that is being driven by the growth in the economy, the need to connectivity and take the economic cooperation to a new level qualitatively.
- Highlighted the 'Closer development Partnership' agreed upon by India and China and various new areas of collaboration in railways and industrial parks courtesy the 'Make in India' campaign.
- Talked about the greater need for cultural exchange and the establishment of sister province ties between Gujarat and Guangdong and mentioned the annual Kailash-Mansarovar Yatra.
- It highlighted that Relations between India and China have grown beyond their bilateral and regional dimension mentioning the Indo-China partnership in BRICS, BASIC and G-20.
- The status of India and China as civilizational powers and their shared interests were mentioned.
- A six point template was highlighted to realize the dream of an Asian Century:

- A. Action- oriented approach
- B. Broad-base bilateral engagement
- C. Convergence on common regional and global interests
- D. Develop new areas of cooperation
- E. Expand strategic communication
- F. Fulfil common aspirations to usher 'Asian Century'

➤ **External Affairs Minister's Speech at the inauguration of "Visit India Year 2015" in Beijing, February 02, 2015 – Key Points:**

- The speech focused on encouraging tourism and the importance of people to people contact.
- It was announced (after the discussion between Prime Minister Modi and President Xi Jinping) that 2016 will be celebrated as "Visit China Year".
- The speech highlighted India's varied tourist attractions mentioning historical and religious sites, scenic destinations, varied weather, and culinary delights.
- It highlighted the concept of 'Unity and Diversity' that can be experienced throughout India and the concept of 'Atithi Devo Bhava' which makes India welcoming to all international tourists.

2. 18th Round of Talks between the Special Representatives of India and China on the Boundary Question, New Delhi on 23 March, 2015

The 18th round of talks between the Special Representatives of India and China on the Boundary Question, Ajit Doval, National Security Advisor and Yang Jiechi, State Councillor was held in New Delhi on 23 March, 2015.

- They expressed satisfaction on the progress made in the negotiations and emphasized commitment to the three-step process to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable resolution of the border question at an early date.
- The Special Representatives continued the discussions to reach a mutually acceptable Framework for resolution of the Boundary Question on the basis of the Agreement on the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles.
- Both sides agreed to take necessary steps to maintain peace and tranquillity in the border areas which is a pre-requisite for continued growth of bilateral relations.
- The Special Representatives expressed satisfaction at the growing interaction between the border forces of the two countries and agreed to further expand such contacts as these constitute important confidence building measures for maintaining peace and tranquillity in the border areas.

3. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Visit to China, 14-16 May, 2015 – Key points:

Prime Minister Modi visited People's Republic of China from 14-16 of May 2015. During his 3-day trip to China, Prime Minister visited the Xi'an, the home city of President Jinping, Beijing and

Shanghai. Besides the bilateral engagements during the visit, Prime Minister Modi participated in the India-China Business Forum in Shanghai, addressed the Indian Community in Shanghai and also delivered a lecture at the Tsinghua University, Beijing.

➤ **Prime Minister Modi's speech at Tsinghua University, Beijing, May 15, 2015**

- Highlighted the cultural linkages of the two great civilisations and the initiative taken up by the Indian government to bring economic prosperity in the country.
- Prime Minister Modi talked about the economic reform measures initiated by the government eliminating unnecessary regulations and simplifying the procedures.
- He stated that the Indian government is building a tax regime that is predictable, stable and competitive, and that will integrate the Indian market. And also scaling up investments in next generation infrastructure – roads, ports, railways, airports, telecom, digital networks and clean energy. India is creating the global skill pool to establish a modern economy with a world class manufacturing sector.
- The changing world has created new opportunities and challenges. Both India and China face instability in their shared neighbourhood that can threaten their security and slow down economies.
- The spreading tide of extremism and terrorism is a threat that both India and China face; for both, its source is in the same region.
- India and China conduct their international commerce on the same sea lanes. The security of sea lanes is vital for both the economies; and, bilateral cooperation is essential to achieve it.
- Geography and history make it clear that the dream of an interconnected Asia will be successful, when India and China work together.
- The prospects of the 21st century becoming the Asian century will depend in large measure on what India and China achieve individually and what they do together.
- India and China have enormous stakes in the international negotiations on climate change. Their cooperation in these forums will be crucial to shape their outcomes.
- Prime Minister frankly asserted that if these two countries have to realise the extraordinary potential of their partnership, they must also address the issues that lead to hesitation and doubts, even distrust in their relationship. They must try to settle the boundary question quickly.
- He also emphasised that both India and China are increasing their engagement in shared neighbourhood. This calls for deeper strategic communication to build mutual trust and confidence and both the countries must ensure that their relationships with other countries do not become a source of concern for each other.
- If the last century was the age of alliances, this is an era of inter-dependence. So, talks of alliances against one another have no foundation.
- Sino-Indian partnership in international forums should not be determined by the concerns of others, but the interests of the two countries.
- China's support for India's permanent membership of a reformed UN Security Council, and for India's membership of export control regimes like Nuclear Suppliers Group will do more than just strengthen their international cooperation.

➤ **Prime Minister's Remarks at the Launch of India-China Forum of State Provincial Leaders, May 15, 2015**

- PM Modi emphasised the importance of launching a new vehicle for advancing cooperation between the two countries.
- This will become one of the most important instruments for deepening their economic partnership and contact between the people of both the nations.
- He asserted that states do have a vital role to play in the national development.
- Every nation needs strong international partnerships for its progress. The linkage has deepened in an integrated world. As international partnerships in trade, investments, innovation, technology, tourism, education, skills and health grow; state governments have a stake in them and responsibility for their success. PM Modi found, both through outbound and inbound state delegations, that state level interactions can be often more focused and productive.
- A number of decisions can be taken quickly by the state governments. These interactions also make the state governments more sensitive and aware of the international dynamics and requirements.
- PM Modi believed that it would be much easier to translate Sino-Indian vision into reality, if provincial and state governments come into closer contacts. It will also serve their other interests – especially promoting greater people-to-people contacts, which is at the heart of all relationships.

➤ **Prime Minister Modi's address at the Launch of Centre for Gandhian and Indian Studies at Fudan University, Shanghai**

- भारत का मूल चिंतन रहा और भारत के वेदों से कहा गया कि चारों दिशाओं से ज्ञान का प्रकाश आने दो, “ज्ञान भद्रो” कहकर के हमारे यहां यह कल्पना की गई। विचार को, ज्ञान को, न पूरब होता है, न पश्चिम होता है - वो सनातन होता है और दुनिया के किसी भी भू-भाग का ज्ञान मानव संस्कृति के विकास के लिए काम आता है।
- महात्मा गांधी का अध्ययन या भारत का अध्ययन, हमारा चीन और भारत का पुराना सांस्कृतिक विरासत का अगर पुराना इतिहास देखें, तो दोनों देश ज्ञान पिपासु थे, ज्ञान पाने के लिए साहस करते थे, कष्ट उठाते थे। 1400 साल पहले वेनसांग भारत पहुंचे होंगे और भारत के विद्वत् लोग चीन पहुंचे होंगे सिर्फ और सिर्फ ज्ञान के लिए, सांस्कृति को जानने के लिए, परंपराओं को जानने के लिए, कितना साहस किया जाता था।
- ज्ञान के लिए दरवाजा खोलना उसके लिए भीतर एक बहुत बड़ी ताकत लगती है। अगर भीतर बड़ी ताकत नहीं होती है, तो दूसरे विचारों का डर लगता है कहीं वो आकर हमें खा तो नहीं जाएंगे। हमारे ऊपर सवार तो नहीं हो जाएंगे? अपने आप में जब ताकत होती है तब व्यक्ति और विचारों को सुनने समझने की इच्छा करता है। और आज चीन फिर से एक बार भगवान बुद्ध के कालखंड के बाद गांधी के माध्यम से उस महान सांस्कृतिक विरासत को जानने के लिए उत्सुक हुआ है, मैं अपने आप में एक बहुत बड़ी अहम घटना मानता हूं।

- आज दुनिया दो प्रमुख संकटों से गुजर रही है - एक global warming और दूसरा Terrorism. गांधी के विचारों-आचार में इन दोनों के उपाय मौजूद हैं और इस अर्थ में Gandhian study के माध्यम से इस यूनिवर्सिटी के विद्यार्थी न सिर्फ चीन को, लेकिन मानवजात के माध्यम से भी संदेश देने में समर्थ होंगे कि आज भी गांधी कितने relevant हैं।
- 21वीं सदी एशिया की सदी है। चीन और भारत मिलकर के दुनिया की एक तिहाई जनसंख्या है। अगर यह एक-तिहाई जनसंख्या का भला होता है, वो समस्याओं से मुक्त होती है, मतलब दुनिया का एक तिहाई हिस्सा संकटों से मुक्त हो जाता है। और इसलिए चीन और भारत मिलकर के प्रगति के ऊंचाईयों को पार करें, जिसमें मानवीय संवेदना हो, मानवता हो, बुद्ध का चिंतन हो, गांधी के प्रयोग हों, ताकि हम विश्व को एक ऐसा जीवन जीने के लिए प्रेरित करें जो जीवन जनकल्याण से समर्पित हो।
- **Keynote Address by Prime Minister at India-China Business Forum in Shanghai, May 16, 2015**
 - The serenity of Buddhism in Asian countries is the seed of their success. He strongly believes that this century belongs to Asia, and Buddhism would be a further unifying and catalysing force among the Asian countries.
 - India wants to promote manufacturing in a big way particularly to create jobs for Sino-Indian youth who form 65% of their population. For this purpose, India has launched a campaign called "Make in India". It is also the effort of the Government to encourage innovation, R&D and entrepreneurship in the country.
 - Many Chinese companies have the possibility of investing in India to take advantage of India's potentials. The potential lies in Manufacturing, processing as well as in infrastructure.
 - He assured that India's economic environment has changed and the regulatory regime is much more transparent, responsive and stable.
 - He highlighted that lot of efforts have been made and are still underway to improve the 'Ease of Doing Business'.
 - He said India's growth rate is above seven per cent. Most of the international financial institutions including the World Bank, IMF, OECD and others are predicting even faster growth and even better in the coming years. MOODY's have recently upgraded the rating of India as positive on account of its concrete steps in various economic fields
 - Indian component manufacturers have been masters in high-quality precision and the Chinese players have mastered the art of mass production. The component design expertise of Indian engineers and low cost mass production by China can cater to the global markets in a better way. This industrial partnership of China and India can bring about greater investment, employment and satisfaction of the people.

Several important agreements were signed between the two countries during Prime Minister's visit such as:

- The establishment of Consulate-General at Chennai, India and Chengdu, China, extension of the Consular district of the Consulate-General of India in Guangzhou to include Jiangxi province.

- Agreement in the field of Vocational Education and Skill Development, in Tourism;
- Action Plan for Cooperation in setting up of the Mahatma Gandhi National Institute for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship in Gujarat; and Action Plan for Enhancing Cooperation in the Railways.
- MoU on Consultative Mechanism for Cooperation in Trade Negotiations at WTO;
- MoU between MEA, India and International Department of Central Committee of the Communist Party of China;
- MoUs in the field of Education, Mining, Space Cooperation, Doordarshan and China Central Television in the field of Broadcasting, on establishing India-China Think-tanks forum to bring together Indian and Chinese scholars to deliberate on contemporary issues of regional and international significance;
- MoU was also signed to construct a framework for collaboration in the sphere of ocean sciences, ocean technology and associated domains, also between Geological Survey of India and China Geological Survey.
- Further, NITI Aayog of the Government of India and the Development Research Centre, State Council of the People's Republic of China agreed to create cooperative relations between the two institutions, with the broad objective of furthering cooperation and understanding on strategic macroeconomic and policy issues.
- Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India and China Earthquake Administration, P.R. China entered into MoU for cooperation in the field of Earthquake Sciences and Earthquake Engineering, Climate Change, Polar Science and Cryosphere.
- Agreement for Sister state/province between Karnataka and Sichuan and Sister City relations between Chennai-Chongqing, Hyderabad-Qingdao, Aurangabad-Dunhuang was also signed. Besides MoUs were signed between ICCR and Fudan University on establishing Centre for Gandhian and Indian Studies and also with Yunnan Minzu University on Yoga College.

In the Joint Statement issued, it was emphasised to strengthen the bilateral relations in different spheres as India-China bilateral relations are poised to play a defining role in the 21st Century in Asia and indeed, globally. The leaders agreed that the process of the two countries pursuing their respective national developmental goals and security interests must unfold in a mutually supportive manner with both sides showing mutual respect and sensitivity to each other's concerns, interests and aspirations.

Key Points:

- The two sides agreed to regular visits at the level of Heads of State/ Government. Full use will be made of the opportunities provided by the presence of their leaders at various multilateral forum to hold consultations on bilateral relations and issues of regional and global importance
- The two sides acknowledged the positive role of the Agreements and Protocols that have been signed so far in maintaining peace and tranquillity in the border areas. Committed to enhance border defence cooperation, the two sides will carry out annual visits and exchanges between the two Military Headquarters and neighbouring military commands, endeavour to operationalise the hotline between the two Military

Headquarters, expand the exchanges between the border commanders, and establish border personnel meeting points at all sectors of the India-China border areas. The two sides affirmed that an early settlement of the boundary question serves the basic interests of the two countries and should be pursued as a strategic objective by the two governments. Bearing in mind the overall bilateral relations and the long-term interests of the two peoples, the two sides are determined to actively seek a political settlement of the boundary question.

- The two leaders noted with satisfaction the steps taken and the progress achieved in the Railway sector cooperation including the projects on speed raising on the existing Chennai-Bengaluru-Mysore line, the proposed feasibility studies for the Delhi-Nagpur section of high speed rail link, the station redevelopment planning for Bhubaneswar & Baiyappanahalli, heavy haul transportation training and setting up of a railway university. They welcomed the Action Plan outlining the next steps in the partnership in this key infrastructure sector.
- The two sides agreed to reinforce the cooperation in the field of Satellite Remote Sensing, Space-Based meteorology, Space Science, Lunar and Deep Space Exploration, Satellite Navigation, Space Components, Piggy-back Launching Services, and Education and Training.
- The two sides recognized that enhancing border areas cooperation through border trade, pilgrimage by people of the two countries and other exchanges can effectively promote mutual trust, and agreed to further broaden this cooperation so as to transform the border into a bridge of cooperation and exchanges. The two sides agreed to hold negotiation on augmenting the list of traded commodities, and expand border trade at Nathu La, Qiangla/Lipu-Lekh Pass and Shipki La.
- Both sides reiterated their strong condemnation of and resolute opposition to terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and committed themselves to cooperate on counter-terrorism. They agreed that there is no justification for terrorism and urged all countries and entities to work sincerely to disrupt terrorist networks and their financing, and stop cross-border movement of terrorists, in accordance with the relevant principles and purposes of the UN Charter and international laws. They called for early conclusion of negotiations on the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.
- The two sides are ready to continue cooperation under the framework of Shanghai Cooperation Organization. China welcomed India's application for full membership of Shanghai Cooperation Organization and also agreed to work together with relevant parties to accelerate the preparation for establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank to promote regional infrastructure and economic development.
- Both the countries welcomed the progress made in promoting cooperation under the framework of the BCIM (Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar) Economic Corridor. Both sides recalled the second meeting of the Joint Study Group of BCIM Economic Corridor, and agreed to continue their respective efforts to implement understandings reached at the meeting.
- The two sides shared the view that the issue of climate change is of vital importance for the sake of today's world and future generations. They underscored the importance of working together and with other countries to conclude an ambitious, comprehensive, universal, balanced and equitable climate agreement at the forthcoming CoP 21 to

UNFCCC to be held in Paris later this year that will also encourage genuine technology transfer, collaboration for adaptation and mitigation and financial support in meeting this common global challenge.

➤ **Joint Statement on Climate Change – Key Points**

- The two sides issued Joint Statement on Climate Change between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the People's Republic of China during the visit.
- Joint Statement on Climate Change emphasized that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Kyoto Protocol are the most appropriate framework for international cooperation for addressing climate change.
- They reaffirmed the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and call for the leadership of developed countries in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and providing finance, technology and capacity building support to developing countries.
- The two sides reaffirmed that the 2015 agreement (*COP21 at Paris*) shall be in full accordance with the principles, provisions and structure of the UNFCCC, in particular the principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, reflecting different historical responsibilities, development stages and national circumstances between developed and developing countries.
- Two sides decided to enhance high-level bilateral dialogue on domestic climate policies and multilateral negotiations and to further strengthen practical bilateral cooperation, including in areas of clean energy technologies, energy conservation, energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable transportation including electric vehicles, low-carbon urbanization and adaptation.

4. Parliamentary Delegation from the People's Republic of China led by Zhang Dejiang, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, visits India, June 13-16, 2015

Chinese Parliamentary Delegation led by Zhang Dejiang, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress called on President Pranab Mukherjee, Vice-President Mohammad Hamid Ansari, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and met Sumitra Mahajan, Speaker Lok Sabha.

President Pranab Mukherjee said that this visit will help revitalize India-China parliamentary exchanges especially since the last visit of the Chairman of the National People's Congress took place 14 years ago. The last visit of Speaker of the Lok Sabha to China was also in 2006.

Prime Minister Modi said that parliamentary exchanges are an important pillar of the bilateral relationship. He stressed on the need to broaden the foundation of India China relations by promoting exchanges between State-level legislatures as well. Prime Minister Modi and Zhang Dejiang emphasised the importance of promoting investment, trade, tourism and people to people ties, and enhancing strategic communication and coordination.

5. Prime Minister Modi meets Xi Jinping, President of PRC, on the sideline of BRICS Summit, Ufa, Russia, July 8, 2015

Prime Minister Modi met President Xi Jinping, the President of China on the sidelines of BRICS Summit at Ufa, Russia. Among important issues came up for the discussion were progress since May 2015 in the relationship, mainly on the economic side, in industrial parks, in terms of investment.

The two leaders welcomed the fact that the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra through Nathu La had started off. The talks also covered border issues, the work which the Special Representatives have been charged with, the possibilities of their making accelerated progress, peace and tranquillity issues, confidence-building measures. Some global issues came up specifically in the case of China - UN Security Council, their NSG membership quest, and some issues pertaining to counterterrorism. There was also some mention of how India-China are approaching the challenge of the reconstruction that faces Nepal.

6. Minister of Home Affairs Rajnath Singh's Visit to China, November, 18-23, 2015

Minister of Home Affairs Rajnath Singh, paid an official visit to China (Beijing and Shanghai) from 18 November to 23 November, 2015.

The joint statement between the Ministry of Home Affairs, India and the Ministry of Public Security, China – Key Points:

- The two sides have agreed that the successful exchange of visits between Xi Jinping, President of China in September 2014 to India and Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India in May 2015 to China yielded important consensus to build a closer development partnership between the two countries, which provides the direction for the development of bilateral relations and created a favourable opportunity for the growth of India-China law enforcement cooperation.
- The two sides will further exchange high-level visits and establish India-China High Level Meeting Mechanism led by the Home Minister of India and the Minister of Public Security of China to be held in Beijing and Delhi once every two years.
- In order to assist the Minister-level meeting mechanism, a Joint Secretary/Director General Level meeting mechanism led by the International Cooperation Departments of the two Ministries will be established. This mechanism will be held once a year, alternately in Beijing and New Delhi.
- Both sides agreed to enhance cooperation in combating international terrorism through (a) exchanging information on terrorist activities, terrorist groups and their linkages; (b) exchanging experiences on anti-hijacking, hostage situations and other terrorism related crimes; (c) coordinating positions on anti-terrorism endeavours at regional and multilateral levels and supporting each other. Both sides also agreed to exchanges by groups of counter-terrorism experts to discuss counter-terrorism cooperation.
- The two sides shall strengthen the exchanges and cooperation in the area of law enforcement capacity building.

7. Chinese Military Delegation led by General Fan Changlong, Vice-Chairman of the Central Military Commission visited India, November 15-17, 2015

A Chinese military delegation led by General Fan Changlong, Vice-Chairman of the Central Military Commission, visited India from 15-17 November 2015. Gen. Fan Changlong held talks with Defence Minister and Chief of Army Staff and called on the Prime Minister.

- The two sides agreed that peace and tranquillity in border areas is the cornerstone for smooth development of bilateral relations.
- They also agreed to further enhance communication and exchanges between the two armed forces and operationalise additional Border Personnel Meeting points.

8. Indian Northern Army Commander led Delegation Visits China, December 14-20, 2015.

A six member high level delegation from the Northern Command of the Indian Army led by Lieutenant General DS Hooda, Army Commander, Northern Command, visited China. The delegation had a high level meeting with General Qi Jianguo, Deputy Chief of General Staff, PLA.

- Both sides stressed on the need to ensure peace and tranquillity along the borders and hoped that both sides will further strengthen the bilateral defence exchanges by enhancing the frequency of interactions between the two armies.
- It was also agreed to further cooperate on issues of fighting terrorism which is affecting both the countries.

9. Joint Military Exercise: Operation 'Hand-in-Hand'

A battalion level Joint India-China Army Exercise called Operation 'Hand-in-Hand' on counter-terrorism and 'Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief' was held at Kunming, China from 12 to 22 October 2015. Participating troops from both sides had trained together and learned from each other in mixed groups on Basic Individual Skills (combat boxing, basic mountaineering and shooting), Comprehensive Combat Skills (obstacle crossing, combat shooting, demolition, high intensity physical training) and unit/sub unit tactics, especially in a counter terrorism scenario. A joint field exercise depicting counter-terrorist operations on India- China border areas was held from 21 to 22 October 2015 to validate the exercise objectives.

II. European Union

A. Belarus

President of India Pranab Mukherjee visit to Belarus (2-4 June, 2015)

President Pranab Mukherjee paid visit to Belarus from June 2 to June 4, 2015. It was the first presidential visit to Belarus. Both countries signed a roadmap for India-Belarus cooperation. India and Belarus signed protocols amending the agreement for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and on Property (Capital) of the 27th of September, 1997. Other MoUs between Bureau of Indian Standards and the State Committee for Standardization of the Republic of Belarus on Cooperation in the field of Standardization and Information Support; Prasar Bharati (PB) and the National State Television and Radio Company of the Republic of Belarus (Beltele radio company) for cooperation on Broadcasting; bilateral cooperation between the Securities and Exchange Board of India and the Ministry of Finance of the

Republic of Belarus and Ministry of Textiles of the Republic of India and the Belarusian State concern for Manufacturing and Marketing of Light Industry Goods were signed.

India and Belarus also signed seven MoUs in the education and scientific cooperation. MoUs between IIT Guwahati and the Belarusian National Technical University in the field of research collaborations, student and faculty exchange; IIT Guwahati and the Belarusian State University of Informatics And Radioelectronics in the field of research collaborations, student and faculty exchange; Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak, India and the Belarusian State University of Culture and Arts of Belarus for Development of Academic Cooperation in the field of research & education, twinning and dual degree programs as per UGC; Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, Amarkantak, and the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics for academic and scientific cooperation; Indira Gandhi National Tribal University and the Belarusian State University of Physical Culture, Visvesvaraya National Institute of Technology (VNIT), and the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics in the field of engineering and technology and VNIT and the Belarusian National Technical University, Belarus in the field of engineering and technology were signed.

B. France

1. Visit of Prime Minister to France (April 10-11, 2015)

At the invitation of the President of the French Republic François Hollande, the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi paid an official visit to France on 10-11 April 2015. During this visit a Joint Statement was issued which included the following major points:

- They reaffirmed their commitment to the strategic partnership and agreed to further deepen and strengthen bilateral ties based on shared principles and values relating to democracy, freedom, rule of law and respect for human rights.
- As global partners, 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 and India committed to continuing 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.
- Prime Minister Modi extended his full support to France for making a successful outcome of CoP 21 to UNFCCC to be held in Paris. The leaders expressed confidence that the Paris conference (November 30- December 11, 2015) would finalise a historic agreement for the post 2020 period.
- France welcomes India's offer to be a partner of the Smart Cities development scheme and is ready to implement its best technological solutions and share its experience in the field of integrated sustainable cities, in particular in urban planning, urban grids, water and sanitation, sustainable mobility and digital technologies.
- They agreed that India and France must intensify their cooperation within the framework of JWG on Counter-Terrorism, including on information and intelligence sharing on terror networks and work together to share experiences on dealing with the growing phenomenon of radicalisation.

- The leaders stressed the importance of joint military exercises between their Armies (Shakti), Navies (Varuna), and Air Forces (Garuda) and welcomed the participation of the French Carrier Battle Group in the Varuna exercise in the Indian Ocean in the coming weeks.

Following is the list of some important agreements/initiatives/announcements signed/agreed during visit of Prime Minister to France: (April 10-11, 2015)

- MoU between L&T and AREVA;
- Pre-engineering agreements between NPCIL and Areva;
- MoU between ISRO and CNES on Megha Tropiques;
- MOU between ISRO, CNES and ONERA for Ka-band propagation experiment over Indian tropical region’;
- Programme between ISRO and French National Centre for Space Studies (CNES);
- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the field of renewable energy between the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), Government of India and the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy, Government of France.

C. Germany

1. Visit of Prime Minister to Germany (April 12-14, 2015)

The Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi paid an official visit to Germany on 12-14 April 2015. During this visit a Joint Statement was issued which included the following major points:

- **Manufacturing:** Utilise the momentum generated by India’s participation in the Hannover Messe to foster stronger ties between business and industry on both sides in order to support India’s ‘Make in India’ initiative.
- **Skill Development:** Expand existing Indo-German cooperation through new initiatives, including a road-map for enhancing employability of trainees and apprentices by strengthening industry involvement in Skills Development, as in the German dual system.
- **Urban Development:** a) Strengthen the bilateral cooperation through the establishment of a working group on urban development. (b) Setting up peer-to-peer network of Municipalities for direct collaboration; and (c) Assistance in the area of affordable housing.
- **Environment:** Strengthen the bilateral cooperation through the establishment of two working groups in the areas of water and waste management.
- **Railways:** Support for the modernization of the railway infrastructure including setting up of semi high-speed and high-speed railways and training and skill development of personnel in the rail sector starting with signalling and telecommunications and a high-speed rail system.
- **Cleaning of Rivers:** Following the completion of the Ganga Scoping Mission in October 2014 by Germany, develop cooperation on Ganga River rejuvenation strategies, capacity support for urban sanitation, setting up of standards, approaches to industrial pollution and innovative financial models.
- **Renewable Energy:** Support India’s proposed objective of 175GW of renewable energy by 2022 through technical and financial support for developing comprehensive solar rooftop and green energy corridor projects in India.

- Education: Promote closer educational exchanges, including through setting up of an International Centre for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences, strengthening collaboration between universities in India and Germany through the Indo German Strategic Partnerships in Higher Education program, and enhancing the exchange of scientists between both countries, e.g. in the framework of India's GIAN initiative.
- Language: Support the respective programs and efforts in India and Germany to broaden knowledge of each other's languages among the youth in accordance with the national policy of each country.
- Science and Technology (S&T): Both sides declared their intent to promote closer R&D Cooperation in science, technology and innovation, in particular through extending the tenure of the bi-national Indo-German Science & Technology Centre in India with appropriate resources, the cooperation arrangement between Ministry of Earth Sciences, India and Helmholtz Association, Germany for Institutional collaboration in the area of Earth Sciences, and understanding between National Council of Science Museums in India and Leibniz Association, Germany on closer cooperation in science communication.

2. Visit of External Affairs Minister to Germany (August 25-27, 2015)

EAM Sushma Swaraj met German Foreign Minister Frank Walter Steinmeier and a number of other leaders. A small group of dignitaries representing the Indian Diaspora in Germany was presented to the Minister. Harsha Gramminger presented the European Ayurveda Association (EUAA) and its work in progressing Ayurveda and AYUSH systems of medicine in Europe. Gramminger also shared with the Minister brief plans for the 2nd European World Ayurveda Congress, October 2016, Koblenz, Germany.

3. Visit of German Chancellor Angela Merkel to India, October 4-6, 2015

German Chancellor Angela Merkel visited India from 4-6 October 2015 for the 3rd Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC) between India and Germany.

List of MOU's signed during the visit:

- Joint Declaration of Intent between the Ministry of Human Resource Development of the Republic of India and the Federal Foreign Office of the Federal Republic of Germany regarding the promotion of German as a Foreign Language in India and the promotion of Modern Indian Languages in Germany.
- Summary record of the Negotiations on Development Cooperation between the Government of India and the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany.
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy of the Republic of India on Indo-German Development Cooperation regarding the Indo-German Solar Energy Partnership.
- Joint Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship of the Republic of India, on one hand, and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and

Development of the Republic of Germany, on the other, on Cooperation in the Field of Skill Development and Vocational Education and Training.

- Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of India and the Federal Ministry of the Interior of the Federal Republic of Germany on Security Cooperation.
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Civil Aviation of the Republic of India and the Federal Ministry of the Interior of the Federal Republic of Germany on Aviation Security.
- Joint Declaration of Intent between the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of India and the Federal Ministry of the Interior of the Federal Republic of Germany on Cooperation in the Field of Disaster Management.
- Joint Declaration between the Ministry of Science and Technology (Government of the Republic of India) and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (Government of the Federal Republic of Germany) on the extension of the tenure of the Indo-German Science and Technology Centre (IGSTC).
- Memorandum of Understanding between University Grants Commission (UGC), India and German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), Germany on Indo-German Partnerships in Higher Education (IGP).
- Joint Declaration of Intent between the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare, (MoA&FW), Government of India, and the Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety (BVL) of the Federal Republic of Germany on Plant Protection Products.
- Joint Declaration of Intent on the further Development of the Cooperation in the Field of Railways between the Federal Ministry of Transport and Digital Infrastructure of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Ministry of Railways of the Republic of India.
- Memorandum of Understanding between the Department of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises, Government of India, and Fraunhofer Society, Germany on cooperation in the field of manufacturing.
- Joint Announcement on setting up a Fast-Track system for German companies in India.
- Joint Declaration between the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Government of the Republic of India on the continuation of the cooperation in the field of advanced training of corporate executives and junior executives from India.
- Joint Statement of Intent on Cooperation in Food Safety between the Federal Institute for Risk Assessment (BfR) and the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI).
- Joint Statement of Intent between the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) and the Federal Office of Consumer Protection and Food Safety (BVL) on Cooperation in Food Safety.
- Memorandum of Understanding between the German Agribusiness Alliance and Agriculture Skill Council of India (ASCI) on Cooperation in Agricultural Studies.
- Letter of Intent between the Department of Science and Technology, Government of the Republic of India (DST), the Council for the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings (Council), and the Foundation Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings (Foundation) on supporting participation of Indian young scientists in Natural Sciences for the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meetings.

4. Indo-German Joint Statement on Climate Change and Energy Technology Cooperation (October 05, 2015)

- Both the countries share the long-term target of holding the increase in global average temperature below 2 degree Celsius above preindustrial levels.
- Germany welcomes India's intention to transform its energy sector by increasing the share of renewable energy, in particular solar energy, in electricity generation consistent with its goal of 175 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2022.
- India and Germany underline the importance of climate finance and emphasise the commitment by developed countries to jointly mobilize USD 100 billion from public and private sources per year by 2020 to developing countries.
- India and Germany have launched an Indo-German Working Group on Climate Change under the Indo-German Environment Forum in order to regularly discuss climate policy and exchange views with regard to India's and Germany's transition to low-carbon economies and associated co-benefits for sustainable development.
- India and Germany decided to forge an Indo-German Climate and Renewable Alliance, a comprehensive partnership to harness technology, innovation and finance in order to make affordable, clean and renewable energy accessible to all and to foster climate change mitigation efforts in both countries.
- India and Germany acknowledge that climate change responses and solutions generate new opportunities and co-benefits.
- Both countries affirm that several already established bilateral dialogue structures, such as the Indo-German Energy Forum (IGEF), the Indo-German High-Technology Partnership Group, the Indo-German Working Group on Quality Infrastructure for Cooperation in Standardization, Conformity Assessment and Product Safety and the Indo-German Consultative Group, are already doing important work for the transition to low-carbon economies.
- Prime Minister Modi and Chancellor Merkel reaffirmed the importance of providing a transparent and predictable policy environment to foster innovation. Prime Minister Modi emphasised India's ongoing efforts to create a market environment that will promote trade and investment in climate technology. Germany is prepared to further support India in its efforts to deploy renewable, in particular solar, energy technologies and to create attractive framework conditions [e.g. through the Indo-German Energy Forum, Indo-German Solar Partnership, IGEN].
- India and Germany recognize the importance of exchanging experiences on political implementation strategies that can help countries transition to low-carbon, climate resilient energy production and consumption. The leaders therefore agreed to expand their efforts to assist other developing countries in their endeavour to achieve low-carbon development.
- India and Germany will work together to develop and implement solutions that strengthen climate friendly urban development, including, inter alia, through initiatives in energy transition in cities, climate friendly urban mobility, energy efficiency in the housing sector, energy efficiency in urban water supply as well as recycling and waste management in major Indian cities.

5. Joint Statement – Third India Germany Inter-Governmental Consultations (IGC) in New Delhi (October 05, 2015)

Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi and the German Chancellor Angela Merkel agreed to steer the strategic partnership between India and Germany into a new phase by building on their growing convergence on foreign and security issues and on the complementarities between the two economies.

They welcomed the intensification of high-level engagement since the last IGC in 2013, with Prime Minister Modi's visits to Berlin and Hanover April, 2015 and several Ministerial visits from both sides. They committed to maintain the momentum of exchanges in the next two years. They noted that, fifteen years into the Strategic Partnership, Indo-German cooperation is founded on common democratic principles, marked by trust and mutual respect and geared towards building stability, prosperity and sustainable development through closer dialogue and cooperation in security, enhanced trade and investment, partnerships in manufacturing, skilling, clean energy, infrastructure, innovation and education. Looking ahead at the coming two years, India and Germany commit to an ambitious bilateral agenda to jointly pursue these goals.

- Bolstering Security and Building a Stable Global Order
- Working with Businesses Towards Inclusive and Skills-based Prosperity
- Building Sustainable Livelihoods and a Clean Environment
- Driving Innovation and Education Together
- Enhancing Mutual Understanding and Exchange

D. Great Britain

1. Vision Statement on the UK-India Summit 2015 (November 12, 2015)

Vision Statement on the UK-India Summit 2015 (November 12, 2015) endorsed by Prime Minister Modi and Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, David Cameron.

- The Vision Statement set out the fundamental principles on which the UK-India partnership is built, and outlining a roadmap for deepening co-operation. They resolved to hold biennial PM-level summits to advance the partnership. They also resolved to agree on a new Defence and International Security Partnership which will intensify cooperation on defence and security, including cyber-security, counter-terrorism and maritime security. Also, noting that addressing climate change and promoting secure, affordable and sustainable supplies of energy are shared strategic priorities for India and the UK.
- The vision statement mentioned the following areas of cooperation: building a Global partnership, Cooperation in Economic Development and Finance, Make in India, Business, Smart Cities and Urban Renewal, Education, Skill, Science and Research, Health, Culture and Crime.

2. Joint Statement on the UK-India Summit 2015 (November 12, 2015)

- Invest in skills for this century and create high quality jobs for the people. Cooperate in health and education to advance human development. Invest in infrastructure and promote manufacturing, including in areas of advanced technologies, with the lightest

possible footprint on Earth. Use the vast new opportunities of the digital age to revolutionise services, increase prosperity of the people and address the shared challenges. Build leading edge of research, technology and innovation in realising the vision of a low carbon future, while meeting the development aspirations of the people. Promote clean energy that is affordable and accessible. Partner in making the rivers cleaner, the habitats healthier and build smart, sustainable cities in which everyone can prosper.

- Both nations are committed to upholding the international rule of law and to seeking solutions to global problems within the framework of the UN and other international organisations. The UK supports India's membership of international export control regimes, so that together, we can lead the way in reinvigorating the rules-based international system to respond to the formidable global challenges we face. Agreed on forward-looking steps in security and defence cooperation.

3. Statement of Intent on Partnership for Cooperation in Third Countries

The two Prime Ministers also agreed to scale up bilateral cooperation to a global partnership for development through a "Statement of Intent on Partnership for Cooperation in Third Countries" which will facilitate working together to benefit third country partners by assisting them in addressing their development challenges in a wholly demand driven manner.

4. India-UK Joint Statement on Energy and Climate Change

- Prime Minister Cameron underlined the UK's commitment to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% by 2050, as set out in the 2008 Climate Change Act, meeting its carbon budgets in the most cost-effective manner. Prime Minister Modi highlighted India's commitment to reduce its emissions intensity by 33–35% by 2030 compared to 2005 levels and put in place 40% cumulative electric power installed capacity from non-fossil fuel based energy resources by 2030 through nationally determined development measures and priorities.
- The two Prime Ministers emphasised the importance of climate finance and of developed countries honouring their commitment to mobilise jointly US\$100bn a year by 2020 from a wide variety of sources, both public and private, in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation. UK and India recognised the crucial role of predictable and enhanced public and private climate finance, to support mitigation and adaptation actions in developing countries.
- Prime Minister Cameron and Prime Minister Modi welcomed the signing of a MoU to strengthen energy cooperation between the two countries building on existing successes and promoting closer future collaboration in areas such as electricity market reform, energy efficiency, offshore wind, solar power, smart grids, energy storage, and off-grid renewable energy services. They also welcomed the extension of the collaboration between the UK and India on strategic energy planning. Announced the signing of a MoU between the UK and the Indian Department for Atomic Energy to encourage joint training and experience sharing on Civil Nuclear with the Indian Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership.
- The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed the importance of sharing skills and expertise to deliver secure, affordable and sustainable energy for all. Prime Minister Cameron

announced a £10 million five-year programme of Technical Assistance to support national and state-level reforms in India's power sector.

5. Defence and International Security Partnership

India and the UK resolve to strengthen the international system and develop a deeper partnership to better combat global threats. The key areas would be defence cooperation, make In India, global issues like UN reforms, counter terrorism, cyber, serious and organised crime and maritime security.

In the Annex on Mechanisms for Cooperation it was stated that India and the UK will deepen their bilateral relationship, through biennial PM-PM Summits, supported by their annual Foreign Office dialogues and NSA-NSA talks. The two countries will hold annual strategic dialogues between the Defence Ministers, and between the Joint/Integrated and Single Service Chiefs. The proposal is to intensify their biennial military exercise programme, starting with the Naval, Army, and Air Force exercises planned for 2017 in India. And will hold regular consultations on disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

E. Ireland

1. Visit of Prime Minister to Ireland September 23, 2015

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Ireland and met Prime Minister Enda Kenny. It was the visit of an Indian Prime Minister to Ireland after 59 years. The two leaders held joint press briefing. Information technology, tourism, science and technology and education were focus areas of cooperation. India sought Ireland's support for the UNSC permanent membership. There are about 26,000 Indians in Ireland, constituting a vibrant community.

F. Kingdom of Norway

6. Borge Brende, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway, led a delegation of senior officials to India for the India- Norway Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) (02 November 2015 in New Delhi).

During discussions, both sides agreed that there is dynamism and energy in Norway-India trade and investment relations though a lot yet remains to be achieved. India would like Norway to engage in the creation of the next generation infrastructure including ports, roads and railways, active cooperation in fisheries/marine resources covering such diverse fields as Krill Fishing, Trout Farming, Marine Cage Culture, and Mapping of Stocks. One of the objectives of the joint effort is to make shipbuilding and shipping more efficient and environmentally friendly. Bilateral collaboration in education spans joint research and higher education at post graduate level in diverse fields including energy, climate change, ocean and arctic/polar research, public health, and information security; urban planning and development; environment; biotechnology and the medical sciences; marine sciences; innovation and geo-hazards.

G. Netherlands

Mark Rutte Prime Minister of the Kingdom of the Netherlands visited India on June 5-6, 2015. During the meeting the two Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at the longstanding and historical bonds of friendship between the two countries spanning over four centuries and shared values of democracy, pluralism, multiculturalism, human rights and rule of law. Expressing satisfaction at the growing political, economic, institutional and people-to-people exchanges and cooperation, they welcomed the new momentum in bilateral relations. They took particular note of the significant

expansion in economic and commercial engagement in the last decade and the serious interest on both sides to intensify cooperation in several key sectors of mutual interest where there are untapped complementarities and natural synergies. Recognizing their shared interests and responsibilities in addressing a broad range of international issues, including peace and security, free and fair trade and an open, just, inclusive and rule-based international order, the two leaders held in-depth discussions on bilateral, regional and international issues. Recognizing the increasingly globalized nature of threats and challenges and the shared stakes in each other's security, the Prime Ministers agreed to expand security and defence cooperation between India and the Netherlands. Both Prime Ministers welcomed the possibility of Dutch participation in India's 'Make in India' initiative in the defence sector.

Expressing concern about the serious threat posed by the spread of violent extremism and terrorism to both countries, the Prime Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to combat terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and reiterated the need for a unified and collective effort by the international community to eliminate terrorism through a holistic approach, including the implementation of the U.N. Global Counter Terrorism Strategy and early conclusion of the Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism. To enhance bilateral cooperation in this area, they welcomed the setting up of a Joint Working Group on Counter Terrorism and convening of the first meet.

H. Spain

1. Third Round of India-Spain Foreign Office Consultations, March 02, 2015

- Third Round of India-Spain Foreign Office Consultations was held on 02 March, 2015 in New Delhi. The Indian delegation was led by Navtej Singh Sarna, Secretary (West), Ministry of External Affairs and the Spanish delegation was led by Igancio Ybañez, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Spain.
- They reviewed progress on existing bilateral agreements and discussed the agreements under consideration. Both sides were agreed to upscale bilateral cooperation given that the year 2016 will mark the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between India and Spain by organizing high level visits, cultural activities, business exchanges etc.

2. Visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs & Cooperation of Spain to India (April 26-28, 2015)

Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs of India and José Manuel García-Margallo, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain met on April 27, 2015 during the latter's official visit to India. The Ministers decided to take a number of actions with a view to enhancing economic cooperation, strengthening bilateral relations and contributing to the stability and prosperity of South Asia and Europe. Major among them include:

- The Ministers will recommend an early Summit meeting between the two countries at the level of Heads of Government as mutually convenient.
- The Ministers decided to intensify policy coordination and information exchange regarding the situation in South Asia, the Middle East, Maghreb and Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as global issues such as terrorism, climate change, energy security and the UN Security Council agenda.
- The two sides agreed to launch a regular Security Policy Dialogue, led by the Ministry of External Affairs of India and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain to

assess common strategic security challenges, exchange points of view and enhance cooperation at bilateral and multilateral level.

- The Ministers welcomed the exchange of experts in the fields of foreign affairs and security from their respective think tanks and academia, and expressed confidence that such collaboration would enhance the common understanding on security and strategic issues of mutual interest. The Ministers stressed the relevance of "Casa Asia" and the network "Red de Casas" as important stakeholders of public diplomacy and partners in furthering the bilateral relationship. In this context, it was agreed to revitalize public diplomacy linkages between the two countries through the Spain India Tribune mechanism. It was also agreed to explore cooperation between the diplomatic training institutes of the two countries.
- In the context of celebrating 60 years of diplomatic relations in 2016, it was agreed that both countries would provide as much assistance as possible for commemorative events in close cooperation with relevant institutions. Both sides agreed to actively promote mutual exchanges in the areas of economy, culture, academia and education, science and technology, and tourism, and explore ways to enhance mutual understanding and friendship between their peoples.
- The Ministers also acknowledged the importance of initiatives to enhance business and civil society networking and expressed their full support to the Spain – India Council Foundation. In this regard, they expressed satisfaction at the successful organization of the First India – Spain Forum on December 3-4, 2014 in Spain which focused on sustainable cities and transport networks.
- The Ministers also noted the encouraging progress in the negotiations of the following agreements: Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Persons, Agreement on Visa Waiver for Holders of Diplomatic Passports, Agreement on remunerative employment for dependents of members of a diplomatic mission or consular post, Agreement in the field of social security, Agreement on civil aviation and security, Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation on Transplant Services and Memorandum of Understanding for Cooperation on Port Matters and expressed the hope that they will be concluded soon.

I. Sweden

1. The President's visit to Sweden in May-June 2015 (31 May-2 June 2015)

Incidentally, it was the first ever Head of State visit from India to Sweden. During the visit, several agreements were signed between both the countries in the field of sustainable development, in micro, small and medium enterprises, visa exemption for diplomatic passports, in scientific field particularly in polar and ocean research and research on health. Several education related MoUs were signed between leading Universities of both countries for mutual cooperation.

2. On June 1, the President of India Pranab Mukherjee was on a state visit to Sweden.

In his banquet speech the President said appreciated the long standing friendship between India and Sweden. Though geographically distant, both the countries are bound by their commitment to democratic values and practices. Both being open, pluralistic societies, India and Sweden are committed to the protection of human rights and the rule of law. Through the years, India and Sweden have developed mutual trust and goodwill, bringing the people of both the nations together

to achieve common goals in many sectors. The President stressed that both India and Sweden desire to enhance their cooperation to the fullest potential.

III. Japan

1. On the invitation of External Affairs Minister, Sushma Swaraj, Foreign Minister of Japan Fumio Kishida paid an official visit to New Delhi from 16 to 18 January 2015. External Affairs Minister co-chaired the 8th India-Japan Strategic Dialogue with the Japanese Foreign Minister on 17 January 2015. The two ministers exchanged views on the bilateral relationship, cooperation in the international arena, and strategic regional cooperation in the meeting. The two Ministers also affirmed the promotion of political dialogue including Japan-India-U.S. trilateral cooperation, and security cooperation such as joint maritime exercises.
2. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, visited India from 11 to 13 December 2015. A joint statement on India and Japan Vision 2025: Special Strategic and Global Partnership Working Together for Peace and Prosperity of the Indo-Pacific Region and the World was released. Some of the issues and areas of cooperation discussed and agreed upon are:
 - The two leaders resolved to transform the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership, into a deep, broad-based and action-oriented partnership, which reflects a broad convergence of their long-term political, economic and strategic goals.
 - With the view to realise the objectives of India and Japan Vision 2025, the two leaders decided to develop a comprehensive and concrete medium and long-term action plan.
 - India and Japan will work to strengthen regional economic and security forums and coordinate their actions to tackle global challenges including the reform of the United Nations, climate change as well as terrorism.
 - Indo-Japan future-oriented partnership raised the collaboration to a new level in areas of infrastructure, manufacturing and high technology, including advanced transportation systems, civil nuclear energy, solar power generation, space, biotechnology, rare earths and advanced materials.
 - Agreement concerning the Transfer of the Defence Equipment and Technology and the Agreement concerning Security Measures for the Protection of Classified Military Information was concluded.
 - Desire to further develop dialogue and exchanges between the two countries in the security and defence fields, including through the full utilisation of '2+2 Dialogue', Defence Policy Dialogue, Military-to-Military Talks and Coast Guard to Coast Guard cooperation was reaffirmed.
 - The need to leverage excellent bilateral relations to promote trilateral dialogues and cooperation with major partners in the region was highlighted as it would contribute to evolve an open, inclusive, stable and transparent economic, political and security architecture in the Indo-Pacific region.
 - Seeking the synergy between India's "Act East" policy and Japan's "Partnership for Quality Infrastructure", it was decided to develop and strengthen reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructures that augment connectivity within India and between India and other countries in the region

- An Agreement was reached for Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, and it will be signed after the technical details are finalised, including those related to the necessary internal procedures.
- Memoranda were signed on technological cooperation, and R&D collaboration in the railways sector.
- A Memorandum of Cooperation was signed on introduction of Japan's High Speed Railways (HSR) technologies (the Shinkansen system) to Mumbai-Ahmedabad route, which would cost around 15 billion dollars. Japan would fund 80 percent of the fund. Prime Minister Modi appreciated Japan's consideration of providing highly concessional yen loan for the HSR on Mumbai-Ahmedabad route.
- Japan will support India's efforts on Make in India, Skill India, Clean India, Digital India and by sharing its advanced skills and technologies and through active mobilisation of Japanese public and private sector involvement, including Official Development Assistance (ODA).
- Progress acknowledged on Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC), and the determination to expedite the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) projects was reaffirmed. The Chennai Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC) project to be taken to the next stage of concrete implementation by utilising ODA loan schemes and other facility measures.
- Another key takeaway was the creation of "Japan-India Make-in-India Special Finance Facility" up to 1.5 trillion Yen by Nippon Export and Investment Insurance (NEXI) and Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), which aims to promote direct investment of Japanese companies and trade from Japan to India, to support their business activities with counterparts in India, including development of necessary infrastructure, and to help materialise Make-in-India policy of the Government of India.
- Total commitment of Japanese ODA yen loan to India in FY 2015 may reach around 400 billion yen, the highest ever provided to India. 100 billion yen will be used for the metro projects both in Chennai and Ahmedabad. The projects to be carried out with the ODA loans are improvement of road network connectivity in north eastern states of India, the peripheral ring road surrounding Bengaluru, the horticulture irrigation in Jharkhand, Mumbai Trans Harbour Link, the modernisation of ship recycling yards in Gujarat, and Tuticorin Outer Harbour.
- Japan to develop "Japan Industrial Townships (JITs)," with investment incentive for companies that would not be lower than under the prevailing policy framework such as Special Economic Zone (SEZ), and National Investment and Manufacturing Zone (NIMZ).
- "Core Group" chaired by Cabinet Secretary is created to coordinate and closely monitor the process to ensure that investments from Japan as envisaged in India-Japan Investment Promotion Partnership are facilitated.
- The Japanese have expressed the intention of establishing a new mechanism, "Japan-India IoT Investment Initiative," to promote investment in Internet of Things (IoT) related area from India to Japan.
- Intention for the establishment of joint research laboratories; enhanced exchanges between young scientists and those under "Japan-Asia Youth Exchange Program in Science"; the establishment of joint research centres in India in the field of ICT; stem cell

research collaboration; and the joint fellowship Programme for young researchers was shared.

- In the next five years, 10,000 young Indian talents will be visiting Japan under such frameworks as students' exchange, IT training and short term exchanges in a hope to provide solid bonds for India-Japan future relations.
- Indian states and cities of Japan Partnership welcomed. For instance strengthening of ties between the City of Kyoto and Varanasi, two ancient and historic cities integral to their respective cultural heritage.
- The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed their intention to work together for the early realisation of U.N. reforms, particularly the Security Council reform, to better reflect the realities of the international community in the 21st century. They welcomed the recent developments in the Inter-Governmental Negotiation (IGN) process, towards the launch of text-based negotiations, and reaffirmed their determination to redouble their efforts towards achieving concrete outcomes during the 70th Session of the U.N. General Assembly.
- India and Japan expressed commitment to work together for India to become a full member in the four international export control regimes: Nuclear Suppliers Group, Missile Technology Control Regime, Wassenaar Arrangement and Australia Group, with the aim of strengthening the international non-proliferation efforts.

IV. Russia

The President of India visited Russia at the invitation of Russian President Vladimir Putin to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of the Victory day to mark the victory of Russia in the Second World War. The President was accompanied by Minister of state for Railways, Manoj Sinha and other senior officials.

1. Foreign Ministers from India, Russia and China at the 13th Russia-India-China (RIC) meeting in Beijing, China (2nd February)

- The Ministers agreed that Russia, India and China (RIC), as countries with important influence at international and regional levels and emerging market economies, need to further strengthen coordination on global issues and practical cooperation, in the spirit of openness, solidarity, mutual understanding and trust.
- The Ministers emphasised that cooperation between their countries is conducive to maintaining international and regional peace and stability and promoting global economic growth and prosperity.
- Focus was given to the strengthening of their cooperation in think-tanks, business, agriculture, disaster mitigation and relief, medical services and public health.
- The Ministers agreed to promote parliamentary, media, cultural and youth exchanges including visits of young diplomats.
- The Ministers stressed on the importance of pursuing a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation.
- The Ministers supported the mediation efforts by the UN Secretary-General and his special envoy to secure "incremental freeze zones" and to allow humanitarian aid to Syrian civilians.

- The Ministers highly valued the efforts by Russia to convene the first meeting of inter-Syrian consultations between representatives of the Syrian Government and opposition groups in January 2015.
- The Ministers welcomed the important achievements made in the elimination of Syria's chemical weapons, and complimented the Organizations for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in its efforts towards elimination and destruction of chemical weapons in Syria.
- The Ministers expressed support for the efforts of the Syrian Government to combat terrorism.

2. President at the Meeting of Indian and Russian Universities in Moscow State University, Moscow (8th May)

- The President of India, Pranab Mukherjee visited Moscow State University today (May 8, 2015) and witnessed the launch of a Network of Indian and Russian Institutions of higher education. An agreement between the Ministry of Science & Technology, Govt. of India and Russian Science Foundation as well as several agreements between Indian and Russian university were also signed on the occasion.
- Speaking at the event, the President said India and Russia have a long history of educational cooperation. In the late 1950s, the Soviet Union supported the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay in its formative years. Tens of thousands of Indian students studied in Russia in the 1970s, 80s and 90s. Though the numbers have dropped somewhat in recent years, even now, over four thousand Indian students study at Russian universities. Some of the Indian institutions have active programmes of cooperation - exchange of students, researchers and faculty members, and sharing of research publications.
- The President said Russia's educational institutions have a great legacy of accomplishment. As far back as 1930, during his visit to the Soviet Union, Rabindranath Tagore had described Russian universities as "miracles in the realm of education". It is this educational system that has led to Russia's enviable success as a nation of learning. It has enabled Russia's technological achievements in areas such as material sciences, aerospace, nuclear science, petrochemicals, mining and heavy engineering.
- The President said there is a need for a broader and institutionalised engagement between educational institutions of India and Russia. At the last Summit meeting between India and Russia in December 2014, the two countries had decided to support a network of partnerships between their universities. Many of universities have been involved with their counterparts in identifying opportunities for cooperation and are ready to formalize arrangements for systematic cooperation in the future. The establishment of a Network of Indian and Russian Universities would facilitate establishment of more institutional linkages, including exchanges of faculty, researchers and students, joint research activities and scientific conferences and symposia.

3. Keynote Address at Russia Diplomatic Academy, Moscow (8th May 2015)

- In his Keynote Address after receiving an Honorary Doctorate at the Diplomatic Academy of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the President of India, Pranab Mukherjee said Russia has been a pillar of strength at difficult moments in India's history.

- The President said India-Russia relations, shaped as they are by their respective historical experiences, cultural affinities, political convergences and economic opportunities, will not be affected by winds of transient global political trends. Russia has contributed to India's development, growth and security. India will always reciprocate this support. Across Indian society and the spectrum of its political structures, there is unanimity that friendship with Russia is an important pillar of India's foreign policy. India values its close and extensive cooperation with Russia in defence, nuclear energy and security. Russia is and will remain India's most important defence partner. It is also a key partner for India's energy security, building on its leading role in the development of nuclear power generation in India.
- The President said the dynamic development of India-Russia strategic partnership owes a great deal to the vision and leadership of President Vladimir Putin. His personal commitment has led to new heights in relations of the two countries. India recognizes President Putin as a great friend of India. He looks forward to renewing his association with President Putin on this visit.

4. President's meeting with prominent Indologists of Russia (10th May 2015)

- Addressing the distinguished Indologists, the President said although their work ensures that they are always inter-connected with India and its history, culture, heritage, politics and arts. India appreciates their contribution in promoting better understanding of India in Russia. At the same time, it is also important to inspire the younger generation to engage in Indological research by giving it contemporary relevance and making it not only intellectually stimulating but also professionally rewarding.
- The President announced that the Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) will institute an annual Distinguished Indologist award for promoting Indology abroad. He also announced that ICCR will organize a regional conference on Sanskrit and Indology in Russia. Support for the Indian Chair in the Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Social Sciences from ICCR will also be continued for another two years.

5. Prime Minister's visits to Russia (for BRICS and SCO Summits) and Central Asian Countries (July 06, 2015)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi embarked on six countries visit on 6 July 2015 starting from Uzbekistan. Three agreements on cooperation between the Foreign Ministries, on cooperation in culture, cooperation in tourism have been signed.

6. Meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin (8 July 2015)

After arriving in Ufa for BRICS summit, Prime Minister met President Vladimir Putin and President Xi Jinping of China.

- With President Putin, Prime Minister Modi held a fair amount of discussion on economic issues including issues pertaining to trade, to market access, to investments by each other, to some of the process challenges including liberalization of visa, and a discussion on the progress on the FTA with the Eurasian Economic Zone. The two leaders also did a fairly comprehensive review of India-Russia defence cooperation.

- On the nuclear side, they reviewed the state of the cooperation and discussed the further possibilities in that. There was some discussion on Indo-Russia space cooperation and hydrocarbons.

7. Joint Statement between the Russian Federation and the Republic of India: Shared Trust, New Horizons (December 24, 2015)

At the invitation of the President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, the Prime Minister of the Republic of India, Narendra Modi, paid an official visit to the Russian Federation on 23-24 December 2015 for the bilateral Annual Summit.

Key Points:

- Reflecting their continued emphasis on further enhancing bilateral economic and commercial relations, President Putin and Prime Minister Modi jointly addressed CEOs of leading Russian and Indian companies.
- A number of important agreements in diverse fields of bilateral cooperation, including several commercial agreements between Russian and Indian companies, were signed during the visit.
- Prime Minister Modi addressed the Indian Diaspora in Russia.
- The Leaders expressed satisfaction at continued bilateral exchanges including high-level visits, institutional exchanges and other contacts over the past year that had further strengthened the Russia-India strategic partnership.
- The participation of the President of India Pranab Mukherjee in the celebrations to mark the 70th Anniversary of Russia's Victory in the Great Patriotic War exemplified the mutual solidarity, empathy and goodwill between the two countries.
- On the 70th Anniversary of Russia's Victory in the Great Patriotic War, a contingent of the Indian Armed Forces also attended the commemoration.
- The continuation of parliamentary exchanges, especially the visit of the Speaker of the State Duma of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, Sergey Naryshkin to India in February 2015 for the Russia-India Inter-Parliamentary Commission was noted.
- The two leaders noted on the intensive and effective dialogue between their Ministries, Security Councils and other specialized agencies that took place throughout the 2015.
- The Sides reconfirmed their commitment to realize the target set at the last Annual Summit, to increase annual bilateral trade and investment and emphasized the need for continued facilitation by both the governments.
- In this context, an agreement to reach on liberalization of the travel regime for the businessmen of both States was agreed upon for its effective implementation.
- The outcomes of the twenty first meeting of the Russian-Indian Intergovernmental Commission (IGC) on Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation held in Moscow on October 20, 2015, as well as the decisions of various working groups of the Commission, particularly on trade and economic cooperation, modernization and industrial cooperation was appreciated.
- The joint working group identified several projects of priority investment projects in promising sectors such as oil and gas, 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. Initiation for its early finalization of relevant proposals was encouraged by the two leaders.

- The role of investment funds to facilitate high-technology investments in Russia and India was encouraged.
- Russia's participation as partner country in India Engineering Sourcing Show 2017 was seen as a medium that could impart added momentum to bilateral economic relations.
- The early finalisation of a draft Joint Study Group report to consider the feasibility of a free trade agreement between the Republic of India and the Member States of the Eurasian Economic Union was encouraged.
- The two sides attached great importance to exploring new multi-modal connectivity between their economies to facilitate the movement of bulk goods and commodities as well as trade between the two countries.
- Increased emphasis on implementation of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) was shown during the meeting.
- Both the leaders stressed that the INSTC can play a key role in promoting economic integration in the region stretching from the Indian Ocean to the Baltic Sea by creating new centres of growth as well as joint industrial and infrastructure facilities.
- For the smooth implementation of the Green Corridor between India and Russia, the Customs authorities had created legal mechanisms which will be put into test mode soon.
- Initiatives to promote direct trade in diamonds between Russia and India, including the increased number of Indian resident companies signing long-term rough diamonds supply contracts with PJSC ALROSA from 9 in 2014 to 12 in 2015 were seen.
- The creation of a Special Notified Zone (SNZ) at the Bharat Diamond Bourse and the start of diamond viewing by ALROSA Group on its premises were agreed upon. Promotion of the development of SNZ and its rough diamond auctions mechanism were also agreed.
- Positive outcome of engagements between the phytosanitary and veterinary authorities of both the countries to finalize mutual market access for agricultural and processed food products, including dairy products were appreciated. This is a new and promising area for development and diversification of bilateral trade.
- Identification of the second site in India for additional six nuclear reactor units to be set up in cooperation with Russia was agreed.
- Russia welcomed the interest and involvement of Indian partners with regard to cooperation in joint projects stipulating the possibility of LNG supply to India from JSC NOVATEK project Arctic LNG on the resource base of the fields located on the Gydan Peninsula and partly in the Gulf of Ob.
- The Agreement between Rosneft and ONGC Videsh Limited for acquiring 15% stakes by OVL in Rosneft's Vankorneft Oil fields were welcomed.
- Both sides noted with appreciation the offer made by Rosneft of scholarships to Indian students interested in pursuing courses in the field of Oil and Petroleum in Russia.

- The Sides noted mutual interest in developing cooperation in joint implementation of electric power projects, including hydro, thermal and solar power plants, as well as supply of Russia's electric power equipment to India.
- Decision to establish a Russian-Indian council for organizations to finance cooperation in science, technology and innovation was welcomed.
- As an important measure to boost the effectiveness of cooperation among Russian-Indian research centres, the Sides called for the creation of a Russian-Indian data base of scientific and educational institutions and joint projects.
- The Sides nominated Tomsk State University and the Indian Institute of Technology in Mumbai as coordinators of the initiatives as a "Russia-India Resource Centre".
- Considering Russia's status as a member of the Arctic Council (AC) and India's observer status at this organization since 2013, the Sides emphasized the importance of joint activities in the framework of the Arctic Council. They acknowledged the potential for the development of joint scientific research in the Arctic region, particularly the Russian Scientific Centre on Spitsbergen (Svalbard) archipelago.
- In the education sector, Indian Side highlighted the programme of Global Initiative for Academics Network (GIAN) in this regard and encouraged faculty from various universities in Russia to avail of the opportunities available.
- The Sides called for early conclusion of a Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 2016–2018 between the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of India and confirmed their interest in intensifying cultural cooperation, including between academic and research organizations of the two countries acting in the field of culture and arts.
- Noting the success of the Festival of Indian Culture in Russia in 2015, it was decided to have the Festival of Russian Culture in India in 2016.
- The Sides welcomed the finalized agreement to issue six-month multiple entry tourist visas, based on reciprocity, which would further enhance tourism and people-to-people contacts.
- Russia reaffirmed its support for India's membership at the UNSC.
- They agreed to work together to increase the effectiveness of joint efforts in the SCO framework to counter threats and challenges to security, including those emanating from the territory of Afghanistan, and to enhance economic, cultural and humanitarian cooperation in the region.
- The Sides agreed to work together to promote an open, inclusive and evolutionary regional architecture for security and stability in the Asia Pacific, emphasizing the peaceful settlement of disputes through dialogue, while respecting the diversity of political systems and development choices.
- Both sides agreed to increase cooperation within the framework of the ASEAN Regional Forum and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting Plus and contribute to strengthening the leading mechanisms of practical interaction on identifying ways and means to maintain peace and stability in the Asia Pacific.
- The two leaders agreed that the inclusion of maritime cooperation as a priority area for cooperation in the East Asia Summit (EAS) merits further consideration.

- Russia reiterated its support for India's application to join APEC and committed to work closely with India on this issue.
- The Sides highlighted the importance of respecting the universally recognized principles of international law in the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs), in particular, the UN Charter, the principle of political independence, territorial integrity and sovereign equality of States, non-interference in internal affairs of other States and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including right to privacy.
- Stressing once again that India should fully participate in the development of the norms of international export control regulation, Russia expressed its readiness to support India's aspiration for full membership in the Nuclear Suppliers' Group.
- Russia supported India's interest in full membership in the Wassenaar Arrangement.
- Both Sides expressed serious concern at developments in Syria and Iraq where terrorist groups including Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), the al Nusra Front and other similar groups are operating causing violence.
- Both sides expressed their support to global efforts to fight terrorism and to enhancing international efforts to counter activities of terrorist groups including "foreign terrorist fighters" pursuant to the relevant UNSC resolutions.
- Russia and India voiced their strong support to sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Syria.
- Both sides expressed a common understanding that the internal armed conflict in Syria cannot be solved by the use of force, but rather through political and diplomatic means – through a substantive intra-Syrian dialogue without preconditions or external interference and based on varied agreements such as the Geneva Communiqué of June 30, 2012 etc.
- Both sides emphasised the importance of national reconciliation and unity in Iraq by creation of an inclusive state system and strengthening of national democratic institutions through capacity building.
- Russia and India welcome the progress achieved in the area of security, including the maintenance of the ceasefire regime in south-eastern Ukraine, as well as the signing of the Minsk agreement.
- To counter the spread of narcotic substances, importance of cooperation within the frameworks of the SCO, BRICS and the Paris Pact initiatives were emphasised.

MoUs/Agreements/Contracts

During the visit, 10 MoUs and five agreements were signed between the two leaders of India and Russia. Completion of a contract was confirmed during the Summit. They were:

- Protocol amending the agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on simplification of requirements for mutual travels of certain categories of citizens of the two countries 21 December 2010.
- Protocol amending agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on mutual travel regime for holders of Diplomatic & Official Passports of 3 December 2004.

- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of the Russian Federation on Cooperation in the field of Helicopter Engineering.
- Plan for Cooperation between the Federal Customs Service of the Central Board of Excise and Customs, Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, Republic of India and the Russian Federation for combating Customs violations in 2015 – 2017.
- Programme of Action Agreed Between The Department of Atomic Energy of India And The Russian State Atomic Energy Corporation "Rosatom" for Localization of Manufacturing in India for Russian-Designed Nuclear Reactor Units.
- MoU between the Ministry of Railways of the Republic of India and the Joint Stock Company "Russian Railways on technical cooperation in railway sector.
- MoU between Solar Energy Corporation of India and Russian Energy Agency regarding construction of solar energy plants in the Republic of India.
- MoU for cooperation between HEC & CNIITMASH for development of Centre of Excellence for heavy engineering design at HEC.
- MoU for cooperation between HEC & CNIITMASH for upgradation and modernization of HEC's manufacturing facilities
- MoU between Prasar Bharati and Digital Television Russia on Cooperation in the field of Broadcasting.
- Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding between Centre for Development of Advance Computing (C-DAC), Indian Institute of Science Bangalore (IISc) and Lomonosov Moscow State University (MSU).
- Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding between Centre for Development of Advance Computing (C-DAC), OJSC "GLONASS" and GLONASS Union.
- MoU in the field of investment cooperation in the Russian Far East between The Tata Power Company Limited and Ministry for Development of the Russian Far East
- MoU for Cooperation for geologic survey, exploration and production of hydrocarbons onshore and on the continental shelf of the Russian Federation
- Confirmation of successful completion of the first stage pre-completion actions in relation to the creation of a Joint Venture in JSC VankorNeft
- MoU for Cooperation for geologic survey, exploration and production of hydrocarbons onshore the Russian Federation between Rosneft oil company, Oil India Limited and Indian Oil Corporation Limited.

Media Statement by Prime Minister during his visit to Russia (December 24, 2015)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his visit to Russia said that he sees:

- Russia as a significant partner in India's economic transformation and in shaping a balanced, stable, inclusive and a multi-polar world.
- Initiative with Russia through the Inter-Governmental Agreement on manufacture of Kamov 226 helicopter in India as the first project for a major defence platform under the Make in India mission was praised.
- India and Russia's membership of BRICS, East Asia Summit, G20 and now Shanghai Cooperation Organisation has given the Indo-Russia partnership a global character. It is

particularly important in the arc from Eurasia to Asia Pacific, including in Central Asia and Afghanistan.

V. The United States of America

1. The President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, accompanied by First Lady Michelle Obama, visited India from January 25-27, 2015 as the Chief Guest at India's 66th Republic Day celebrations, the first U.S. President to grace this historic event.

- President Obama and Prime Minister Modi elevated the bilateral relationship through their endorsement of a new India-U.S. Delhi Declaration of Friendship. This Declaration proclaims a higher level of trust and coordination that will continue to draw the two Governments and people together across the spectrum of human endeavour for a better world. The Declaration establishes secure hotlines between the Prime Minister of India and the President of the United States of America and National Security Advisors.
- India and the US signed the US-India Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region. The strategic vision supports regional economic integration, and promotes accelerated infrastructure connectivity and economic development in a manner that links South, Southeast and Central Asia, enhancing energy transmission and encouraging free trade and greater people-to-people linkages. The Vision document affirms the importance of safeguarding maritime security and ensuring freedom of navigation and over flight throughout the region, especially in the South China Sea and opposes terrorism, piracy, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction within or from the region.
- The two leaders, in the Joint Statement, pledged to translate their commitment of “Chalen Saath Saath”: “Forward Together We Go” of September 2015 into action through “Sanjha Prayaas; Sab Ka Vikaas”: “Shared Effort; Progress for All”.
- Prime Minister Modi and President Obama jointly appreciated the significant efforts undertaken by both sides in recent months to re-energize the strategic partnership, and affirmed expanding the substantive underpinnings of Indo-US diversified bilateral strategic partnership including through expanded strategic consultations, stronger defence, security, Clean Energy Goal and Cooperation, Climate Change and economic cooperation.
- The Joint Statement mentioned that the leaders agreed to expand their efforts to assist other developing countries and address global development challenges for the benefit of the wider region and the world.
- Both leaders appreciated the focused action and accomplishments by both sides on the decisions taken during the Summit in September 2014 and in this regard, they welcomed:
 - Signing of **three MoUs** between the State Governments of Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency on 25 January 2015 to develop Vishakhapatnam, Allahabad, and Ajmer as Smart Cities with the participation of U.S. industries;
 - Signing of a framework on and inauguration of the India-U.S. Investment Initiative in Washington on 12-15 January 2015 to jointly cooperate on facilitating capital market development conducive to financing investment;

creating an environment that encourages investment in various sectors in India; and working to overcome any obstacles to such investment;

- Signing of the Statement of Cooperation for Supervisory Cooperation and Exchange of Supervisory Information between the Reserve Bank of India and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), Federal Reserve System, and Office of the Comptroller of Currency (OCC);
- Signing of the Joint Declaration of Intent to advance implementation of the Digital India programme and further bilateral commercial ICT cooperation on January 23, 2015;
- On September 30, 2014, signing of an implementing agreement between the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to conduct the joint NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR) mission;
- Launching of a Knowledge Partnership in defence studies expressing a shared desire to pursue collaborative activities between the United States and Indian National Defence Universities and Continuing bilateral engagement on the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI), including the January 22, 2015 agreement in principle to pursue co-production and co-development of four pathfinder projects, form a working group to explore aircraft carrier technology sharing and design, and explore possible cooperation on development of jet engine technology.

2. Visit of External Affairs Minister to USA, September 2015

- United States Secretary of State, John Kerry and Secretary of Commerce, Penny Pritzker, welcomed India's External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj and Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Nirmala Sitharaman to the first U.S.-India Strategic and Commercial Dialogue held in Washington DC on 22 September 2015. The Minister of External Affairs, Sushma Swaraj and Secretary of State John Kerry issued U.S.-India Joint Declaration on Combating Terrorism on September 22, 2015. Building on successful cooperation in Asia, both the sides welcomed continued cooperation under the Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region agreed by President Obama and Prime Minister Modi.
- The BRICS Ministers of Foreign Affairs held their regular meeting on September 29, 2015, in New York on the margins of the annual session of the UN General Assembly.
- On September 29, 2015, the Secretary of State John Kerry hosted the inaugural U.S.-India-Japan Trilateral Ministerial dialogue with External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj and Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida on the sidelines of the 70th UN General Assembly in New York. They underscored the importance of international law and peaceful settlement of disputes; freedom of navigation and over flight; and unimpeded lawful commerce, including in the South China Sea. They reiterated their support for ASEAN centrality in the multilateral political and security architecture in the Asia-Pacific region.
- Speech by External Affairs Minister Smt. Sushma Swaraj at the UNGA – 'The UN at 70: A Time for Action'. The Minister highlighted that the reform of the Security Council

remains to be the most urgent and pressing need. The UN needs to include more developing nations in the decision making structures of the Security Council.

3. Joint Statement on First U.S.-India Strategic and Commercial Dialogue Washington D.C. September 22, 2015

The first U.S.-India Strategic and Commercial Dialogue was held in Washington on September 22, 2015. The U.S. affirmed its support for India's membership in the Missile Technology Control Regime at its upcoming plenary, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, and in the other global non-proliferation export control regimes. India and US agreed to launch new High Level Consultations led by the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State and India's Foreign Secretary. They launched a joint work stream on ease of doing business. Both countries looked forward to the early signing of a new five year MoU on energy security, clean energy and climate change.

4. U.S.-India Joint Declaration on Combating Terrorism

U.S.-India Joint Declaration on Combating Terrorism issued on 22 September, 2015. India's Minister of External Affairs Sushma Swaraj and US Secretary of State John Kerry on the occasion of the inaugural India-U.S. Strategic and Commercial Dialogue reaffirmed the commitment of India and the United States to combat terrorism in all its forms. They recognize the serious threat posed by ISIL/Da'esh to global security and affirm efforts to degrade and defeat this threat in accordance with the provisions of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 2178, 2170 and 2199.

5. Visit of Prime Minister to USA September 23-28, 2015

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the US from 23 to 28 September 2015. He addressed the UN General Assembly and interacted with a number of leaders from the world.

- On 25 September 2015, Prime Minister Modi delivered his speech at the UN Sustainable Development Summit. He said that nations have a national responsibility for sustainable development. They also need policy space. Much of India's development agenda is mirrored in the Sustainable Development Goals and the country is focusing on the basics: housing, power, water and sanitation for all.
- On 26 September 2015, Prime Minister Modi invited Dilma Rousseff, President of Brazil, Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany and Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, for a G-4 meeting in New York. The G-4 leaders stressed that a more representative, legitimate and effective Security Council is needed. The leaders emphasised that the G-4 countries are legitimate candidates for permanent membership in an expanded and reformed Council and supported each other's candidature.
- On September 27, 2015 Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered a speech at the Digital India Dinner in San Jose. He said that the government is trying to alleviate poverty by using the power of networks and mobile phones to launch a new era of empowerment and inclusion. About 180 million new bank accounts in a few months, direct transfer of benefits to the poor, insurance within the reach of the poorest and pension for the sunset years for all, are such initiatives and visions of Digital India.
- On 27 September 2015, Prime Minister Modi made a speech at India-US Start-up Konnect 2015 in San Jose. He highlighted the importance of start-ups in today's world

and said that India's own ecosystem of start-ups is evolving rapidly. It is driven by the energy, enterprise and innovation of its youth. He also launched the BHARAT Fund – which stands not just for India, but also for Better Health, Agriculture, Renewables and Technologies.

- On 29 September 2015, Prime Minister Modi made a statement at the Summit on Peacekeeping in New York. Over 180,000 Indian troops have participated in UN peacekeeping missions – more than from any other country. India was the first country to contribute a Female Formed Police Unit to the UN Mission in Liberia. The Prime Minister said that the troop contributing countries do not have a role in the decision-making process and have no adequate representation in senior management and as force commanders.
- Prime Minister Modi's last two engagements in New York before he left for New Delhi were bilateral meetings with the President of Palestine Mahmoud Abbas, and Enrique Peña Nieto, the President of Mexico.

10. Multilateral Institutions

I. ASEAN-India Summit

1. Opening statement by Prime Minister at 13th ASEAN-India Summit in Kuala Lumpur (November 21, 2015)

The Prime Minister stated that trade increased to about 76.5 billion U.S. dollars in 2014-15; and, so has investment in both directions. ASEAN remains the largest investment partner – both for inward and outward flows. Science, technology and innovation constitute a vital pillar of ASEAN-India cooperation and support their economic partnership. The government will enlarge the ASEAN-India Science and Technology Development Fund from the current one million U.S. dollars to 5 million U.S. dollars and also intends to set up an ASEAN-India Innovation Platform to facilitate commercialization of low cost technologies, technology transfer and collaborative R&D projects. India also offers ASEAN its indigenously developed GPS Aided Geo Augmented Navigation or GAGAN services, which provides advanced navigation and location assistance and information facilities. And also proposes that India and ASEAN cooperate in sustainable development of Ocean or Blue Economy.

II. BASIC 20th Ministerial Meeting (27-28 June 2015)

The 20th BASIC Ministerial Meeting on Climate Change was held in the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations in New York on 27-28 June 2015. The meeting was attended by Izabella Teixeira, Minister for the Environment of Brazil, Edna Molewa, Minister of Environmental Affairs of South Africa, Xie Zhenhua, Special Representative for Climate Change Affairs of China and Ravi S. Prasad, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change of India. Ministers reaffirmed that the process and outcome of the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) should be guided by and be in full accordance with all principles and provisions of the UNFCCC. Ministers underscored the need for the Paris Agreement to address in a balanced manner all six elements identified in the Durban mandate – mitigation, adaptation, finance, capacity-building, technology development and transfer, transparency of action and support. In this regard, they stressed that an ambitious outcome of the ADP should not focus solely on mitigation, but should also address the other elements in a balanced and comprehensive manner.

III. Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN)

1. The second meetings of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Sub-Regional Cooperation between Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) on Water Resources Management and Power/Hydropower and on Connectivity and Transit

The second meeting of the JWG on Sub-Regional Cooperation between Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) on Water Resources Management and Power/Hydropower and on Connectivity and Transit was held in New Delhi on 30-31 January 2015.

- It discussed the scope for power trade and inter-grid connectivity between the four countries as well as potential for closer cooperation in future power projects.
- It was agreed that joint efforts would be made to explore harnessing of water resources including hydropower and power from other sources available in the sub-region.

- The JWG was also agreed to exchange lists of potential future hydropower/power projects to be undertaken jointly involving at least three countries on equitable basis.
- The JWG on Connectivity and Transit reviewed existing arrangements. It agreed on the significance of BBIN agreements to enable movement of motor vehicles and railways.
- JWG delegation exchanged ideas on potential cargo (both roads and railways) and bus routes, involving at least three countries in addition to the existing bilateral routes and also agreed to share suggestions in this regard. It was also decided to explore the possibility of using multi-modal transport to meet commercial as well as tourist needs.

IV. Brazil, Russia, India and South Africa (BRICS) (November 15, 2015)

1. Opening Remarks by Prime Minister at BRICS Leaders' Meeting, Antalya, Turkey (November 15, 2015)

India attaches the highest importance to BRICS. It is honoured to assume the Chairmanship of BRICS from 1 February 2016 and build on the great work done by other Members. The theme of India's BRICS Chairmanship will be "Building Responsive, Inclusive and Collective Solutions" which, in short, will be 'BRICS'. It aptly describes the ethos of the group.

2. BRICS Summit (9 July 2015)

Ten specific proposals, called as Dus Kadam, India has made. As India will be the next host of BRICS summit and will be the chair from February 2016 to December 2016. India will try to carry forward these initiatives and announcements that were made by the Prime Minister. These proposals are:

1. BRICS trade fair during 2016.
2. BRICS Railway Research Centre
3. Cooperation among Supreme Audit Institutions,
4. A BRICS Digital Initiative
5. The BRICS Agricultural Research Centre
6. A State and Local Governments Forum
7. Cooperation among cities in field of urbanization
8. A BRICS Sports Council and an annual BRICS Sports Meet
9. The first major project of the New Development Bank should be in the field of clean energy
10. A BRICS Film Festival

The declaration issued at this occasion includes 77 paragraphs which covers a variety of subjects, most importantly:

- A good paragraph on cooperation in the United Nations, specifically in regard to reform of the UN Security Council.
- There is a set of paragraphs on the subject of cooperation against terrorism. There is a reflection of cooperation among BRICS members in the efforts against the drugs problem.
- Several paragraphs relating to cooperation in the ICT area.
- There is a reflection in this declaration on the importance of IMF reform and reform of the World Bank governance structures.

- There is a reference to cooperation in WTO, cooperation on the subject of climate change.

3. Opening Remarks by Prime Minister at BRICS Leaders' Meeting, Antalya, Turkey (November 15, 2015)

India attaches the highest importance to BRICS. It is honoured to assume the Chairmanship of BRICS from 1 February 2016 and build on the great work done by other Members. The theme of India's BRICS Chairmanship will be "Building Responsive, Inclusive and Collective Solutions" which, in short, will be 'BRICS'. It aptly describes the ethos of the group.

V. Community of Democracies, 8th Ministerial Conference

On 27 July 2015, India as the member of the Governing Council of the Community of Democracies participated its 8th Ministerial Conference which was hosted by El Salvador as the current President of the Group. Gen. V.K. Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs, led the Indian delegation and spoke at the plenary session along with Foreign Ministers of Guatemala, Mongolia, Mali, and El Salvador.

VI. COP 21

1. Statement by Prime Minister at COP 21 Plenary in Paris (November 30, 2015)

- By 2030, India will reduce emissions intensity per unit GDP by 33-35% per cent of 2005 levels and 40 per cent of India's installed capacity will be from non-fossil fuels. India will achieve it by expanding renewable energy - for, example, by adding 175 Gigawatts of renewable generation by 2022 and enlarging India's forest cover to absorb at least 2.5 billion tonnes worth of carbon dioxide.
- The principles of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities must remain the bedrock of India's collective enterprise across all areas - mitigation, adaptation and means for implementation. Anything else would be morally wrong.

VII. East Asia Summit (EAS)

1. EAS Conference on Maritime Security and Cooperation, 9-10 November 2015

The conference discussed, analysed and put together the various components that would help India and the other East Asian nations to strengthen cooperation among EAS participating countries in the maritime domain, including maritime security and a more cooperative and integrated future for the region through overall development of the ocean-based blue economy.

2. Remarks by Prime Minister at the 10th East Asia Summit in Kuala Lumpur (November 22, 2015)

The Prime Minister stated that the East Asia Summit remains to be the key forum for shaping the collective future of the region." He highlighted five points: First, East Asia Summit must continue to support the evolution of an inclusive, balanced, transparent and open regional architecture for security and cooperation. Second, India shares with ASEAN a commitment to freedom of navigation, over flight and unimpeded commerce, in accordance with accepted principles of international law, including the 1982 UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Third, stronger commitment and closer cooperation on cyber security, outer space and non-proliferation. Four, a balanced and broad-based

Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership. Five, development cooperation is at the heart of the East Asia Summit. India will continue to support the efforts of its partner countries.

VIII. G-20

1. G-20 meeting (November 15-16 2015)

- In his meeting with President of Turkey, Erdogan, Prime Minister Modi, sought Turkish support for India's membership of the four export control regimes. United Nations Security Council reform also came up for discussion, as also did the threat posed by terrorism. In this context, both sides agreed to look at counterterrorism cooperation.
- In his meeting with Prime Minister of Spain, Mariano Rajoy, the discussion focussed on the issue of terrorism. Including security, other areas of cooperation were also highlighted by India, specifically to the railway sector. India wants to upgrade its existing network, improve and increase the speed of the existing rail network and Spain has the requisite technologies, their rail network is considered to be one of the best and most efficient in Europe. The other sector Prime Minister Modi highlighted was defence manufacturing and also marine security.
- In his meeting with Prime Minister of Australia Turnbull, the focus was on cooperation on the finance and banking sector. This was discussed in view of the Minister for Finance, Arun Jaitley's proposed visit to Australia in March 2016.

IX. India-Africa Forum Summit (26-29 October 2015)

The Third India-Africa Forum Summit held in New Delhi (October 26-29) unveiled a "dynamic and transformative agenda" of mutual empowerment and mutual resurgence that will bring India and Africa closer in years and decades to come. It brought together the leaders and representatives of all 54 countries of the dynamic African countries to New Delhi for first time for this landmark summit meeting that set to upscale and transform the multi-faceted India-Africa partnership. This was by far the biggest gathering of African leaders on the Indian soil and showcased multiple dimensions of the India-Africa relationship that is pivoted around trade, training, technology, capacity building and development partnership. In a clear reaffirmation of their unstinting commitment to building lasting partnerships with India, 41 countries were represented at the level of heads of state/government.

The summit kicked off with a resplendent multi-media cultural programme, which included 'Chants of Faith' seeking blessings for the revitalization of India and Africa Vedic incantations mingled with African song Kealebog, celebrating India's diversity and Africa's awakening. The show culminated with One Beat, One Rhythm and One Vision of a radiant future. The IAFS-III brought out vividly an increasing convergence of interests, positions, values and a burgeoning web of win-win partnership between the two growth poles of the world to address a host of cross-cutting global issues, ranging from the UN Security Council reforms, piracy/maritime security and terrorism to multilateral trade negotiations, climate change and sustainable development.

The vision document entitled 'Delhi Declaration 2015' and 'India-Africa framework for Strategic Cooperation' outlined a multi-faceted strategy for dovetailing the India growth story with Africa's Agenda 2063 to spur mutual resurgence.

1. Statement by External Affairs Minister at Ministerial Meeting of Third India-Africa Forum Summit (October 27, 2015). The key highlights are:

- India is committed to a people-centric approach which focuses on capacity building, human resource development, technical and financial support for mutually agreed priorities. In the past seven years, a total of 40,000 scholarships have been provided by Government of India to Africa. Since the Second India-Africa Forum Summit in 2011 alone, the figure stands at over 24,000 scholarships. India's scholarships and training programmes have spanned more than 300 training programmes in over 60 reputed institutions.
- Higher education scholarships have been given at various universities and distance learning has been facilitated through the Pan Africa e-network. Through these programmes, India has endeavoured to develop African capabilities in areas ranging from marine hydrography to renewable energy, and from rural development to cyber security.
- The vehicle of Lines of Credit has been used to foster economic and infrastructural development in Africa. In the last decade, a total of almost 9 billion US dollars in concessional credit has been approved for nearly 140 projects in more than 40 African countries and ECOWAS by Government of India. So far, nearly 60 projects have been completed. The projects range from agriculture in Burkina Faso and Madagascar to road transportation in CAR and Senegal; and from railway rehabilitation in Angola and Benin to sugar industry rehabilitation in Ethiopia and Sudan.
- India and Africa are the most rapidly growing developing economies in the world. Their bilateral trade has multiplied 20 times in the last 15 years and doubled in the last five years to reach nearly 72 billion US dollars in 2014-2015.
- India was among the first emerging economies to unilaterally put in place a duty-free market access scheme for LDCs. In 2014 we expanded this scheme to now include 98% of tariff lines. The benefits of this scheme extend to 34 African countries to increase their exports to India.
- There is a strong on-going cooperation through training and negotiations on global trade issues, including at WTO to protect and promote the legitimate interests of developing countries, especially the LDCs.
- India watched with great interest the adoption of the Agenda 2063 in June this year by the African Union, which provides a clear roadmap for the future. Similar and shared experiences and struggles of India and Africa translate into similar scale of challenges and concerns, both at the level of national priorities and collective interests in an increasingly globalised world.
- Providing universal access to primary healthcare and battling diseases are particularly urgent priorities for both India and Africa. Over the last several years, India has been an active participant of the international efforts to meet the challenges posed by pandemics, including Ebola and HIV/AIDS in Africa. The Pan African e-Network project links a large number of super-speciality hospitals in both India and Africa.
- India's cooperation with Africa extends to other areas as well. These include agriculture, education and skills development, energy and infrastructure, science & technology among others. Blue or Ocean economy, maritime security and counter-terrorism are also areas where more focus is needed.

2. Inaugural Remarks by External Affairs Minister at the 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit, October 29, 2015.

- The gathering of African Heads of States and Heads of Governments is like a family reunion. India and Africa are linked by the Indian Ocean and are joined by 2.7 million strong Indian Diaspora in Africa, which is contributing actively to the economic development of its adopted homeland.
- India has always stood for and with Africa. The relationship is forged in the crucible of the shared struggle against imperialism, colonialism, racial discrimination and apartheid. That era is now behind us, but the solidarity engendered by that shared struggle continues.
- The modern partnership rests on the pillars of economic growth, development and empowerment and is a consolidation of their engagement at various levels – bilateral, regional and pan African.
- The longstanding and multifaceted India-Africa development partnership is based on the principles of equality, friendship and solidarity. It represents one of the finest examples of South-South cooperation.
- The 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit will chart a bold new course for our future cooperation.

3. Speech by External Affairs Minister at the India-Africa Business Forum organised by ASSOCHAM, CII and FICCI, October 28, 2015. The key highlights are:

- India-Africa Business Forum 2015, jointly organized by the apex business chambers of India is a laudable initiative towards bringing together leaders from government and business from both India and Africa as part of our continuing efforts to widen and deepen our trade and investment ties. I warmly welcome all participants, especially those who have travelled from different parts of Africa to our country.
- Business and related economic activity is a major driver of India's close and friendly ties with Africa. It is therefore, most appropriate that this Business Forum has been organized as lead event culminating in the Third India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-III).
- Trade and economic exchanges between India and Africa are a vital component of India's all-round relationship with this rising continent. The total trade figure of about US \$72 billion in 2014-15, though impressive, since it signifies more than a ten-fold growth in a decade, is still below its potential considering the size of India and Africa, and a combined population of over 2.3 billion people, representing a huge consuming market for all sorts of goods and services.
- India has had a presence in Africa for several centuries. The business acumen of the Indian Diaspora who have made Africa their home has played a significant role in the growth and development story across the continent. At present, it is estimated that investments of the order of US\$32-35 billion are spread all across Africa in multiple sectors of agriculture, manufacturing and services. As India's economy has grown and matured, considerable amount of capital generated in India seeks new destinations outside the country, including in Africa.

4. Speech by Prime Minister at the Inaugural Ceremony of the Third India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi, October 29, 2015

- Today, the heart beat of 1.25 billion Indians and 1.25 billion Africans are in rhythm. India and Africa are among the world's oldest civilisations and are each a vibrant mosaic of languages, religions and cultures.
- India and Africa have spoken in one voice in the world; have formed a partnership for prosperity; have stood together under blue helmets to keep peace and have fought together against hunger and disease.
- When looked at the future, something precious that unites both is the youth. Two-thirds of India and two-thirds of Africa is under the age of 35 years. And, if the future belongs to the youth, then this century has to be shaped and build by them.
- Many successful examples of economic reforms, infrastructure development and sustainable use of resources are seen turning adrift economies into dynamic ones. Four hundred thousand new businesses were registered in Africa in 2013; and, mobile telephone at present reaches 95% of the population in many places.
- Africa is now joining the global mainstream of innovation. The mobile banking of M-Pesa, the healthcare innovation of MedAfrica, or the agriculture innovation of AgriManagr and Kilimo Salama, are using mobile and digital technology to transform lives in Africa.
- Across its magnificent landscape, Africa is setting standards in wildlife conservation and eco-tourism. Africa's sports, art and music delight the entire world.
- Africa, like the rest of the developing world, has its development challenges. Like others in the world, it has its own concerns of security and stability, especially from terrorism and extremism. But African leadership and the African people would rise to those challenges.
- In less than a decade, trade with Africa has more than doubled to over 70 billion dollars. India is now a major source of business investments in Africa. Today, 34 African countries enjoy duty free access to the Indian market.
- India has committed 7.4 billion dollars in concessional credit and 1.2 billion dollars in grant since the first India-Africa Summit in 2008. It is creating 100 capacity building institutions, and developing infrastructure, public transport, clean energy, irrigation, agriculture and manufacturing capacity across Africa. In the last three years alone, nearly 25,000 young Africans have been trained and educated in India. They are the 25,000 new links between us.
- India will make available our space assets and technology and will use the possibilities of digital technology to transform development, public services, governance, disaster response, resource management and quality of life. India will expand and extend the Pan Africa E-Network, conceived by late President APJ Abdul Kalam, which links 48 African countries to India and to each other. This will also help set up your Pan Africa Virtual University.
- Development of human capital in every walk of life will be at the heart of India – Africa partnership.
- Technology will be a strong foundation of our partnership.
- India will help develop Africa's agriculture sector. Africa has 60% of the world's arable land reserves, and just 10% of the global output. Agriculture in Africa can drive the continent's march to prosperity, and also support global food security.

- India's expertise in healthcare and affordable medicines can offer new hope in the fight against many diseases; and give a newborn a better chance to survive. India will also collaborate to develop Indian and African treasures of traditional knowledge and medicines.
- India will make available its space assets and technology. It will use the possibilities of digital technology to transform development, public services, governance, disaster response, resource management and quality of life. It will expand and extend the Pan Africa E-Network, conceived by late President APJ Abdul Kalam, which links 48 African countries to India and to each other. This will also help set up Pan Africa Virtual University
- India will cooperate for sustainable development of Blue Economy that will become important future drivers of mutual prosperity.
- India and Africa are making enormous efforts with their modest resources to combat climate change. For India, 175 Gigawatts of additional renewable energy capacity by 2022 and reduction in emission intensity by 33-35% by 2030 are just two aspects of its efforts
Both sides will also deepen India-Africa partnership on clean energy, sustainable habitats, public transport and climate resilient agriculture.
- When the world meets in Paris in December, a comprehensive and concrete outcome that is based on the well established principles in the UN Convention on Climate Change is expected to be seen.
- India also want to see a genuine global public partnership that makes clean energy affordable; provide finance and technology to developing countries to access it; and the means to adapt to the impact of climate change.
- African countries are invited to join an alliance of solar-rich countries that has been proposed to launch in Paris on November 30 at the time of COP-21 meeting. The goal is to make solar energy an integral part of life and reach it to the most unconnected villages and communities.
- At Nairobi Ministerial of the WTO in December, it must be ensured that the Doha Development Agenda of 2001 is not closed without achieving these fundamental objectives.
- A permanent solution is needed on public stockholding for food security and special safeguard mechanism in agriculture for the developing countries.
- India advocates reforms in global institutions. This is a world of free nations and awakened aspirations. Institutions cannot be representative of world, if they do not give voice to Africa, with more than a quarter of UN members, or the world's largest democracy with one-sixth of humanity. That is why India and Africa must speak in one voice for reforms of the United Nations, including its Security Council.
- To add strength to the partnership, India will offer concessional credit of 10 billion U.S. dollars over the next five years. This will be in addition to the ongoing credit programme.
- India will also offer a grant assistance of 600 million U.S. dollars. This will include an India-Africa Development Fund of 100 million U.S. dollars and an India-Africa Health Fund of 10 million U.S. dollars. It will also include 50,000 scholarships in India over the

next five years. And, it will support the expansion of the Pan Africa E-Network and institutions of skilling, training and learning across Africa.

- When it comes to security, distance no longer insulates one from each other.
- That is why cooperation needs to be deepened in maritime security and hydrography, and countering terrorism and extremism; and, why there is a need to have a UN Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism.
- India will also provide support for Africa Union's peacekeeping efforts. And, it will train African peacekeepers in India and Africa. India and Africa must also have a stronger voice in decisions on UN Peacekeeping Missions.

5. Prime Minister's Closing Remarks at India-Africa Forum Summit 2015 in New Delhi, October 29, 2015

- This has been a truly historic day. India had the opportunity to listen to the whole of Africa. The first two Summits were limited to a few countries on the basis of the Banjul formula.
- India will increase focus on using technology to support Africa's development to transform governance, empower citizens, impart scale and speed to development, improve services, increase access to health and education, design products that are affordable for the poor, customize services to the needs of specific groups and build a more sustainable future for our planet.
- High priority will be given to increase trade and investment flows between India and Africa. Trade will be made more balanced. Africa's access to the Indian market will be facilitated. Full and effective implementation of the duty free access extended to 34 countries will be ensured.
- Cooperation and collaboration need to be intensified to seek reforms of the United Nations; achieve our shared goals in global trade; build a global partnership for the Development Agenda 2030 and, pursue our expectations from the Paris Meet on climate change. A world shaped in their vision and aspirations will give us each a better chance to succeed.

6. Media Briefing by Official Spokesperson, October 30, 2015

- The Prime Minister's first bilateral meeting was with His Majesty King Mohammed VI, the King of Morocco. In regard to economic issues, he said Morocco was very attractive for institutional investors. It also had a very large sovereign wealth fund. The Prime Minister outlined some of the initiatives the Government had taken to attract more FDI and sovereign wealth funds including the provision of infrastructure bonds.
- He said that India needed phosphate for fertilizers and Morocco had an abundance of phosphate, so cooperation in this area would be a win-win partnership. His Majesty suggested the formation of a high level joint commission to take bilateral relations to a new level. The Prime Minister totally agreed with this suggestion.
- The Prime Minister's next meeting was with Dr. Hage Geingob, the President of the Republic of Namibia. Discussions focused on defence, energy and agriculture. The Prime Minister said that India's agriculturists would definitely consider taking up projects in

Namibia. There was also a discussion on UN Security Council reform with the President of Namibia saying that powerful countries like India should be in the Security Council.

- The Prime Minister's third meeting was with Mr. Abdel Fattah el-Sisi the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt. This was the second meeting in two months. They had last met on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly Session in New York in September. President Sisi said that Egypt would welcome Indian investment and more joint ventures. He referred to the new Suez Canal as a complete corridor of integrated development and said that numerous industrial zones in Egypt would be very attractive to Indian businesses. He sought closer cooperation with India in the political, economic, security and defence fields. The Prime Minister said India could also assist in agriculture, human resources development, animal husbandry and dairy.
- Prime Minister met the President of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania Mr. Mohammed bin Abdul Aziz who thanked the Government of India for funding projects in his country relating to milk factory, drilling for water wells, rural electrification and clean energy. He welcomed Prime Minister's initiative towards promoting use of solar and clean energy. The Prime Minister invited him to join the solar alliance that he will launch in Paris on the sidelines of the COP-21. Mr. Aziz also sought to learn from India's green revolution in the area of agriculture. Finally, Mauritania said that it would be opening a Mission shortly in New Delhi and he requested that India should try and set up a similar resident Mission in Mauritania.
- The Prime Minister had meeting with the President of the Republic of Mali Mr. Ibrahim Boubacar Keita thanked the Prime Minister for India's development assistance and lines of credit. Mr Keita sought increased assistance for reconstruction and growth of Mali which has been badly affected by terrorist activities. He sought India's assistance in counter-terrorism. Prime Minister commended Malian efforts to fight terror and to steer the country towards increased growth and offered India's full assistance. The President of Mali said that he would like to return to India on a full bilateral visit. He also invited the Prime Minister to visit Mali and said that when he comes, he would specially take him to Timbuktu which is a cultural heritage site and which the terrorists have wanted to blow up.
- Prime minister met the Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Mr. Hailemariam Desalegn. Mr Desalegn said Ethiopia has emulated Indian democracy and federalism and entire generations of Ethiopians have been taught by Indian teachers. In terms of the modern partnership, he referred to the 150 Indian companies who are currently active in Ethiopia and he said he wanted more. He sought India's assistance in capacity building agro-processing, pharma and IT. He also invited Indian investors to take advantage of the huge arable land available in Ethiopia for pulses and oilseed production. Prime Minister said that he would send an expert team to visit Ethiopia.
- Prime Minister had meeting with the Vice President of the Republic of Angola Manuel Domingos Vicente who referred to the deep historical times and India's support for Angola's independence. He sought India's assistance in agriculture, IT, renewable energy, traditional energy, medicine, pharma and other areas. Discussions also focused on cooperation in the oil sector, particularly as the Vice President of Angola was the CEO of Sonangol for 12 years.

- Prime Minister had meeting with the Vice President of Tanzania Mr. Mohamed Gharib Bilal. He congratulated him on the election victory in the polls which had just been held, in fact on the day when the Vice President was here. The Vice President sought further lines of credit for a railway line to ease traffic congestion in Dar es Salaam and he said we could do this under PPP model. He also sought industrial incubators. Prime Minister informed him that NSIC would be visiting Tanzania in November for a feasibility study on this particular subject. Tanzania also sought cooperation in the fight against terrorism. The Vice President said that the menace of piracy had largely been tackled but the threat of terrorism loomed large. Prime Minister said that he would be happy to provide training, technology and intelligence sharing in this particular field.
- Prime Minister had a very warm meeting with the President of Federal Republic of Somalia Mr. Hasan Sheikh Mahmood who said very proudly that his is a living example of India-Africa cooperation. The President thanked India for its peacekeeping efforts and for the role of the Indian Navy which had succeeded in controlling piracy of the coast of Somalia. He said terrorism in Somalia was now subsiding and the task of nation building had begun. However he also referred to the challenges, such as recurrent energy shortage and closure of more than 200 factories. Al Shabab which had flourished in ungovernable places was now in retreat, he said, as the government was setting up federal entities in those areas. He also referred to the trade relationship with India.
- Prime Minister's last bilateral meeting was with the President of the Union of the Comoros Dr. Ikililou Dhoinini. There was a discussion on the USD 42 million line of credit offered by India to Comoros which is being used for setting up an 18 MW power plant in the capital city of Moroni. The President requested more scholarships particularly for Science subjects. Prime Minister said that Comoros was a maritime neighbour and we were ready to assist in all sectors. Many Comoros nationals were coming to India for medical treatment.

7. Bilateral documents adopted at the IAFS-III

Two documents – Delhi Declaration 2015 and India-Africa Framework for Strategic Cooperation – were adopted on the closing day of the four day Summit, which reflected on the political, security and socio-economic issues.

- The Delhi Declaration 2015 identifies issues of bilateral, regional and international interests and priorities to India and Africa, and spells out the common vision, aspirations, expectations, and the initiatives. The Declaration comprises 34 points covering a range of areas of cooperation that both regions should work together.
- The India-Africa Framework for Strategic Cooperation delineates in detail the shared core priorities and challenges relating to general and specific areas of cooperation and the proposals agreed to address those. It outlines a number of new initiatives to intensify cooperation in the existing areas of cooperation and also identifies some new areas of collaboration which holds tremendous potential for future.
- Some of the areas of cooperation both sides agreed to work together are UN Security Council Reforms, climate change, defence & security, balanced trade relations, renewable energy, blue economy, technology & innovation, health and education.

X. Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

1. Country Statement by Minister of State for External Affairs at 15th Meeting of IORA Council of Ministers (COM) in Padang, Indonesia, October 23, 2015

India will adopt a 10-point approach between the 15th IORA Ministerial until the next Ministerial in Indonesia. The 10 proposals which India will pursue include:

- India proposes to set up a Centre on Medicinal Plants as a Specialized IORA body. The proposed Centre will work closely with the Regional Centre for Science & Technology Transfer. India will shortly propose an MoU in this regard for consideration of all partners.
- India is ready to work closely with Mauritius and other IORA partners to set up an IORA virtual university with an aim to launch it in 2017 when IORA marks its 20th Anniversary.
- The Blue Economy Dialogue will be institutionalized and its 2nd edition will be held India in August 2016. He requested the IORA partners to kindly make note of the time frame of the event and ensure highest possible level of participation.
- India will be happy to offer capacity-building programmes to scientists from IORA partners at the Indian National Centre on Ocean Information in Hyderabad. Remote Sensing and Potential Fishing Zones (PFZ), Ocean State Forecasting (OSF), Ocean Colour (Data, Processing and Applications), Ocean Climate Modelling, Standard Operating Procedure for Tsunami Warning and Emergency Response are some of the broad themes addressed through these training programmes. Details of these programmes will be shared through the Secretariat.
- India will offer a Special Training Course for IORA Diplomats at the Foreign Service Institute in New Delhi.
- India will hold a Workshop on Women's Empowerment in 2016 in India.
- A Workshop on Skill Development in Youths will be held in India in 2016. Time-frame and other details will be shared shortly.
- India remains committed to strengthen IORA Secretariat through secondment of an Advisor-cum-Research Analyst. We hope to fulfil this commitment soon.
- India would be happy to provide office equipment including 6 laptops and a photocopying machine to the IORA Secretariat.
- Last but not the least. I am happy to announce a contribution of USD 100,000/-, for the IORA Special Fund.

XI. Russia-India-China (RIC)

1. The 13th RIC Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting (02 February 2015)

Remarks by External Affairs Minister at Joint Press Interaction during 13th RIC Foreign Ministers Meeting in Beijing – Key Points:

- India Russia and China mutually decided to celebrate the 70th year of the establishment of the UN and also commemorate the anniversary of the end of World War II indicating a deep commitment to peace in the region
- Russia and China reiterated their support for India's aspiration for a greater role in the United Nations.

- The Indian Foreign Minister thanked her Foreign Minister counterparts for supporting India's membership in the organization and management of Shanghai after the due legal and procedural formalities are over.
- Russia and China welcomed India's participation in Asia-Pacific Economic Forum, APEC.
- Improvement in administration of economies emerged as a topic of shared interest for all three countries.
- The Indian and the Chinese Foreign Minister agreed to Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov's invitation to organize the next RIC meeting in Russia later this year.
- A Joint Communiqué was issued on the occasion that outlines the discussions on various issues and details out the consent reached on various topics.
- Discussion held on International terrorism and Consensus was reached on the following:
 - There can be no ideological, religious, political, racial or any other justification for the acts of terrorism.
 - The need to bring to justice perpetrators, organisers, financiers and sponsors of terrorist acts and that people should get justice.
 - Faster judgment on this issue in the comprehensive agreement pertaining to International terrorism.

2. Joint Communiqué of the 13th Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Russian Federation, the Republic of India and the People's Republic of China

- The ministers agreed that Russia, India and China should enhance their cooperation in think-tanks, business, agriculture, disaster mitigation and relief, medical services and public health. They explored potential for cooperation in oil and natural gas production and transportation, and in other fields of energy, high tech, environmental protection and connectivity, agreed to promote parliamentary, media, cultural and youth exchanges including visits of young diplomats. They expressed satisfaction with the outcome of the 13th Trilateral Academic Conference held in Moscow in July 2014, and welcomed the 14th Trilateral Academic Conference to be held in China in May 2015.
- They underlined that the international community should remain committed to democratization of international relations and multi-polarity. They stressed the importance of pursuing a new type of international relations featuring win-win cooperation. They opposed forced regime change in any country from the outside.
- Ministers recognized that the year 2015 marks the 70th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and Russia, India and China affirmed the need to solemnly commemorate those historic moments of great significance in human history and their commitment to safeguarding a fair and equitable international order based on the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and The Ministers reiterated their strong commitment to the United Nations.
- They reaffirmed the need for a comprehensive reform of the United Nations, including its Security Council, with a view to making it more representative and efficient and Foreign Ministers of China and Russia reiterated the importance they attached to the status of India in international affairs and supported its aspiration to play a greater role in the United Nations.
- The Ministers reiterated their commitment to strengthening coordination and cooperation in a joint effort to maintain lasting peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific

region, welcomed the 4th Summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia (CICA) and the Shanghai Declaration adopted at the Summit, they also welcomed the continued discussion on regional security architecture in the Asia-Pacific region under the framework of the East Asia Summit.

- Underlined the necessity to strengthen coordination and cooperation in various regional forums and organizations such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus (ADMM-Plus), Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) and Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) and agreed to establish a trilateral Russia-India-China consultation mechanism on Asia-Pacific affairs, with the first meeting to be held at an early date.
- China and Russia welcomed India's application for full membership of SCO and supported India to join the SCO after completing all necessary negotiations and legal processes.
- The Ministers reiterated that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations committed by whoever, wherever, and for whatever purposes, is a threat to international peace and security, that there can be no ideological, religious, political, racial, ethnic, or any other justification for acts of terrorism. They underlined the need to bring to justice perpetrators, organizers, and sponsors of terrorist acts.
- The Ministers were of the view that the international community should make joint efforts to counter the threat of the use of information and communication technologies for military, political, criminal and terrorist purposes and build a peaceful, secure, open and cooperative information space.
- The Ministers noted that preventing arms race in outer space is in the interests of maintaining international peace and security and for the promotion and strengthening of international cooperation, The Ministers also noted the importance of establishing and developing a more focused dialogue and closer cooperative relationship among representatives of Russia, India and China with a view to advance the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Use of Outer Space (COPUOS).
- The Ministers supported the political transition in Afghanistan through the presidential elections and security transition from International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and The Ministers highly valued the positive results of the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Istanbul Process in Beijing, which contributed to strengthen regional cooperation and facilitate peace, rehabilitation and economic reconstruction in Afghanistan.
- The Ministers affirmed their support for efforts to seek a comprehensive and long-term solution to the Iranian nuclear issue through political and diplomatic means. They welcomed the extension of negotiations between P5+1 and Iran.
- The Ministers discussed the developments of the Israel-Palestine conflict, they urged Israel and Palestine to exercise restraint and take effective measures to avoid further escalation of tensions.
- The Ministers discussed the latest developments in Syria. They reiterated that there is no military solution to the Syrian crisis and urged all parties to abjure violence and resume peace negotiations based on "Geneva Communiqué" of June 2012, they also The

Ministers welcomed the important achievements made in the elimination of Syria's chemical weapons, and complimented the Organizations for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in its efforts towards elimination and destruction of chemical weapons in Syria.

- The Ministers expressed deep concern over the ongoing turmoil in Iraq and its spill-over effects, and emphasized their respect for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq, and their support for the efforts of the Iraqi government to uphold domestic stability and combat terrorism. They hoped that all parties in Iraq enhance unity and reconciliation so as to swiftly restore national stability and social order.
- The Ministers expressed deep concern about the current crisis in Ukraine, and called on all parties in the inter-Ukraine conflict to exercise restraint and fully implement the Minsk Protocol, engage in comprehensive dialogue and pursue a peaceful resolution of the crisis through political negotiations.
- The Ministers expressed their support for improved global economic governance to ensure sound and stable growth of the world economy. They called for immediate reform of the international financial system to increase the voice and representation of emerging markets and developing countries, with a focus on the implementation of the 2010 IMF Quota and Governance Reform by the end of this year. Russia and India welcome and support the efforts of China to host the 2016 G20 Summit.
- The Ministers reaffirmed commitment to the World Trade Organization (WTO), they reaffirmed commitment to the Doha Development Agenda as well as to the regular work of the WTO, they underlined the importance of tangible progress at the Conference toward a successful conclusion of the WTO Doha Round.
- They called on the international community to accelerate their efforts towards attainment of the MDGs and formulate the Post-2015 Development Agenda under the principles of equity, democracy, transparency, member states driven and consensus, they also called on the international community to actively implement the follow-up process of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in accordance with the principle of "common but differentiated responsibilities".
- The Ministers welcomed the adoption of the "Lima Call for Climate Action" by the 20th United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP20).
- The Ministers welcomed the successful conclusion of the 6th BRICS Summit, particularly the signing of the Agreement on the New Development Bank and the Treaty for the Establishment of a BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement, they also welcomed the decision taken by the Fortaleza Summit on opening negotiations on the Draft Strategy of Multilateral Economic Cooperation and Framework of BRICS Closer Economic Partnership. China and India expressed their full support to Russia for a successful 7th summit of the BRICS leaders in July 2015.
- The Ministers highly valued the fruitful achievements of the 22nd APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, including launching the process of Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP), promoting innovative development, economic reform and growth and enhancing connectivity of the Asia-Pacific and acknowledged India's important role in driving global economic growth, and supporting the openness of APEC, China and Russia would welcome India's participation in APEC.

- The Ministers stressed the importance of regional connectivities, which will inject strong impetus in enhancing political mutual trust, economic cooperation, and promoting cultural and people-to-people exchanges. In this context, they discussed initiatives, including China's initiatives of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. They welcomed synergy of various initiatives to improve regional connectivity in Asia.
- The Ministers expressed their deep concern over the spread of the Ebola virus in some African countries and the damage it caused to the health and safety of the local people. They decided to continue to work hand in hand in helping the African countries curb and prevent the spread of the Ebola.

XII. The United Nations

1. The Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, paid an official visit to India from 10-13 January 2015.

- The Secretary General and his delegation visited Gandhinagar to participate in the Vibrant Gujarat Summit 2015 as a Guest of Honour and Keynote Speaker. While addressing 'Vibrant Gujarat', Ban Ki-Moon said "India is in a unique position to lead the move towards sustainability in the wider world. This year will provide a formidable opportunity for emerging powers to position themselves in a changing global landscape".
- Ban Ki-Moon delivered Thirteenth Sapru House – UN Lecture at ICWA, New Delhi and asserted that India can play major three roles in the world. First, as a driver for peace in the region and the world. Second, as a champion of human rights and thirdly as a leader on clean development – clean sustainable development.

2. On 21 June 2015, the External Affairs Minister, Sushma Swaraj addressed the first International Day of Yoga celebrations at the United Nations

She stated that Yoga is neither a religion, nor should it be seen as belonging to any particular religion. It is a science, the science of well-being, the science of integrating body, mind and soul, the science of actualising individual's true potential. Millions others all across the world in 192 nations, have joined them in their own unique national celebrations of this historic day. Prime Minister Modi led the largest yoga class in history when he addressed more than 35,000 people at Rajpath on that day. This truly was a confirmation of the international character of Yoga as well as its convening power. By celebrating the International Day of Yoga together, India celebrated common humanity with all.

She said, "Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his address to the General Assembly last year, had said that Yoga embodies unity of mind and body, thought and action, restraint and fulfilment and harmony between man and nature. The United Nations is about nations living in harmony with each other. By celebrating the International Day of Yoga at the United Nations, India sent a powerful message about men and women living in harmony with each other and also in harmony with nature."

She further added, “At a time when ethnic conflicts and extremist violence are threatening to destabilize societies, yoga can serve as the perfect antidote to stem such negative tendencies and move humanity on the path of harmony and peace.”

3. Visit of President-elect of the General Assembly of the United Nations, Morgan Lykketoft, to India – August 29-September 01 2015

He met PM Modi, External Affairs Minister Swaraj and Sujata Mehta, Secretary, MEA, as well as delivered a lecture “UN at 70” at ICWA.

4. Speech by External Affairs Minister at the General Assembly of the United Nations, on – ‘The UN at 70: A Time for Action’, October 01, 2015

Salient points of the speech:

- The United Nations is completing 70 years this year. Therefore, this General Assembly meeting is historic. She hoped that this year would also be historic for the United Nations from the perspective of outcomes and she assured India’s full support in such efforts.
- United Nations has been successful in preventing a third world war, in assisting decolonization and dismantling apartheid, in combating global epidemics and reducing global hunger, and in promoting democracy and human rights. However, the United Nations appears as an ineffective institution in the area of international peace and security. It has failed to effectively address the new challenges to international peace and security.
- The goal of peacekeeping is very important. Under the blue flag, several men and women are constantly working to prevent conflict, protect civilians and sustain peace processes. With 180,000 peacekeepers deployed so far, India has been the largest provider of international security by the UN. Even today, about 8000 Indian military and police personnel are participating in 10 Missions, operating in highly challenging environments.
- India remains committed to continue supporting the UN Peacekeeping Operations and even enhance its contributions, as announced by Prime Minister Modi at the Leaders’ Summit on Peacekeeping. India’s new contributions will cover all aspects of peacekeeping – personnel, enablers and training. At the same time, it is a matter of concern that there is no role of troop contributing countries in the formulation of mandates, which are often amended without consultations. This is a clear violation of Article 44 of the UN Charter.
- On the 70th anniversary of the UN, Minister Swaraj paid tribute to more than 3,300 peacekeepers including 161 from India who have made the ultimate sacrifice. India stands ready to contribute to the Peacekeepers Memorial Wall, which has been approved by the 69th General Assembly.
- International terrorism can only be defeated by organized international action. The world must demonstrate that it has zero tolerance for terrorists who kill and maim innocent civilians with action based on the principle of prosecute or extradite. Countries that provide financing to terrorists and safe havens for their training, arming and

operations must be made to pay a heavy price by the international community. Minister Swaraj appealed to all to come together in this 70th anniversary year of the United Nations and pledge unanimously to adopt the CCIT (Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism).

- Further, real social and economic progress remains a critical goal. The elimination of basic human want leads almost invariably to more peaceful societies, as is evidenced by a map of the conflicts that engulf parts of the world.
- The world's future must rest on building a sustainable planet for its children and its children's children and there should be a strong commitment to deliver an ambitious and credible agreement on climate change.
- As with health emergencies, natural disasters and man-made conflicts also deserve coordinated response. In recent months, the international community has been found wanting on the refugee crisis due to the conflict situations in Syria, Iraq and Libya. A swift response backed by political will is the need of the hour. India's response in its neighbourhood to humanitarian crises has been quick, responsive and holistic. Whether it was Nepal or Yemen, India has emerged as a net security provider, assisting not only Indian nationals but those of other countries that sought India's help. India would be hosting the first Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in November 2016 on Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction.
- In a world that continues to be dominated by wealthy and influential nations, the notion of sovereign equality of the UN has permitted the developing world to question some unfair norms. But it has not permitted a fundamental challenge to the inequity of a system built for a world that no longer exists. If one has to preserve the centrality and legitimacy of the UN as the custodian of global peace, security and development, the reform of the Security Council is its most urgent and pressing need. Inclusion of more developing nations in the decision making structures of the Security Council and amending the way it does business by doing away with outdated and non-transparent working methods should be adopted.
- For an organization like the United Nations, 70 years has a unique significance. It is an occasion for revitalization and for renewal. She invited all nations to contemplate the idea of the United Nations as a Banyan Tree.

11. Non-Traditional Security Issues

I. Cyber Security

1. Joint Statement: Inaugural India-Australia Cyber Policy Dialogue – August 31, 2015

First India-Australia Cyber Policy Dialogue was held in New Delhi on August 24, 2015. Dialogue was led by for India by Santosh Jha, Joint Secretary, Policy Planning, counter Terrorism and Global Cyber Issues, Ministry of External Affairs and on the Australian side by Ian Biggs, Assistant Secretary, Strategic Issues and Intelligence Branch, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Dialogue included, on the Indian side, representatives from the CERT-India, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the National Security Council Secretariat, the Ministry of Defence, the Central Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Telecommunications as well as the Ministry of External Affairs. On the Australian side the Dialogue included representatives of the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Department of Communications, the Attorney-General's Department (CERT-Australia), and the Australian Federal Police.

The two sides discussed the full range of cyber issues exchanging cyber threat perceptions, policies and strategies, agency roles and responsibilities, key domestic developments including Digital India and Australia's Cyber Security Review, the development of international norms of responsible state behaviour in cyberspace, regional developments, the multi-stakeholder approach to internet governance and cybercrime.

To strengthen the relationship between CERT-India and CERT-Australia they signed a framework for operational cooperation on cyber security to promote greater cooperation in exchanging information on cyber threats and in responding to incidents. The two sides also identified opportunities to work together to exchange information on cybercrime and on law enforcement measures. The delegations agreed that further dialogue would be fruitful to deliberate on the application of international law to cyberspace and the development of norms including the work of the UN Group of Governmental Experts, the work of regional bodies including the ASEAN Regional Forum on confidence building and the Asia-Pacific CERT community in supporting the development of regional CERT capacity, and on the role of different stakeholders in supporting the multi-stakeholder approach to internet governance.

The two countries decided to hold the next round of the Dialogue in Canberra in 2016.

2. Joint Statement: 2015 United States-India Cyber Dialogue – August 11 – 12, 2015, Washington DC

The fourth in the series, whole-of-government Cyber Dialogue, was led by the U.S. Cybersecurity Coordinator and Special Assistant to the President, Michael Daniel and by India's Deputy National Security Advisor Arvind Gupta. The Department of State Coordinator for Cyber Issues Christopher Painter and the Ministry of External Affairs Joint Secretary for Policy Planning, Counterterrorism, and Global Cyber Issues Santosh Jha co-hosted the Dialogue.

U.S. whole-of-government participation included the Departments of State, Justice, Homeland Security, Treasury, and Commerce. The Indian government was represented by the National Cyber Security Coordinator at the National Security Council Secretariat, the Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry of Home Affairs, and the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology.

A range of cyber issues were discussed which included cyber threats, enhanced cybersecurity information sharing, cyber incident management, cybersecurity cooperation in the context of 'Make in India', efforts to combat cybercrime, Internet governance issues, and norms of state behaviour in cyberspace.

The two delegations identified a variety of opportunities for increased collaboration on cyber security capacity-building, cyber security research and development, combating cybercrime, international security, and Internet governance, and intend to pursue an array of follow-on activities to bolster their cyber security partnership and achieve concrete outcomes.

In addition to the formal Dialogue, the delegations met with representatives from the private sector to discuss issues related to cybersecurity and the digital economy. The Indian delegation also met with Deputy Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Assistant to the President for Homeland Security and Counterterrorism Lisa Monaco.

The two countries decided to hold the next round of the Cyber Dialogue in Delhi in 2016.

12. Miscellaneous

1. Prime Minister's Message to the Heads of Indian Missions, 07 February 2015

- Prime Minister urged the Heads of Indian Missions to use this opportunity to help India position itself in a leading role, rather than just a balancing force, globally, to shed old mindsets, be quick to adapt to changing global situations, and to work ceaselessly and with a clear mind, on India's development priorities, and to advance India's interests abroad.
- Prime Minister described the Heads as "shining vibrant representatives" (tejasvi, jeevant anshpunj) of India's glorious heritage.
- Prime Minister said there were new "actors" and new "threats" to global peace and prosperity; that India has always stood for "Vishva-Bandhutva" and peace – the brotherhood of the world and has a great responsibility in helping the world counter these challenges to peace.
- About Climate Change the Prime Minister said, India must take the lead in countering this challenge, and also work towards a change in global attitudes towards the challenges of climate change and mentioned that Indian culture was replete with illustrations which indicated "prakriti-prem" – "love for nature."
- Prime Minister credited the Indian diplomatic community for their success in the International Day of Yoga being adopted by the United Nations in record time, with a record number of co-sponsors, he called Yoga should be projected as a possible solution to common everyday problems of people across the world, including stress management.
- Prime Minister said the NITI Aayog has recognized the Indian Diaspora as a great strength of the Indian nation, and Heads of Missions must come up with innovative ways, in which to positively build upon this strength.
- Prime Minister called for preparing a compendium of best practices of Missions across the world, and spreading them horizontally, developing a culture for "Swachhta" , to remain ahead of the curve on digital diplomacy, maintain digital libraries, and maintaining regular contact with prominent individuals from countries abroad.

2. Address by External Affairs Minister at inauguration of International Conference on "Indian Diaspora and Cultural Heritage: Past, Present and Future" in New Delhi, 11 February 2015

- The speech highlighted the heritage and culture of India that lives on through Indian traditions, language, art and the wealth of knowledge left behind by ancestors.
- It talked about the rich history and values about peace, non-violence and brotherhood that hold true in the present scenario like 'vasudheva kutumbakam' and Sarva dharma sambhav, and the spread of Indian people, knowledge and culture throughout history.
- It talked about the arduous journey that was undertaken by Indians as indentured labour in the 19th century and their subsequent successes and spread to various corners of the world.

- Speech highlighted the efforts that Indian Diaspora has made in the spread of Indian culture, art, dance, music, and films and literature.
- It mentioned the commemoration of this long journey through various events like the 'Pravasi Bharatiya divas' celebrating the 100 year anniversary of Gandhiji's return from South Africa and the installation of a memorial in Kolkata dedicated to Indian indentured labour in Guyana.
- It mentioned that India today is witnessing an unprecedented resurgence of interest from around the world and India's growth as a soft power as evident by recent adoption of the International Day of Yoga by the United Nations, with a record 177 countries co-sponsoring.

3. Keynote Address by Secretary (East) at the Inaugural Session of the Conference on ASEAN-India Co-operation in Food Security, Agriculture Technology and Food Engineering, Run-up Event for Delhi Dialogue VII 2015, in Mumbai, 12 February 2015

- Highlighted the increased focus on India's eastern neighbourhood and beyond is clearly discernible with visits by Prime Minister Modi to Japan, Myanmar, Australia and Fiji.
- Reiterated Prime Minister Modi's thoughts on the emphasis of transforming India's Look East Policy to Act East Policy and placing ASEAN at the core of the dream of an 'Asian Century'.
- It highlighted the historical ties of ASEAN-INDIA relations, and India's decision to elevate the strategic partnership taken in 2012 on the occasion of 20 years of ASEAN-INDIA relations.
- It mentioned the 26 annual dialogue mechanisms with the ASEAN, including a Summit and seven Ministerial level meetings in key sectors, including, notably, agriculture.
- The speech mentioned Vision Statement adopted during the 2012 Commemorative Summit recognised the need to ensure long-term food security in the region and welcomed the efforts to strengthen cooperation in the agriculture sector between ASEAN and India.
- Gave a short update on the work being done by the ASEAN- INDIA working group on agriculture and the Medium-Term Plan of Action for ASEAN-India Cooperation in Agriculture and Forestry for the period 2011-2015.
- The speech acknowledged that agriculture and food security is one of the key components of a nation's overall growth plan and the importance of agriculture for manufacturing sector as well as revenue after export of agricultural raw materials and cash crops.
- It talked about the common challenges faced by ASEAN members in the field of agriculture and Forestry and that cooperation, technology transfers and joint R&D would benefit all.
- It talked about several programmes underway for agricultural cooperation and hoped that this collaboration would keep growing stronger.
- It highlighted the attempts to enhance connectivity - India-Myanmar-Thailand Trilateral Highway, food park on the outskirts of Imphal and the proposed SEZ at Thoubal in Manipur were mentioned as examples.

- It highlighted the work on the framework for the Special Facility for project financing and quick implementation of connectivity projects with ASEAN as announced by Prime Minister Modi in 12th ASEAN-India Summit.
- Highlighted the opening of new Resident Mission to ASEAN in Jakarta with a full-time Ambassador in January 2015.

4. External Affairs Minister's speech at International Youth Summit 2015 for NextGen World, 20 February 2015

- The speech started with highlighting the beauty and vitality of youth and comparing the new dawn of India on the world stage to India's youthfulness as an emerging power.
- It highlighted India's growing importance in economic, political and cultural forums all across the globe.
- It talked about the need to realize that the world is much more interconnected now than it was in the past and that phenomenon like terrorism, climate change, global trade effect one and all and that India must operate with this view of global interconnectedness.
- It highlighted the four key agenda that the foreign policy focuses on:
 - Harnessing external engagements for national resurgence and development and furthering development and diplomacy together.
 - The 'Neighbours First' policy, Promoting peace and stability in the immediate neighbourhood. The neighbourhood policy also focuses on vision of wide-ranging regional integration and connectivity.
 - The Foreign policy sees Indian culture as a powerful asset in promoting India's interests abroad, the International Yoga Day was cited as an example.
 - India is pursuing a people-centric, interactive and youthful foreign policy which is open to new ideas, new initiatives and new inspirations, specially from young people.

5. Inaugural Address by Secretary (East) at ASEM Workshop on Water Resource Management through Efficient and Innovative Solutions in New Delhi, 27 February 2015

- It mentioned the 11th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting hosted by India in November 2013 marked the beginning of a new orientation in ASEM, as members agreed to move beyond discussions towards tangible, result-oriented initiatives on a voluntary basis.
- The speech highlighted that in the above context; the Government of India has identified several areas for tangible cooperation, and has hosted several Roundtables.
- Mentioned that urbanization, water management technologies and greenways were identified as one of the areas of possible tangible cooperation in ASEM.
- It mentioned India's interest in Water Management and highlighted that The National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), released by the Government of India in 2008, has identified eight National Missions to meet the challenges of the impact of climate change. The National Water Mission is one of these eight. The main objective of the National Water Mission is conservation of water, minimizing wastage and ensuring its more equitable distribution, both across and within States, through integrated water resources development and management.

- It highlighted the challenges India faces with effective water management and reducing waste and that in developing economies like India this becomes a greater problem as no one wishes to stymie industrial growth either.
- It highlighted that some of the strategies that can be identified for achieving these goals include exploring new sources, water purification technologies such as reverse osmosis for sea water and brackish water desalinization etc.
- The speech mentioned that cooperation and knowledge transfers on such issues are imperative.

4. External Affairs Minister's address at International Conference on "India and Indian Ocean: Renewing the Maritime Trade and Civilizational Linkages" in Bhubaneswar (March 20, 2015).

- Underlining the importance of Indian Ocean, she stated that the vast Indian Ocean region hosts over 40 states and nearly 40 % of world population. It is vast and diverse, home to great cultures and holds immense opportunities for the future. Therefore, this region which extends from African coast to West Asia, South Asia and South East Asia and touches Australia has been a focus of India's foreign policy.
 - Further, she mentioned that today, the Indian Ocean carries one half of world's container shipments, one-third of the bulk cargo traffic and two-thirds of the oil shipments, though three-fourths of this traffic goes to other regions of the world. Ninety per cent of India's trade by volume and 90 per cent of its oil imports take place through sea. They have a long coastline of 7500 km, 1200 islands and a 2.4 million square kilometres of Exclusive Economic Zone.
 - Stressing the need of strong maritime security mechanism in the region, she said that maritime security is a key aspect of India's bilateral relations with all Indian Ocean littoral states. She mentioned that India is looking forward to build a closer cooperation in maritime domain, regularize bilateral maritime exercises and strengthen the dialogues between the navies and the Coast Guards with all littoral countries in the Indian Ocean Region.
 - She said that India is part of various multilateral institutions, which are actively debating maritime security issues in the Asia Pacific region.
 - India has been working with like-minded countries to preserve the integrity, inviolability and security of maritime domain which is a global common, she mentioned.
 - EAM reaffirmed India's commitment to maritime security, freedom of navigation, unimpeded lawful commerce and peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law.
 - She said, "We are seeking a more cooperative and integrated future for the region through overall development of the ocean or blue economy. This would promote increased cooperation in trade, tourism and investment, infrastructure development, marine science and technology, sustainable fisheries and protection of marine environment."
- 6. Countries in the region should develop a common regional standard to promote intra-regional trade. There is need to evolve some mechanism to address the challenges and**

hindrances in the way of intra-regional trade growth and boost economic performance of IORA.

7. Address by External Affairs Minister at the Centenary Commemorative Exhibition of First World War in New Delhi (March 23, 2015) Remarks – Key Points

- Narrating the contribution of Indian soldiers in First World War, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj said that many regard Great War as a European Affair, a product of battle for supremacy among imperial powers of Europe. But, this is not entirely true.
- Not only India, but the entire Indian sub-continent, took part in this conflict. Some estimates suggest that nearly 1.5 million participated in the war from the region, she mentioned.
- Some experts have estimated that every sixth soldier that Britain sent out to fight was from the Indian Empire. These brave soldiers fought in alien climate and conditions far away from their homeland.
- India contributed more soldiers to the war than South Africa, New Zealand, Australia and Canada combined. Some experts have estimated that every sixth soldier that Britain sent out to fight was from the Indian Empire. These brave soldiers fought in alien climate and conditions far away from their homeland.

8. Remarks by External Affairs Minister at Growth Net Summit 2015 in New Delhi (March 26, 2015)

- India's engagement, particularly economic engagement, with the rest of the world has grown and expanded significantly, and it is only natural that Indian foreign policy is such that it contributes substantially to the growth story.
- India is ideally placed to emerge as a powerful player in global manufacturing landscape and export markets using its unique advantage of 3D - Democracy, Demography and Demand. At the centre of this endeavour is the Make in India campaign. However, leveraging the 3D advantage requires appropriate public policy and also a positive external environment in terms of trade and investment opportunities.
- India's Act East Policy is reflective of its desire to move into a more proactive and action-oriented phase of India's Look East Policy. The success of this policy is evident from India's close engagement with the ASEAN countries in the last few months.
- India has made special efforts to develop a coherent strategy on connectivity, particularly for linking ASEAN with India's North East.
- India's economic engagement with ASEAN has also been stepped up. Here, priorities are regional integration and implementation of projects in various sectors such as connectivity, energy, education, IT and culture.
- India is committed to ensuring a governance and regulatory system that would be transparent, responsive and investor-friendly. The Government of India has taken a number of steps in this regard.
- Incorporating local bodies and state governments in India's outreach to the world is part of a broader effort, in accordance with Prime Minister's Modi's vision of co-operative federalism. To implement this vision my Ministry has created a "States Division" which is responsible for liaising with the states for all trade and investment related purposes.

- Indian Diaspora could be India's most valuable partner in implementation of the flagship schemes of the Government be it Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Clean Ganga, skill development, smart cities or GIAN.
- Prime Minister has launched a new form, a higher level of dialogue with the Indian Diaspora across the world. He has reached out to them, and they have reciprocated his warmth and friendship.

9. Keynote Address by External Affairs Minister at the Inaugural Session of Delhi Dialogue VII, New Delhi- Key Points

- External Affairs Minister stated that enhancing connectivity between India and ASEAN is a key strategic priority for India. Stressing the need of infrastructure development in North-East region, she explicitly stated that the North-Eastern region is India's land-bridge to the ASEAN, and she was delighted that the Chief Ministers of so many states from the region have spared their valuable time to contribute to the deliberations.
- India has maritime boundaries with several ASEAN countries, and this is particularly important from a trade perspective.
- Hopefully, ASEAN-India Maritime Transport Cooperation Agreement will be finalised by the end of the year, she informed the audience.
- India has made progress in implementing the Trilateral Highway project which proposes to provide seamless connectivity from Moreh in Manipur to Mae Sot in Thailand via Myanmar.
- India has also started negotiations on an India-Myanmar-Thailand Transit Transport Agreement to address soft connectivity issues, she mentioned.
- India is about to commence implementation of a space project, which will be the largest project under the ASEAN-India Fund, involving establishment of a Tracking & Data Reception Station and Data Processing Facility at Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam by ISRO; upgrading of the Biak Station in Indonesia; as well as provision of training for space personnel from all ASEAN countries.
- India will continue its assistance for human resource development and capacity building under the ITEC and Colombo Plan, the Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) Quick Impact Fund initiative and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Cooperation (BIMSTEC).
- India is also in the process of establishing Centres of Excellence in Software Development and Training and Centres for English Language Training in CLMV countries under the Initiative for ASEAN Integration - Narrowing Development Gap. That week, its project team is in Lao PDR and Vietnam, holding discussions with the host government on the establishment of these Centres of Excellence.

10. External Affairs Minister's speech at launch of WFUNA Foundation India in New Delhi (March 3, 2015) – Key points

- Launching the India Chapter of the WFUNA is an important milestone which should trigger serious reflection upon the performance of the world body and its specialized agencies in carrying out their duties.
- The EAM stated that there was a strong belief that the UN as a representative organization of the comity of nations should reflect contemporary geopolitical and economic realities. That is why India is today at the forefront of efforts for UN reform,

including expansion of the Security Council in both the permanent and non - permanent categories, to make it more broadly representative, efficient and transparent and thereby further enhance its effectiveness and the legitimacy of its decisions.

- India believes that there must be a concrete outcome on this long standing issue in the 70th Anniversary year of the UN, further she said.
- She believes that it is not only the obligation of the member states to support the UN in meeting the global challenges and creating opportunities for all but a shared responsibility of all stakeholders.

11. India Welcomes Nuclear Deal with Iran (14 July 2015)

In its official reaction to the Iranian nuclear deal, India welcomed the successful conclusion of negotiations on the Iranian nuclear issue. With regard to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has an important role, which has been underlined by the agreement between Iran and the Agency on a road map for the clarification of past and present outstanding issues.

12. Media Interaction by President upon the conclusion of his State Visit to Jordan, Palestine and Israel en route from Tel Aviv to New Delhi, October 15, 2015

- The visits to Jordan, Palestine and Israel were first ever visits by an Indian President. They reflect the importance that India places on enhancing its partnership with countries of this region, which is India's extended neighbourhood.
- In Jordan, the President held meetings with King Abdullah II and Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour of Jordan, exploring the possibilities of opening up new synergies in different areas of mutual interest including counter terrorism, defence, IT, and energy. King Abdullah II expressed his keen desire to encourage Indian companies to work with the Jordanian ICT companies. 16 MoUs and Agreements, including between academic institutions were finalised. A major avenue in Amman was named after Mahatma Gandhi during his visit.
- King Abdullah II supported India's candidature to permanent membership of an expanded UN Security Council and the ongoing UN reform process. King Abdullah II and I inaugurated a US\$ 860 million project of Jordan-India Fertilizer Co., a joint venture between IFFCO and the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company to produce phosphoric acid for export to India.
- In Palestine, the President was received with great warmth and affection by President Mahmoud Abbas, Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah and leaders of major political parties. The President reiterated India's principled support to the Palestinian cause and called for a negotiated solution resulting in a sovereign, independent, viable and united State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital, living within secure and recognized borders, side by side at peace with Israel as endorsed in the Quartet Roadmap and relevant UNSC Resolutions.
- The President announced increase of ICCR scholarships from 10 to 25 per annum, and ITEC slots from 50 to 100 for Palestine; handed over a cheque worth US\$ 5 million as a budgetary support to the Palestinian authority; and inaugurated the India-Palestine Centre for Excellence in ICT in the Al Quds University and announced India's decision to build one more India-Palestine Centre for Excellence in ICT in Gaza with similar aims and

objectives at an estimated cost of US\$ 1 million. The President announced Government of India's decision to set up an IT park in Ramallah at an estimated cost of US\$ 12 million and a Palestinian Institute of Diplomacy at an estimated cost of US\$ 4.5 million.

- In Israel, the President was received with great warmth and friendship by President Reuven Rivlin, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Speaker of Knesset Yuli-Yoel Edelstein. Both the leadership reviewed their multidimensional relations and explored ways and means to enhance them for the mutual benefit of the two countries.
- He described Israel as one of the most important countries for India and conveyed the need for the two countries to reinvigorate bilateral ties in all areas of engagement. Israel has provided defence equipment, platforms and systems at a time when India needed them the most. Both the leaderships discussed the need to expand cooperation in solar energy, dairy development, water management, horticulture, animal husbandry and agriculture as well as cooperation between Indian Space Research Organization and Israeli Space Agency.
- Two agreements were signed between the Governments. Eight MoUs exchanged between the educational institutions of India and Israel. These will promote cooperation in the field of higher education between the two countries and provide for joint research, exchange of scholars, etc.

13. Remarks by External Affairs Minister at Dinner for Latin American Dignitaries, October 08, 2015

- Minister Swaraj stated that the relations with the LAC region have traditionally been warm and friendly. Over the last few years, these have intensified in terms of political engagements as well as trade and commercial interactions.
- Trade with the Latin American and Caribbean region has shown impressive growth in the recent past and today stands at about 46 billion dollars. Considering the fact that India's trade was only 2 billion dollars in 2000, this marks a phenomenal growth in bilateral trade with the region.
- India has Preferential Trade Agreement with MERCOSUR and with Chile, investments estimated to be around 20 billion dollars, principally in IT sector, automobile parts, mining and hydrocarbons.
- The Latin American region offers a market for Indian products such as pharmaceuticals, leather, automobile parts, engineering goods, textile, Information Technology among others. On the other hand, the LAC region offers oil and gas, minerals and metals, cereals, pulses, oil seeds, soya, fresh fruits and many other products.
- This year has specifically been significant in view of the fact that India had interaction at Ministerial level with the three major regional groupings, namely, CELAC, SICA and CARICOM.
- The focus of the visits is therefore economics and commerce. But she mentioned three other issues. First, terrorism continues to pose the gravest threats to international peace and security. There is a need to take resolute steps to counter terrorism. In this regard she sought Latin American support for Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism at the UN. Second, climate change is a major global issue confronting India. It has recently announced its INDCs and hopes that a comprehensive, balanced and

equitable agreement will be reached at COP-21 in Paris. Third, the reform of the Security Council and its expansion in both permanent and non-permanent categories is an imperative today. Last UNGA adopted a decision to carry forward to the 70th session the text presented by its President.

14. Briefing session hosted by External Affairs Minister for the Governors of North Eastern States on India's Act East Policy, October 06, 2015

The Minister for External Affairs, Sushma Swaraj held a half day briefing for the Governors of North Eastern States on India's "Act East Policy" on Tuesday, 6 October, 2015. The Briefing Session, which took place at Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan, was attended by J.P. Rajkhowa, Governor of Arunachal Pradesh, Padmanabha Balakrishna Acharya, Governor of Assam and Nagaland, V. Shanmuganam, Governor of Manipur and Meghalaya, Lt. Gen. Nirbhay Sharma, Governor of Mizoram and Shrinivas Patil, Governor of Sikkim.

The briefing, which covered comprehensively all aspects of India's Act East Policy, with particular focus on how these impacted on the North Eastern region. In her Keynote Address, the EAM stated that the North East is a "natural partner in India's Act East Policy," being India's land bridge to ASEAN, and the Act East Policy is a means to strengthen the stability, economy and prospects of India's North Eastern region. It also covered various cross-border connectivity projects that are under implementation or discussion, which would link the North East to the wider region including Myanmar, Bangladesh, Thailand and even Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam. Issues of border trade and integrating the North East into regional production and value chains were also discussed.

13. India and Multilateral Institutions

I. BRICS and India

1. VII BRICS Summit

VII BRICS Summit, Ufa Declaration, Ufa, the Russian Federation on 9 July 2015

The leaders of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the Russian Federation, the Republic of India, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of South Africa, met on 9 July 2015, in Ufa, Russia, at the Seventh BRICS Summit, which was held under the theme "BRICS Partnership – a Powerful Factor of Global Development". This declaration comprises 77 paragraphs. It covers a variety of subjects.

A paragraph on cooperation in the United Nations, specifically in regard to reform of the UN Security Council. A set of paragraphs on the subject of cooperation against terrorism. Several paragraphs relating to cooperation in the ICT area. There is a reflection in this declaration on the importance of IMF reform and reform of the World Bank governance structures.

Remarks by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the BRICS Business Council at Ufa, the Russian Federation on 9 July 2015

The PM noted:

- BRICS Business Council is one of the most important additions of this BRICS Summit.
- India welcomes the steps and suggestions to create BRICS Reinsurance Pool for providing assistance in big projects.
- India will be highly delighted to host the first Trade Fair.

Media Briefing by Secretary (ER) on VII BRICS Summit in Ufa, the Russian Federation, 9 July 2015

The Briefing highlighted:

- A compilation of some of the proposals that the Prime Minister made in his intervention in the Restricted Session and in his speech in the plenary has been put out.
- Ten specific proposals were made. The first announcement was that we should have an annual BRICS trade fair, the first of these will be during India's chairmanship in 2016. The other announcements are: the Railway Research Centre, cooperation among supreme audit institutions, a BRICS digital initiative, the BRICS Agricultural Research Centre, a state and local governments forum, cooperation among cities, a BRICS Sports Council, and an annual BRICS Sports Meet and a BRICS Under-17 Football Tournament during India's term as Chair.
- Then there was an announcement that the first major project of the New Development Bank should be in the field of clean energy, and a BRICS Film Festival.

2. BRICS Ministers of Foreign Affairs Meeting

Regular Meeting of the BRICS Ministers of Foreign Affairs on 29 September 2015 at New York

- The BRICS Ministers of Foreign Affairs held their regular meeting on September 29, 2015, in New York on the margins of this annual session of the United Nations General Assembly which marked the 70th Anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and the end of the Second World War.
- The Ministers paid tribute to all those who fought against fascism and militarism and for freedom of nations.
- The Ministers discussed the current state of global economy and finances.
- The Ministers stressed the importance of closer economic, financial and trade cooperation, particularly through policy coordination, timely implementation of the Strategy for BRICS Economic Partnership, and the full functioning of the New Development Bank and its African Regional Centre.
- The Ministers reiterated their strong condemnation of terrorism.

Communiqué of BRICS Ministers of Communications on the outcomes of the meeting on "Expansion of Cooperation in the Field of Communications and ICTs" Moscow, 23 October 2015

The Communiqué noted:

- Considering the necessity to ensure the secure, stable and continued operation and use of ICTs, including Internet, the Parties noted the importance of the establishment of mechanism for the Internet governance based on the principles of multilateralism, democracy, transparency and mutual trust and involving relevant stakeholders in their respective roles and responsibilities.
- The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of the Government of India and concerned Ministries of member states made commitment to building of appropriate capacity for cooperation and interaction in the field of ICTs, to hold annual meetings of the BRICS Working Group on ICT Cooperation to further strengthen cooperation in the areas of ICTs, including the Internet.

Media Note on the Informal Meeting of the BRICS Leaders on the Margins of the G20 Summit in Antalya, 15 November 2015

The BRICS Leaders met on the margins of the G20 Summit in Antalya on 15 November 2015.

- The Leaders strongly condemned the abhorrent terror attacks in Paris.
- The Leaders underlined the importance of strengthening BRICS strategic partnership guided by the principles of openness, solidarity, equality, mutual understanding, inclusiveness and mutually beneficial cooperation.
- The Leaders declared their readiness to support China in its upcoming G20 Presidency with a view to enhancing the leading role of the forum in meeting global financial and economic challenges.

Opening Remarks by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at BRICS Leaders' Meeting, November 15, 2015

The PM noted:

- The entire humanity must stand together as one against terrorism. The need for a united global effort to combat terrorism has never been more urgent. This must also be a priority for BRICS nations.
- The theme of India's BRICS Chairmanship will be "Building Responsive, Inclusive and Collective Solutions" which, in short, will be 'BRICS'. It aptly describes the ethos of the group.

II. G20 and India

1. G20 Leaders' Summit, Antalya, Turkey

India's Participation in G20 Leaders' Summit, Antalya, Turkey, November 15-16, 2015

Prime Minister Narendra Modi represented India in the G20 Leaders' Summit Antalya, Turkey in November 2015. The Finance Minister of India and the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India represented in the Finance Ministers and the Central Bank Governors meetings. Arvind Panagariya represented as India's Sherpa in G20.

G20 Leaders' Communiqué, Antalya Summit, 15-16 November 2015

- The Leaders of the G20, met in Antalya, Turkey on 15-16 November 2015 to determine further collective actions towards achieving strong, sustainable and balanced growth to raise the prosperity of their people.
- The G20 Leaders' communiqué noted that the leaders remain resolute to continue their collective action to lift actual and potential growth of their economies, support job creation, strengthen resilience, promote development and enhance inclusiveness of their policies.

G20 Statement on the Fight against Terrorism, Antalya, Turkey, November 16, 2015

- G20 statement condemned, in the strongest possible terms, the heinous terrorist attacks in Paris on 13 November and in Ankara on 10 October 2015. They are an unacceptable affront to all humanity.
- The continued and recent terrorist attacks all across the world have shown once again the need for increased international cooperation and solidarity in the fight against terrorism.

Antalya Action Plan

The Antalya Action Plan sets out strategic and important actions to create strong, sustainable and balanced growth. It says:

- India is committed to use all policy levers to support economic activity over the short and medium term and increase their resilience to shocks.
- In addition to the right mix of the fiscal, monetary and structural reform policies, India has also elaborated on the potential benefits of changing the composition of its tax and expenditures to deliver more growth, for example through raising employment, nurturing private investment and boosting productivity.

- The Action Plan notes: India has deregulated energy prices, liberalized FDI and has improved tax and other policies to reduce the cost of doing business.
- Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Germany, India, Indonesia, and the U.S. commit to undertake substantial additional public infrastructure investment.

Lead Intervention by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at G20 Working Lunch on Development and Climate Change, November 15, 2015

The PM noted:

- Terrorism is a major global challenge of the present times. It not only takes a tragic toll of lives, it also extracts a huge economic cost and threatens their way of life. It calls for a comprehensive global response. Combating it must be major priority for G20.
- This session discusses two other major global challenges– development and climate change. India doesn't see development and climate change as competing objectives. This is centred on the belief in the unity of humanity and Nature.
- G20 must align itself with the Sustainable Development Goals. In doing so, India will also stimulate faster and broader based economic growth.

Intervention by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at G20 Working Dinner on Global Challenges – Terrorism and Refugee Crisis, November 15, 2015

The PM noted:

- Terrorism is a principal global challenge. From regions in conflict to the streets of distant cities, terrorism extracts a deadly price. Old structures of terrorism remain. There are countries that still use it as an instrument of state policy.
- India should strengthen efforts to prevent supply of arms to terrorists, disrupt terrorist movements, and curb and criminalise terror financing.
- Today, there are an estimated 60 million people in need of protection worldwide... India thanked the countries that have opened their borders and shelters.

Intervention by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at G20 Session-I on Inclusive Growth, Global Economy, Growth Strategies, Employment and Investment Strategies, November 15, 2015

The PM noted:

- To stimulate growth, India needs to enhance public investments, not just rely on monetary policy.
- G20's continued call to Central Banks for careful communication on monetary policy actions will be helpful in keeping financial and currency markets stable.
- Multilateral Development Banks should enlarge their capital base to support infrastructure needs of the developing countries. New institutions such as the New Development Bank are welcome additional sources of financing.
- There is global consensus on the need to address climate change. However, multilateral institutions should not impose such difficult safeguards and conditions on loans that they become barriers to development in many countries and undermine sustainable development.

- G20 efforts must be aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, adopted this year, particularly with the number one goal of elimination of all poverty by 2030.
- India welcomed the G20 focus on employment of women and, on youth this year.

Intervention by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at G20 Session-II on Enhancing Resilience in Antalya, November 16, 2015

The PM noted:

- He commended the G 20 for its successful efforts to build a more resilient and open global financial system.
- It is an essential foundation of growth and stability in the global economy.

Intervention by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at G20 Working Lunch on Trade and Energy, November 16, 2015

The PM noted:

- A transparent, equitable, non-discriminatory and rule-based global trading system is essential for the global economy.
- Regional Trade Agreements should not lead to fragmentation of the global trading system and should support a more liberalised multilateral trade regime.

2. G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting

Communiqué: G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting 4-5 September 2015, Ankara, Turkey

The Communiqué noted:

- India reaffirms the role of macroeconomic and structural policies to support their efforts to achieve strong, sustainable and balanced growth.
- India remains deeply disappointed with the continued delay in progressing the 2010 IMF Quota and Governance Reforms. The fight against terrorism is a major priority for all the countries and thus, India reiterates its resolve to tackle its financing channels. India reaffirms its commitment to promote an enabling global economic environment for developing countries as they pursue their sustainable development agendas, including by strengthening India's policy dialogue.

3. G20 Finance and Central Bank Deputies Meeting was held in Sanya, China on December 14-15, 2015

G20 Finance and Central Bank Deputies Meeting was held in Sanya, China on December 14-15, 2015 which is the first high-level meeting since China took over the G20 Presidency on December 1, 2015.

The meeting was co-chaired by Zhu Guangyao, Vice Finance Minister of China and Yi Gang, Deputy Governor of People's Bank of China. Lou Jiwei, Finance Minister of China addressed the opening session and introduced the agenda, priorities and work program of G20 finance track in 2016. The

Deputies reached broad agreement on the agenda, priorities and work program in 2016 and discussed various issues including the global economy, framework for strong, sustainable and balanced growth, international financial architecture, financial sector reform, international tax cooperation, green finance and climate finance, etc.

Delegates from G20 member countries, invited guest countries and relevant international organizations attended the meeting.

III. SCO and India

1. Joint statement of the High-Level Conference Security and Stability in the SCO Region, Moscow, 4 June 2015

- The high Representatives of Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Member states, Observers and Dialogue Partners (including India) discussed in a direct and constructive spirit the issues of ensuring peace and stability in the SCO area.
- The Joint Statement stressed that the dominant tendency of the contemporary stage of international relations is the formation of a multipolar world based on principles of common indivisible security and mutually beneficial equal cooperation.

2. Remarks by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Plenary of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, July 10, 2015

The Prime Minister noted:

- He conveyed his deep sense of gratitude to the members of SCO for accepting India as a full member. It reflects the natural links of history.
- India's spiritual, cultural, political and economic links with the Central Eurasian region has existed since ancient times. And, it has enriched us both.
- India also has strong and deepening strategic partnership with China and Russia.
- India will be pleased to contribute to the development of infrastructure in the region.
- Together with other countries present here, SCO could be a springboard for an integrated and connected Eurasia to become one the most dynamic regions in the world.
- India's requirement for energy and resources and its vast and dynamic market will boost prosperity in the SCO region.
- India will deepen its engagement in human resource development, information and communication technology, pharmaceuticals and health care, banking and capital markets, small and medium enterprises and micro finance, and food security and agriculture.
- The future of prosperity rests on the foundation of peace. India will contribute to advancing peace and friendship in the region.

3. Statement of the Heads of Governments (Prime Ministers) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States on Regional Economic Cooperation, 15 December 2015, Zhengzhou

- Heads of Governments (Prime Ministers) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States advocated stronger economic growth in the SCO territory, improvement

of well-being of peoples and resolution of the tasks of multilateral cooperation in trade and economy in the framework of the Organization, and took into account initiatives of member states for promotion of regional economic interaction, including the project of People's Republic of China to create Silk Road Economic Belt.

4. Joint Communiqué on the outcomes of the 14th Meeting of the Council of Heads of Governments (Prime Ministers) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Member States, December 15, 2015

- On 14-15 December 2015 in Zhengzhou (China) 14th Meeting of the Council of Heads of Governments (Prime Ministers) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was held. From Indian side, the meeting was attended by Minister of State of External Affairs Shri Vjay Kumar Singh.
- Heads of delegations exchanged views in a constructive and businesslike atmosphere on a wide range of issues of international and regional economic growth, discussed prospects and measures for improving economic and humanitarian cooperation for further strengthening of mutual understanding and traditional friendship between peoples of the SCO member states.
- Heads of Governments confirmed the support for the initiative of People's Republic of China on Silk Road Economic Belt and issued a Statement on regional economic cooperation.

5. Address by Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri V K Singh at the Meeting of the Heads of Government of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation, December 15, 2015

The Minister noted:

- India looks forward to the speedy completion of India's membership so that it can involve itself fully in SCO's programmes and activities at the earliest.
- Many of the problems confronting the region, especially the rising tide of cross-border terrorism and extremism, require transnational solutions.
- India can bring to the region its strengths in financial management, especially micro-finance, pharmaceuticals, services such as IT and healthcare, as well as capacity building.

14. Major Events of Ministry of Finance

I. National

‘Make in India’ Programme’

‘Make in India’ has been the major flagship programme of 2015. It aims to facilitate investment, foster innovation, enhance skill development, protect intellectual property, and build best-in-class manufacturing infrastructure. Information on twenty-five sectors, including automobile, defence, aviation, biotechnology, construction, food processing, mining, media and entertainment, oil and gas, tourism and hospitality, has been provided on a web portal along with details of FDI policy, National Manufacturing Policy, intellectual property rights, and the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor and other National Industrial Corridors. An Investor Facilitation Cell has been created in 'Invest India' to guide, assist, and handhold investors. The government has planned to build some of the following corridors:

1. Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor
2. Bengaluru-Mumbai Economic Corridor
3. Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor Project
4. Vizag-Chennai Industrial Corridor
5. Amritsar-Kolkata Industrial Corridor

Since ‘Make in India’ programme has been announced, it has not only highlighted the growth and investable potentials of the Indian economy but also strengthened and widened the canvass of diplomatic engagements at global level. It has showcased India’s growth potential, its importance in setting the pace of regional and global economic cycles. For instance, IMF in its report said that today, India is the fastest growing economy, even exceeded China; its billion plus population offers vast market; its huge mineral and natural resource endowments as well as skilled manpower is capable of converting India into a global manufacturing hub. In fact, the new policy has prepared the platform for engaging the major foreign investors, including the Indian Diaspora, MNCs, which is significant to bail out the world economy from recession as well as putting India into a global league as a significant power.

Establishment of NITI Aayog (National Institution for transforming India)

NITI Aayog, a successor of the Planning Commission (Yojana Aayog), has been established ‘to provide a critical directional and strategic input into the development processes. It was announced by the Indian Prime Minister on 26 January 2015. The commission was established after ‘extensive consultation across the spectrum of stakeholders, including state governments, domain experts and relevant institutions’. The Commission is based on two-way flow of consultation between centre and states than the previous practice of the Planning Commission. The aim of NITI Aayog is to put an end to slow and tardy implementation of policy by promoting better inter-ministerial and better centre-state coordination; foster cooperative federalism; evolve a shared vision of national development priorities. The role of the central government is defined as ‘enabler’ rather than provider of first and the last resort. The Commission also advises on food security, upliftment of poor, skill training,

maintaining state-of-art resource centre, formulate credible plans at the village level and aggregate these progressively at higher levels of government as well as providing advice and encouraging partnerships between key stakeholders both national and international like-minded Think tanks, as well as educational and policy research institutions, are key features of the new Commission.

In addition, the new commission will also look into:

- Leveraging of India's demographic dividend, realization of the potential of youth, men and women, through education, skill development, elimination of gender bias, and employment;
- Elimination of poverty, and provide a chance to every Indian to live a life of dignity and self-respect;
- Redressal of inequalities based on gender bias, caste and economic disparities;
- Integrate villages institutionally into the development process.
- Policy support to more than 50 million small businesses, which are a major source of employment creation;
- Safeguarding of their environmental and ecological assets.

The new commission has also some role to play in Prime Minister's programme of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Digital India, Skill India and Beti Bachao- Beti Padhao Abhiyan.

Department of Disinvestment (DoD)

In 2014-15, the government made significant policy reform in the process of disinvestment. It has changed the earlier approach of disinvestment based on the principles of identification of stocks on an annual plan basis, which was responsible for the problems such as delay in approaching the market, hammering of stocks, overhang, lack of flexibility in divestment of stocks, etc. The rolling plan helped the officials in advance preparation/planning, fast tracking the approval process, maintaining secrecy so as to avoid hammering of stocks and concluding disinvestment of Government of India (GoI) shareholdings in Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) in a time bound and focused manner. Consequently, the Government was able to achieve the highest ever disinvestment receipts of Rs. 24,349 crore in a single FY 2014-15, that too only in last 6 months period of the FY. This is even higher than the annual average of Rs. 9,593 crore between 2000 and 2014.

Looking at the success of the 2014-15, the DoD has planned a figure of Rs. 69,500 crore for the FY 2015-16. This comprises Rs. 41,000 crore from disinvestment of CPSEs and Rs. 28,500 crore from "strategic disinvestment". In order to accelerate the disinvestment process and achieve the target of Rs. 69,500 crore, the DoD has outlined to undertake some of the following measures:

- Replacing annual plan with rolling plans;
- Creating a pipeline of proposals for CPSEs, which at present, are at different stages of approval;
- Fast tracking of approval process;
- Maintaining secrecy to prevent hammering of stocks;
- Changing intermediaries' system of engagement to speed up transactions;

- Making disinvestment programme more inclusive by following an approach to reserve 20 per cent of shares on PSUs-OFS transactions on a case to case basis.

External Debt

By the end-March 2015, India's total external debt stands approximately US\$475.8 billion. In comparison to the previous year it has increased by US\$29.5 billion, around 6.6 per cent. Two factors contributed to the rise of external debt, first, appreciation of US Dollar against the Indian Rupee; and second, non-resident deposits. In terms of GDP percentage, external debt accounts 23.8 per cent, recording a marginal increase of 0.2 per cent from the previous year. The US dollar denominated debt continued to be the largest component of India's external debt with a share of 58.3 per cent at end-March 2015, followed by Indian rupee (27.9 per cent), SDR (5.8 per cent), Japanese Yen (4.0 per cent) and Euro (2.4 per cent). Short-term debt of the total external debt has declined to 17.8 per cent from 20.5 per cent during the same period. The ratio of short-term debt to foreign exchange reserves has also declined to 24.8 per cent from 30.1 per cent between at end-March 2015 and end-March 2014.

FDI, Forex Reserve, External Debt, Ease of Doing Business

Since mid-1991, the government of India embarked upon major economic reforms, the India economy has not only gradually started integrating with the world economy but also slowly emerged as a significant player in the globalization process. It has undertaken some of the following reforms, including the de-controlling of industries from the stringent regulatory process; simplification of investment procedures, promotion of foreign direct investment (FDI), liberalization of exchange control, rationalization of taxes and public sector divestment. However, under 'Make in India' programme the current government has intensified the process of attracting the FDI. Prime Minister Modi visited more than two dozen countries, mainly Japan, USA, China, France, Germany, Canada, the UAE, etc and showcased growing potentials in Indian economy to the foreign investors and attract FDI in the country. PM provided a blueprint of Indian economic policies and elaborated the scheme of 'Make in India'. In a separate meeting, he also emphasised to improve the 'Ease of Doing Business' in India. In Global context, the Easing of Doing Index shows India at 134th position, of the total 189 countries while the PM in a meeting said to put India at 40-50th position. Besides, the government is also planning to implement the Goods and Service Tax (GST) for simplifying the process of taxation as well as thinking over the retrospective provisions of taxation, which has been long awaited by the foreign investors.

FDI Inflows

In comparison to the previous year, FDI equity flow in India increased around 105 per cent, both in terms of dollar and Rupee in 2015. In absolute terms, approximately US \$ 4,481 million (Rs. 27,880 crores) FDI equity came to India compared to US \$ 2,189 million (Rs. 13,589 crores) during the corresponding period in 2014.

For the last three successive years, Mauritius has been the top investor in India. In 2015, it invested around \$9,030 million, followed by Singapore, UK, Japan, Netherland, USA, Germany, etc. Though Cyprus and the UAE are relatively small countries, they stand eighth and tenth largest FDI contributors to the Indian economy. Service sector attracted the major portion of the FDI, followed

by construction and telecommunication. Mumbai has attracted the largest amount of foreign investment capital, followed by New Delhi and Bangalore.

Under 'Make in India' programme the government has introduced several important policies to facilitate FDI in the country. It has eased the FDI norms in 15 sectors. In some sectors such as township, shopping complex, business centres, medical devices, and in certain areas of railways, it has allowed 100 per cent FDI through automatic routes. In other sectors such as defence, it allowed 49 per cent consolidated FDI, private sector banks 74 per cent, etc. In Insurance and sub-activities cap has been raised from 20 per cent to 49 percent, while in Pension fund 49 per cent FDI is allowed.

Forex Reserve

India's forex reserve has registered a growth of 10 per cent, from \$319.71 billion to \$351 billion between 26 December 2014 and 18 December 2015. This is sufficient to finance 10 months' import bill. The shrinking import bill, which has been mainly contributed by the lower crude prices and depreciation of Rupee against USD, has improved India forex reserve.

Masala Bonds

The International Finance Corporation (IFC) has issued a 10-year, 10 billion Indian rupee bonds (equivalent to \$163 million). 'Masala bonds' mark the first rupee bonds listed on the London Stock Exchange. The bond yield was 6.3 percent. They are the longest-dated bonds in the offshore rupee markets, building on earlier offshore rupee issuances by IFC at three-, five-, and seven-year maturities. The vast majority of investors in Masala bonds are European insurance companies. Masala bond is different from the External Commercial Borrowing (ECB), which were issued by the Indian companies to raise foreign currency, while Masala bond is settled in USD so the risk lies not with the Indian side but foreign buyers. Proceeds from the offering were invested in infrastructure bond issuance by Axis Bank. The term Masala has been consciously used to give a local flavour and attract the Indian Diaspora to mind Indian culture and cuisine. In past China and Japan has also issued bonds based on their local names such as Dim-sum bonds after a popular dish of Hong Kong and Japanese Samurai bond to impress the foreign investors. Masala bond can best be defined as cultural-economic diplomacy of the Indian government.

Gold Schemes

As per the estimates of the World Gold Council (WGC) approximately 22,000 tonnes of gold worth \$1 trillion (Rs. 62.6 lakh crore) are kept by the Indians in different forms. This is nearly over half the size of the Indian economy. These gold deposits are lying idle from economic point of view. On the other side, India has been one of the major exporters of gem and jewellery. It imports gold from Russia, Africa, etc., which fluctuates according to the movement of USD and affects its earnings. Looking at the opportunity at home, in 2014-15 budget, the government announced three Gold Schemes to utilise these deposited of gold for economic purposes: Gold Monetisation, Sovereign Gold Bond and Gold Coin scheme. In the past Turkey had implemented the similar scheme of tapping the gold reserves for economic purposes.

- ***Gold Monetization Schemes***

This scheme was announced in Budget 2015-16 with the aim of mobilizing the gold lying idle with households and trusts and deploying it for productive use. The scheme was launched by the Prime Minister of India on 5th November, 2015. The scheme will benefit the manufacturers of gold jewellery who are largely small and medium scale enterprises, by making gold available to them. It will also benefit the common man by allowing him/her to earn interest on their holdings of gold.

- ***Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme***

This scheme was announced in Budget 2015-16 with the view to provide a new financial instrument of investment to public at large and for reducing the demand for physical gold. The scheme was launched by the Prime Minister of India on 5th November, 2015. In the long-run, this scheme will help in reducing the country's demand for import of gold, to a large extent. In the first tranche issuance of the bonds which was open from 6th November, 2015 to 30th November, 2015 approximately 250 crore worth SGBs were subscribed to.

- ***Indian Gold Coin Scheme***

The scheme was announced in Budget 2015-16 with the view to promote indigenously minted national gold coins. The scheme is aligned with the 'Make in India' programme of the Government. The scheme was launched by the Prime Minister of India on 5th November, 2015.

Creation of National Investment and Infrastructure Fund ("NIIF")

In his Budget Speech 2015-16, the Union Finance Minister Shri Arun Jaitley made the announcement of setting-up of a National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF). The aim of establishing the NIIF are to: (i) maximize economic impact mainly through infrastructure development in commercially viable projects, both Greenfield and Brownfield, including stalled projects; (ii) attract investment from both domestic and international sources; (iii) NIIF would solicit equity participation from strategic anchor partners; (v) The contribution of Government of India to NIIF would be aimed to virtually showcase it as a sovereign fund and is expected to attract overseas sovereign/quasi-sovereign/multilateral/bilateral investors to co-invest in it. The initial authorized corpus of NIIF would be Rs. 20,000 crore, which may be raised from time to time. Government's contribution/share in the corpus will be 49 per cent. To oversee the activities of the NIIF, government has decided to constitute a Governing Council with the following composition:- (i) Finance Minister - Chairman (ii) Secretary, DEA (iii) Secretary, Financial Services and members from other agencies. In fact, the NIIF has been planned to provide a level playing field to both domestic and foreign investors.

ODA Plus Loans

A new loan instrument namely ODA Plus, was approved by the Finance Minister to meet additional financial needs for large infrastructure projects which do not fall within the agreed priority areas under Indo-German Bilateral Development Cooperation. Following two projects have been approved/posed to German side for funding under ODA Plus.

Measures Taken For Simplification of Procedures and Better Taxpayer Services

In order to increase revenue and tax compliance, the government has focused to simplify the procedure of tax payment as well as the filing of income tax returns. Following measures have been taken:

- **Issue of Permanent Account Number (PAN)**

PAN is now required for various activities like opening of bank account, opening of demat accounts, obtaining registration for Service Tax, Sales Tax / VAT, Excise registration etc. PAN database has shown steady growth in tune with economic progress. During the current year (up to 31st March 2015) 1,86,04,948 PANs have been allotted.

- **E-Biz Programme**

E-Biz programme is a mission mode project of the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce and Industry. It is aimed to facilitate the investors by providing SINGLE WINDOW clearance like licensing, environment & land clearances, approvals from various ministries and departments for start-up businesses.

- **E-filing of Income Tax Returns**

The e-filing project is an eminent e-governance and e-delivery measure taken by the Income Tax Department for providing web-enabled services to the taxpayers. The project aims at enabling e-filing of Income tax returns, audit reports and other Forms prescribed under the Income Tax over Internet directly by taxpayers and through e-return intermediaries (ERIs). In FY 2015-16, 2.06 crore returns have been received on the e-filing portal till 7 September 2015 registering an increase of 26.12% over the corresponding period of the preceding financial year.

- **Centralized Processing Centre (CPC) for Income Tax Returns**

This project enables Centralized Processing of all e-filed Income Tax returns, and all paper returns also of Karnataka and Goa, at Bengaluru. CPC has processed in excess of 9.25 crore E- Returns till 31st March 2015 against the projected 2.7 crore e-filed returns that CPC was to process in the initial 5 years. CPC has processed 3.07 crore returns of income during Financial Year 2014-15 with a growth rate of 26%, over 2.44 crores processed during Financial Year 2013-14.

- **Refund Banker**

The Refund Banker project has enabled system driven process for determination, generation, issue, dispatch and credit of refunds. This project has made the process of delivery of refund completely automated, speedy and transparent. The refund is directly credited to the bank account of the taxpayer through ECS as soon as it is determined. A web based status tracking facility in collaboration with India Post and National Securities Depository Ltd. (NSDL) is available under the Scheme.

- **E-Sahyog**

E-Sahyog, a pilot project was launched as an online mechanism to resolve mismatches in income-tax return through end to end e-service obviating the need to visit income-tax office by the taxpayer. Under this initiative the Department will provide an end to end e-service using SMS, e-mails to

inform the taxpayers of the mismatch. The taxpayer will simply need to visit the e-filing portal and log in with their user-ID and password to view mismatch related information and submit online response on the issue. The responses submitted online by the taxpayers will be processed and if the response and other information are found satisfactory as per automated closure rules, the issue will be closed. The taxpayer can check the updated status by logging in to the e-filing portal.

- **E- Verification of return of income:**

To facilitate the taxpayers and to provide end-to-end e-enabled services, a system of electronic verification of return of income has been launched by CBDT. A taxpayer can now verify his electronically-filed return through internet banking portal or through Aadhar-based authentication process. For the small taxpayers, an Electronic Verification Code (EVC) can also be generated through the e-filing website of the Income Tax Department. Persons using this facility will not be required to submit paper-based ITR-V verification form to CPC Bengaluru. About 33 lakh e-returns have been verified through EVC till 07.09.2015.

Steps to Curb Black Money

Constitution of Special Investigation Team (SIT) Constitution of a Special Investigation Team (SIT), in May 2014, with two former judges of the Supreme Court as Chairman and Vice-Chairman, inter alia, to deal with issues relating to black money stashed abroad;

Introduction of Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets (Imposition of Tax) Bill, 2015: In order to fulfil the commitment made by the Government to the people of India through the Parliament, the Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets (Imposition of Tax)) Act, 2015 has been enacted. Relevant rules [Black Money (Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets) and Imposition of Tax Rules, 2015] under the said Act have been framed. The salient features of the Undisclosed Foreign Income and Assets (Imposition of Tax) Bill, 2015 are:

- Rate of tax and penalty - Undisclosed foreign income or assets shall be taxed at the flat rate of 30 percent without any exemption, deduction or set off of any carried forward losses. The penalty for non-disclosure of income or an asset located outside India will be equal to three times the amount of tax payable thereon, i.e., 90 percent of the undisclosed income or the value of the undisclosed asset, in addition to tax payable at 30 per cent.
- The act also provides for stringent penalties and enhanced punishment for violation of various provisions.
- Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002 has been amended to include offence of tax evasion under this Act, as a scheduled offence under PMLA.
- Failure to furnish return in respect of foreign income or assets shall attract a penalty of Rs.10 lakh. This will also be punishable with rigorous imprisonment for a term of six months to seven years.
- The punishment for wilful attempt to evade tax in relation to a foreign income or an asset located outside India will be rigorous imprisonment from three years to ten years.
- One time compliance opportunity - The Black Money Act also provided a one-time compliance opportunity for a limited period (from 1st July, 2015 to 30th September, 2015) to persons who have any undisclosed foreign assets which have hitherto not been disclosed for the purposes of Income-tax. Such persons were allowed to file a declaration before the

specified tax authority. The declarants are required to pay tax at the rate of 30 percent and an equal amount by way of penalty. Rs. 4,147 crore of undisclosed foreign assets have been declared under the one time compliance opportunity.

Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Bill

As regards curbing domestic black money, a new and more comprehensive, the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Bill, 2015 has been introduced in Lok Sabha to amend the Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Act (BTPA) 1988. The new amended law will enable confiscation of Benami property and provide for prosecution, thus blocking a major avenue for generation and holding of black money in the form of Benami property, especially in real estate.

Automatic Exchange of Information (AEOI)

India has joined the global efforts to combat tax evasion, including supporting implementation of a uniform global standard on Automatic Exchange of Information on a fully reciprocal basis, facilitating exchange of information regarding persons hiding money in offshore centres. Legislative measures, wherever required, including amendment to section 285BA of the Income-tax Act, 1961 vide Finance (No.2) Act, 2014 facilitating the Automatic Exchange of Information.

Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)

The offence of concealment of income or evasion of tax in relation to a foreign asset will be made a predicate offence under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA). This provision would enable the enforcement agencies to attach and confiscate unaccounted assets held abroad and launch prosecution against persons including in laundering of black money.

Department of Financial Services (DFS)

Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance is a nodal department as far as banking and insurance sector in the country is concerned. In the current fiscal, Department of Financial Services has taken various initiatives and launched different Financial Inclusion & Social Security related Schemes in its pursuit of achieving the goal of Universal Financial Inclusion.

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY): "Mera Khata - Bhagya Vidhaata"

The biggest financial inclusion initiative in the world was announced by the Prime Minister on 15th August 2014 and Mega launch was done by him on 28th August 2014 across the country. This National Mission on Financial Inclusion has an ambitious objective of covering all households in the country with banking facilities and having a bank account for each household. It has been emphasized by the Prime Minister that this is important for including people left-out into the mainstream of the financial system. The Government started the PMJDY to provide 'universal access to banking facilities' starting with "Basic Saving Bank Account" with an overdraft up to Rs.5000 subject to satisfactory operation in the account for six months and RuPay Debit card with inbuilt accident insurance cover of Rs. 1 lakh .

Achievements:

- As on 11th November 2015, Banks have opened 19.21 Crore accounts under PMJDY with deposit of more than 26819 crores. Rupay cards issued to 16.51 Cr. customers. Two lakh accounts are opened per day
- As on 13th November 2015 more than 45.98 lakhs accounts have been offered Overdraft facility.
- Out of these overdrafts facility has been availed by 8.86 lakhs account holders amounting to Rs. 124.95 Lakhs.
- 1336 Claims of Life cover of Rs.30000 and 333 Claims of accident insurance cover of Rs. 1 lakh have been paid till 13th November 2015.
- It has been recorded in Guinness Book of Record.

Jan Dhan Se Jan Suraksha Schemes

In 2015, the government launched several welfare schemes for the common citizens, especially for the aged, poor, females and the families losing their bread earners in any accidents.

- ***Atal Pension Yojana (APY)***

The government launched the APY scheme to provide financial assistance to the person above 60. Under this scheme, a pension of Rs 1,000 to Rs. 5, 000 after 60 years of age focusing on all those covered under any social security programme will be given. The government will contribute 50 per cent of the total contribution for five year up to Rs. 10,000 annually in order to assist the people who are aged people. The scheme is regarded as a universal social security system for all Indians, especially the poor, the underprivileged and the workers in the unorganised sector. APY is being administered by the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) under the overall administrative and institutional architecture of the National Pension System (NPS). A total of 10.35 lakh subscribers have been enrolled under the Scheme till 24 November 2015.

- ***Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY)***

The PMSBY is a one year personal accident insurance scheme, annually renewable offering coverage of Rs. 2 lakh for death or permanent total disability and Rs. 1 lakh for permanent partial disability due to an accident. It is available to people in the age group of 18 to 70 years. Gross enrolment reported by Banks is 9.16 crore under PMSBY as on 24 November 2015. The share of Public Sector Banks (including RRBs) is 93.2 per cent.

- ***Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)***

The PMJJBY is a one year life insurance scheme, annually renewable offering coverage of Rs. 2 lakh for death due to any reason and is available to people in the age group of 18 to 50 years. An exclusive website www.jansuraksha.gov.in has been created. State wise toll free numbers allotted to respond to queries of the customers. Till November 2015, banks report gross enrolment is around 2.86 crore under PMSBY. The share of Public banks is 91 per cent.

II. International

Establishment of New Development Bank (NDB)

New Development Bank has been established by BRICS countries in Shanghai, China. The Bank will mobilize resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS countries, other emerging economies and developing countries. It will complement the existing efforts of multilateral and regional financial institutions. Mr. K.V. Kamath has taken over as the first President of the Bank. NDB is expected to make its first lending by April, 2016.

Establishment of BRICS Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA)

The foundation work for the establishment of CRA by BRICS countries has been completed in 2015. The Governing Council Procedural Rules and Standing Committee Procedural Rules were approved by the Governing Council in its inaugural meeting held on 4 September 2015. The establishment of a self-managed contingent reserve arrangement would have a positive precautionary effect, help BRICS countries forestall short-term liquidity pressures, provide mutual support and further strengthen financial stability. It would also contribute to strengthening the global financial safety net and complement existing international arrangements as an additional line of defence.

SAARC and SDF Meetings

The 7th Meeting of SAARC Finance Ministers and Finance Secretaries were held on 19th and 20th of August, 2015. The Indian delegations for these Meetings were led by Shri Jayant Sinha, Minister of State (Finance). Some of the major issues that were deliberated in these meeting were: (i) currency swap arrangements among SAARC member nations; (ii) facilitating greater flow of capital and intra-regional investment and developments in SAARCFINANCE. (iii) The 4th Meeting of the SDF Governing Council was held on 20th August, 2015, which mainly discussed on the ways of strengthening SAARC Development Fund and establishing its ways forward. (iv) The 21st and 22nd Board Meetings of SAARC Development Fund were held in April and August 2015 respectively; (iv) The Union Cabinet on 18th of November 2015 has approved the extension of the validity of the Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for SAARC Member Countries with amendments for two more years up to November 2017.

India Becomes a Signatory to Asia Infrastructure Investment bank (AIIB)

India along with other countries signed the Articles of Agreement of the Bank on June 29th, 2015. AIIB is a multilateral development bank proposed to be located in Beijing which will foster sustainable economic development, create wealth and improve infrastructure connectivity in Asia by investing in infrastructure and other productive sectors. The process of ratification of the Articles of Agreement is underway.

G20 Summit 2015

The G20 Summit 2015 was held on 15-16 November 2015 in Antalya, Turkey. Prime Minister led the Indian delegation. The Summit marks the culmination of a year long process of inter- governmental meetings led by the Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, Sherpa Dr Panagariya, and official representatives from Government of India. G20 focuses on issues of economic and financial cooperation. At this year's Summit in Antalya, Leaders committed to undertake a number of concrete actions to strengthen the global economy, make global growth more inclusive, enhance the resilience of the international financial system, mobilize investment to raise long-term growth, strengthen

multilateral trading system and implement previous commitments on economic reform and labour markets.

One World without Hunger – A Special Initiative

The scheme launched by the government of Germany was approved to support the eradication of malnutrition and hunger and the securing of long-term food security for a growing global population, and this initiative will be implemented through bilateral/multilateral development cooperation and through partnerships with private sector and civil society. Under this initiative total four projects, totalling Euro 21.05 million, have been identified, 3 projects (euro 11.05) million are under technical cooperation and 1 under financial cooperation (euro 10 million on grant basis).

Solar Energy Partnership

A Memorandum of Understanding was facilitated and signed between MNRE, India, and German government to support Solar Energy Partnership based on concessional loans in the range of 1 billion euro over the next five years. The agreement signed with different entities allocates the funds in the following manner: (i) Euro 57 million to Green Energy Corridors' project in Himachal Pradesh Power Transmission Corporation Limited –Loan Agreement – with KfW (German Development Bank) (ii) Euro 68 million to the Green Energy Corridors' project in APTRANSCO signed with KfW (German Development Bank); (iii) Euro 55 million without sovereign guarantee allocated to Promotion of Microfinance and Micro Enterprises. the agreement was signed between SIDBI (India) and KfW (German Development Bank) (iv) Euro 200 million allocated to Bangalore Metro Rail Project Phase II; agreement was signed with AFD (French Development Bank).

Bilateral Technical and Financial Cooperation Held with Germany and France

Annual Negotiation Meetings with Germany and France (AFD) were successfully held respectively on 28-29 September, 2015 and 8-9 October, 2015. Germany has committed EUR 1,490.60 million (approx. Rs. 11,000 crore) for bilateral Technical and Financial Cooperation for the period of 2015, while France committed an assistance of around 250 million for the same year.

Extension of the Indian Development and Economic Assistance Scheme to Africa

The Government of India has been extending Lines of Credit to Africa and other developing countries since 2005-06. The scheme has been granted second extension for another five years i.e. from 2015-16 to 2019-20 with the approval of CCEA.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Financial Inclusion Signed with the USAID

Under Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), an MoU between the Department of Economic Affairs, India, and the USAID has been signed on 4th November, 2015. Under this agreement, the Government of India and USAID will work together to support financial inclusion through expanded payments acceptance networks and other efforts to the common and poor Indians.

India Signs three Grant Agreements with U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA)

The two sides signed three grant Agreements in the following fields: (i) The USTDA would grant to Airports Authority of India, which would partially fund the technical assistance cost of goods and

services required for a technical assistance on the Provision 2 Body Scanner System Pilot' project in India; (ii) The USTDA would grant to partially fund the cost of goods and services required for feasibility study on the _Bottom Upgrading Project of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. at Mumbai Refinery in India; (ii) Finally, the USTDA would grant to partially fund the cost of goods and services required for developing PPP framework in Indian Railway.

India Signed New Loan and Agreements with World Bank in 2015

To provide a fillip to the infrastructure sector, India negotiated and signed several new loans with the World Bank and the ADB during 2015. This includes IBRD loan of US\$ 650 million negotiated with the World Bank for the third phase of the EDFC project. The total loan committed by the World Bank for the 3-phased EDFC project is US\$ 2725 million. This project will augment freight carriage throughout the eastern dedicated freight corridor between Ludhiana and Kolkata. Another project negotiated and signed is the Tamil Nadu Road Sector Project for World Bank loan of US\$ 300 million. Besides the Tamil Nadu Sustainable Urban Development Project for World Bank loan of US\$ 300 million has been signed in June 2015.

National Initiatives Swachh Bharat

India has sought a financial assistance of US\$ 1500 million from the World Bank to fund its Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin). Under this, the government has planned to reduce open defecation in rural areas, achieving and sustaining Open Defecation Free (ODF) status of villages and enhance solid and liquid based management. The government has also posed projects to the World Bank and the ADB for solar infrastructure & installation at rooftop PV in remote areas, so it could successfully run the education and skill development programmes, particularly the Skill and Employability Enhancement Programme (SEEP), Nai Manzil programme for minority youth and State level Skill Development programs in Jharkhand and Uttarakhand.

Smart Cities Mission

In the Smart Cities Mission, Statements and Guideline document, the government of India says, "Cities are engine of growth for the economy". Currently, around 30 per cent of the total population is living in cities are contributing 63 per cent to the GDP. But by 2030 the situation will significantly transform; around 41 per cent population will move to cities and contribute 75 per cent to the GDP. Consequently, it requires comprehensive development of "physical, institutional, social and economic infrastructure". This will not only improve the quality of life but also attract investment and set in the "motion of virtuous cycle of growth and development". Consequently, the government has planned to develop 100 smart cities in five years (FY 2015- 16 to FY 2019-20) all over the country. The estimated expenditure will be approximately Rs. 48,000 crore over five years i.e. Rs. 100 crore per city per year. Some of the following infrastructures will be built in these cities such as adequate water supply; assured electricity supply; sanitation, including solid waste management; efficient urban mobility and public transport; affordable housing, especially for the poor; robust IT connectivity and digitalization; sustainable environment, etc. The Indian government has signed several agreements with US, Germany, Japan, etc to speed up the process of building the smart cities.

15. Developments in Defence Field

In 2015, the government of India has undertaken multi-pronged policy approaches in defence sector: (i) indigenisation; (ii) modernisation; and (iii) making up critical deficiency of weapons and equipment by developing requisite capacities and infrastructure through the Make-in-India initiative; (iv) Acquiring modern weapons from several countries such as USA, France, Russia, Japan, Israel, etc. In the year 2015, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) the apex body of the Ministry of Defence in matters of acquisitions cleared different critical and high end defence procurement proposals to the tune of more than Rs. 2 lakh crore.

FDI in Defence

On 25 November 2015, the Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) reviewed the FDI policy in defence. According to the revised guidelines, FDI Cap has been raised from 26 per cent up to 49 per cent through automatic route and above 49 per cent under Government route on case-to-case basis, wherever it is likely to result in access to modern and 'state-of-art' technology in the country. Besides, there are other guidelines such as: (i) Defence products list for the purpose of industrial licensing has been substantively shortened and notified; (ii) Government has notified a Defence Exports Strategy for faster clearance for export of defence items; (iii) the portfolio investment by FPIs/FIIs/NRIs/QFIs and investments by FVCIs together will not exceed 24 per cent of the total equity of the investee/joint venture company; (iii) portfolio investments will be under automatic route; (iv) the management of the applicant company should be in Indian hands with majority representation on the Board as well as the Chief Executives of the company/partnership firm being resident Indians; (v) The applicant company seeking permission of the Government for FDI up to 49 per cent should be an Indian company owned and controlled by resident Indian citizens; and (vi) proposals for FDI beyond 49 per cent with proposed inflow in excess of Rs. 2000 crores, which are to be approved by CCS will not require further approval of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA); (vii) Interactions with industry intensified through DRDO and Department of Defence Production.

In defence manufacturing sectors, those companies which have not acquired industrial licensing will have to take permission from the government for availing foreign investment, resulting in change in the ownership pattern or transfer of stake by existing investor to new foreign investor. The Licences will be given by the DIPP, Ministry of Commerce & Industry in consultation with the Ministry of Defence and Ministry of External Affairs. The government also provided guidelines to the investee companies such as: (i) it should be structured to be self-sufficient in areas of product design and development; (ii) The investee/joint venture company along with manufacturing facility, should also have maintenance and life cycle support facility of the product being manufactured in India.

FDI in defence is subjected to the industrial licence under the Industries (Development and Regulation Act), 1951.

Joint Military Exercises

- *Exercise 'Yudh Abhyas - 2015'*

The India-US Combined Military Training Exercise YUDH ABHYAS 2015, was held from 09 to 23 Sep 2015 at Joint Base Lewis McChord, USA. The exercise brought together troops of an Infantry sub unit and a Formation Headquarter of the Indian Army and similar participation from the US Army for the joint training. The exercise provided an ideal platform for the personnel of the two countries to share their experiences on Military Operations in Urban Terrain, under the UN mandate.

- ***Exercise 'INDRA - 2015'***

The joint military exercise between India and Russia, INDRA-2015 was held at Mahajan Field Firing Ranges, which started from 08 to 18 November 2015. The final stage of the exercise saw consolidation of group of forces of the two countries, acting under the auspices of the United Nations, assisting the government of a third country in combating armed terrorists in a semi-urban terrain.

- ***Operation 'Hand-in-Hand'***

A battalion level Joint India-China Army Exercise called Operation Hand-in-Hand on counter-terrorism and 'Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief' was held at Kunming, China from 12 to 22 October 2015. Participating troops from both sides had trained together and learned from each other in mixed groups on Basic Individual Skills (combat boxing, basic mountaineering and shooting), Comprehensive Combat Skills (obstacle crossing, combat shooting, demolition, high intensity physical training) and unit/sub unit tactics, especially in a counter terrorism scenario. A joint field exercise depicting counter-terrorist operations on India- China border areas was held from 21 to 22 October to validate the exercise objectives.

Centenary Celebrations of 1st World War

The Indian Army commemorated the centenary of the First World War from 10 Mar to 14 Mar 2015 in New Delhi in memory of the 1.5 million Indian Soldiers who fought in the war and over 74000 who made the supreme sacrifice. 10th March 1915 coincides with the Battle of Neuve Chapelle marking the British Offensive in Artois region of France in which the Garhwal Brigade & Meerut Division of the Indian Corps participated. The period 2014 to 2018 is being commemorated as the Centenary of World War-I.

Joint Naval Exercises in 2015

- ***Indo-French Varuna – 2015 Exercise***

Fourteenth edition of Indo-French naval exercise (VARUNA) was conducted off Goa from 23 April to 02 May 2015, which had both a harbour and sea phase exercise.

- ***SIMBEX - 2015***

The Indian Navy's Eastern Fleet was on an operational deployment to southern Indian Ocean and South China Sea. As a part of this deployment, INS Satpura, indigenously built guided missile stealth frigate and INS Kamorta, the latest and indigenous Anti-Submarine Warfare Corvette arrived at Singapore on 18 May 2015. These ships participated in IMDEX-15 and later conducted bilateral naval exercise SIMBEX-15 with the Singapore Navy from 23-26 May 2015.

- ***Exercise AUSINDEX - 2015***

The Inaugural Bilateral Maritime Exercise between India and Australia AUSINDEX – 15 was conducted off the east coast of India from 11 to 19 September 2015. The exercise was jointly inaugurated by Rear Admiral Jonathan Mead, Head Navy Capability of Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and Rear Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet on board INS Shivalik at Visakhapatnam. The exercise started with harbour phase encompassing briefings and practical demonstrations along with professional interactions.

- ***Exercise Malabar - 2015***

The 19th edition of MALABAR exercise was conducted in the Bay of Bengal from 14 to 19 October 2015. Along with the Indian Navy and the US Naval Forces, the Japan Maritime Self-Defence Forces (JMSDF) also participated in the exercise. This trilateral exercise significantly enhanced naval cooperation among important navies of the Indo-Pacific region.

- ***Indra-Navy -2015***

The eight edition of Indo-Russian bilateral exercise INDRA NAVY 2015 was conducted in the Bay of Bengal off Visakhapatnam from 07 to 12 December 2015. The exercise helped to further strengthen mutual confidence and interoperability and also enabled sharing of best practices between both the navies.

Defence Cooperation with Foreign Countries

As part of International Defence Cooperation, India Air Force (IAF) is engaged with the Air Forces of various friendly foreign countries through Air Staff Talks, professional exchange visits, sports and cultural events.

- ***Indradhanush-IV***

As part of Indo-UK bi-lateral co-operation, Ex Indradhanush - IV was undertaken between July 21-30, 2015 at RAF base Coningsby, Brize Norton and Honington. IAF contingent comprising of 190 personnel, participated in the exercise. The IAF assets comprised of Su-30MKI, C-130J, C-17, IL-78 aircraft and Garuds. The team demonstrated a high degree of

- ***Joint Military Training (JMT) -15***

Joint Military Training (JMT-15) with Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF) was conducted at AF Stn Kalaikunda from November 02-22, 2015. RSAF deployed 06 X F-16 C/D aircraft. Bilateral exercise with Su-30 MKI was conducted from November 23, 2015 for two weeks.

Helping out People in Distress

- ***Nepal Earthquake***

As part of the Nation's overall relief effort for Nepal, the Indian Army launched operation 'Maitri' from 25 April 2015. The Engineer Task forces launched the rescue and rehabilitation operations from BARPak, Basantpur/Bhaktpur and Jorpati. The Army also established hospitals and treated the injured people in the earthquake.

- ***Chennai Floods***

On 1 December 2015, on the State government's call, in a joint operation, the India Air Force and the Indian Army, under operation 'Madad' rescued more than 20,000 people stranded in the flood in Tambaram, Mudichur, Manipakam, Guduvancheri and Urapakkam areas of Chennai. The Army distributed more than 1,25,000 relief packets provided by the State Government and some NGOs besides those from within its own.

**Research Fellows and Research Intern, who contributed the content
for Year End Review 2015**

S. No	Month	Name	Designation
1.	January 2015	Dr. Rajiv Ranjan	Research Fellow
2.	February 2015	Ms. Aparajita Pandey	Research Intern
3.	March 2015	Dr. Amit Kumar	Research Fellow
4.	April 2015	Dr. Asif Shuja	Research Fellow
5.	May 2015	Dr. Nihar Ranjan Das	Research Fellow
6.	June 2015	Dr. Amit Ranjan	Research Fellow
7.	July 2015	Dr. Omair Anas	Research Fellow
8.	August 2015	Dr Dhrubajyoti Bhattacharjee	Research Fellow
9.	September 2015	Dr. Dinoj K. Upadhyay and Dr Athar Zafar	Research Fellows
10.	October 2015	Dr. Smita Tiwari	Research Fellow
11.	November 2015	Dr. Stuti Banerjee	Research Fellow

12.	December 2015	Dr. Nivedita Ray and Dr. Indrani Talukdar	Research Fellows
13.	Finance and Defence	Dr. Zakir Hussain	Research Fellow
14.	Multilateral Institutions	Dr. Sanjeev Kumar	Research Fellow
15.	Miscellaneous (including Non-Traditional Threats)	Dr. Omair Anas	Research Fellow
16.	ASEAN & Southeast Asia	Dr. Rahul Mishra	Research Fellow
17.	Proofreading	Dr. Rakesh Meena and Dr Dhrubajyoti Bhattacharjee	Research Fellows

